

Ferenc Deutsch After Coming Home From Forced Labor



This is me shortly after coming home from deportation.

I was taken to Sachsenhausen with the last transport in October 1944. In Sachsenhausen there was an international demonstration lager (camp) under the guidance of the Red Cross.

There we were together with POWs. They were not taken for work as we were. We were together in the barracks and they got a monthly parcel from the International Red Cross.

They shared the contents of the parcels among the ten people in the barracks. Every morning at five we were taken in closed train cars from Sachsenhausen to Oranienburg, to an aeroplane factory which belonged to a company called Henkel.

I was lucky, as I got into the engineers. I had to perforate plates, on what was called a vollmaschine, but I had no clue about it.

In February 1945, when the Allied Forces were getting closer, we received an order that the lager at Sachsenhausen had to be emptied.

We walked until Theresienstadt. We got to Theresienstadt at night on the first of May. Everybody was disinfected and we were given other clothes, which were fresh and clean.

For six days we were there doing nothing. I saw that we were in an area where families were together. They were all Czechs.

They had flats where there were small children, and parents and grandparents too. I was amazed. More than once, the Germans were shooting as they left and many died there in that lager.

I was liberated on the 8th of May, 1945. They wanted to take me from Theresienstadt to Sweden. All day long the loudspeaker said in all languages:

"Don't go back to those countries which expelled you." Very many went away, but I wanted to go home, because I did not know at the time what had happened to my wife, and I wanted to help the family.

The International Red Cross had an office there where we were given papers, as we had no documents at all. The papers were filled in according to one's declaration.

Everybody stated their name, age and the trade they wanted. I declared at least three trades. We were also given 800 Czech crowns. I stayed in Prague for some days on those 800 crowns to fortify myself a bit, then I left for Hungary.

I got to Rakospalota in July, 1945. I went to the house we had lived in, but did not find anybody there.

Then I went to the Bethlen Square, where I got a certificate stating that I'd been disinfected, and then I could get food and clothes.