

Chaim Ejnesman's Passport Photo



I don't remember when and where exactly the picture was taken. Anyway, it's my only picture that presents me as a young man. It was taken in the fifties. It could have been taken in Walbrzych where I lived for 13 years after the war.

I was born in Radoszyce, on Zydowska Street, on 8th August 1921. My name is Chaim. Now it's Chaim Henryk. Even in my passport it's Chaim Henryk. They added the name Henryk in Canada. This was because I entered a new society, and it wasn't proper, maybe. I don't know. Perhaps so it would be easier to spell? In any case, now I use both names. For example, when I go to rehabilitation, they call me Henryk. But when I come to the Jewish Committee, they call me Chaim.

In my identity card it's written: mother Laja, father Chile. Anyway, Chaim is no different from Henry. And today no Jew is called what he used to be called.

I remember that on 9th May, or some other day, we were working in this dairy and they announced on the loudspeaker, in Russian, that the war was over. After all, we could speak Russian, and also Ukrainian. So that was it. Then they gave us an address, where we were to show up in Lwow, at a repatriation center. I went there, to Lwow, I remember this like it was today, and they told me that they'd let me know when it would be my year to be sent back to Poland, because they'd take people from different years separately. The war ended in 1945. And in 1946 we left Ukraine. We went back to Poland by train.

Some news from Poland did reach Siberia, but I didn't get anything, because nobody wrote to me and nobody knew where I was. But the guys, who received letters from home, read them to us. I didn't know what was happening to my family. I was sure that, because the family was so large, the ones in Radoszyce, and they were young people, like this cousin who had eleven sons, I thought that they were always so strong, so I thought that someone could have survived in hiding. I later met this Finkler, this son of our rabbi from Radoszyce, and I asked if he had seen someone from my family. He said that they weren't with them in the woods. I don't know how they died. When I left in 1939, they were still alive. I looked for them, but there was no one left. I don't know how come that there's no one left from the Ejnesmans or from the Tenenbaums. Where did they all go? When I came back from Russia, I went to Lodz and I found Chaim Tenenbaum's name on the list of surviving Jews. Uncle Szmul Aron's, my mother's brother's son. Before the war he had a store in Radoszyce, a house, he had everything. But I never found him. He had left - where, I don't know. So I didn't go back home. I went to Walbrzych.

I didn't choose to go to Walbrzych, they did [the repatriation committee]. They would send people to Wroclaw or to Walbrzych, but mostly to Walbrzych, because that city was empty, the Germans had left; at least we got an apartment. When someone would go to work in the mines, like I did, he'd get an apartment. I wanted to go to Lodz, but there were no apartments left, there was nothing, they asked, 'What will you do there?' I didn't meet anyone; I didn't see anyone. Yes, in Walbrzych you'd begin your life anew.