

Holocaust Survivor Story, Solomon Radasky

Kai Vogel

University of Texas at Tyler

Solomon Radasky was from Warsaw, he lived in Praga which is the part of the city across the Vistula River. His family owned a fur coat shop and he used to make fur coats at there.

Radasky had a good life in Warsaw until the Nazis had risen.

The first thing the Nazis did to him was the murder of his mother and his older sister, both were killed on January 1941. He was caught by SD and the Jewish police before both were killed and forced to clean up the snow and to keep the trains running so he did not know that both were killed. When he returned to the ghetto, he found out that his mother and older sister had been killed. They were killed because The Nazis were collecting gold and furs from the people in the ghetto, and when they asked his mother for jewelry and furs, she said she don't have any of them. So they shot her and his older sister too.

His father was killed on April 1942. Because his father went to buy bread from child who smuggled into the ghetto and a Jewish policeman saw that, and his father was shot by it.

Deportations started on July 22, 1942. His other sisters and brothers were sent to Treblinka. After that he was never be able to see anyone from his family anymore.

He was a furrier, so in the ghetto he worked at a Tobbens' shop. He made wool jackets for the Nazi armies. They were short jackets.

For lunch they only gave them bread and soup. In the evening they got another bread and coffee for dinner. When the Poles came to the shop, they were able trade with them for some extra foods. They gave them a few shirts and other clothes for a piece of salami and some bread or potatoes to make a soup.

One day he was pulled from the shop. And he was very lucky because a Volksdeutscher told them he was a nice worker. So he was allowed to go back to the shop first he was, and someone else was put in his place for change.

A friend of Radasky said that he saw one of his sister working at Shultz's shop. He wanted to see her, but he did not know how to get to there and he was 3 kilometers away from that place. So he asked a Jewish policeman to go there, the Jewish policeman told him that he could get a German soldier to go with him and bring me back by paying him 500 zlotys, which was a lot of

money, but he said OK with that, when he got to Shultz's shop which his sister should be there, but he could not find his sister. Then he notice that he was stuck in there. He could not go back to his shop because the ghetto had been surrounded by the Nazi soldiers. The next day was April 19, 1943, which was the day that the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising began.

On May 1, 1943, he was shot in the right ankle. The bullet went through the meat and not the bone, so he was lucky about not to lose his leg. He was taken to the Unschlagplatz, because the Treblinka extermination camp could only take 10,000 people a day. In his group there were 20,000 people. They cut off half of their train and sent half to Majdanek concentration camp. Majdanek was a death camp, and he was in the unlucky group.

At Majdanek they took the prisoner clothes and gave them striped shirts, pants and wooden shoes. Radasky was sent to Barracks 21, in the barrack he met an old guy which was a doctor used to be and he operated him with his pocket knife.

He had to walk for 3 kilometers which would take about 45 minutes walking. They had to work with their barefoot. There were little stones on the road and that will cut into the skin and blood will be running from the feet. The work was a dirty field work. After a few days some people could not take it anymore, and they fell down in the road, if they could not get up anymore, they will be shot where they lay down. So after the work they had to carry their bodies back, or to be shot.

After a while, he was deported to Auschwitz. He was in the Majdanek for 9 weeks, and never changed cloth or been washed. He was in the trains for 2 nights. When they got off the train, they saw that they had finally arrived at Auschwitz concentration camp. There was a selection soon after they arrived and some of the prisoners who did not passed were machine gunned in a field there. They did not take them to the gas chambers.

He got a number tattooed on his arm. He got Number 128232.

He was first sent to the camp at Buna, then was taken to the Auschwitz I camp.

Time continued and He was still in the camp, everyday was a different problem for them until January 18, 1945, when they began liquidating Auschwitz. On the 18th he left Auschwitz,

and 9 days later the Russians liberated it. Those 7 days costed him 5 months.

He left Dachau on the 26th or the 27th of April, 1945. He was liberated on May 1st. During this time they were traveling on trains. They were in Tutzing and in Feldafing and in Garmisch. There were big mountains there. One day they had to get out of the train, and had to go up twenty feet to the other side of the mountain. Then the Germans set up machine guns and started to fire at them. A few hundred were killed as they ran back to the train, but those who lived were not killed.

Couple of days later, he was freed by Americans. They cooked rice for the prisoners, but Solomon could not eat them, because the American soldier told him "Don't eat that. If you do, you will die. There is too much fat in that for you to eat now. Because your stomach has shrunk", but they gave him a toast in change.

Solomon Radasky got married on November 1946. His wife Frieda was from the same town as he was from.

He got two children between her.

He moved to New Orleans in 1949. Even though he did not spoke any English, but he started working at the fur coat shop.

He went to the first vacation with his wife in 1978 to Israel.

On August 2, 2002 Solomon Radasky died.

## References

Cash, d., Radasky, S., & Menszer , J. (n.d.). *portrait of a survivor Solomon Radasky*. Retrieved from holocaust survivors:

<http://www.holocaustsurvivors.org/data.show.php?di=home&da=survivors&ke=7>

*Solomon Radasky-Concentration camp survivor*. (2014). Retrieved from trip line:

[http://www.tripline.net/trip/Solomon\\_Radasky-Concentration\\_camp\\_survivor-1027175667331004A42DDB7C4B82B2A0](http://www.tripline.net/trip/Solomon_Radasky-Concentration_camp_survivor-1027175667331004A42DDB7C4B82B2A0)