

Ignac Neubauer With His Acquaintance



This is me, Ignaz Neubauer, on the left, beside me on a bicycle - a plumber from Uzhgorod, a Jew, whose surname was Preis. I stopped to talk with him in one of the streets in summer, when my colleague passing by photographed us. All I can say about Preis is that in 1943 he crossed the front to join the Russians and spent many years in a camp for the illegal crossing of the border. I don't have any information about what he did afterward. After his release from the camp he settled down somewhere in the Far East. His family perished during the Holocaust. My acquaintance, who photographed us, kept this photo, and he gave it to me after WWII in 1946.

I was born in Velke Kapusany on 2 March 1924. My Hungarian name was Ignac, and my Jewish name was Nuns-Laib. I finished school in 1938. We were poor and since I was the oldest son I had to support the family. I didn't have a profession, but I couldn't go to study since there was nobody to support the family through this time. I began to sell food products to Jewish families in Uzhgorod and soon I had my clients there. My mother kept poultry: chickens, ducks and geese. I bought eggs, chickens and veal from other villagers to sell them in Uzhgorod and later I also took my mother's poultry to sell there. So I earned our living. Of course, this was hard work, but we were not starving and managed to buy everything necessary for the family.

In 1938 Subcarpathia became Hungarian. persecution of Jews began, though we didn't suffer from it since it was directed on wealthier people. In 1939 anti-Jewish laws were issued. Jews were not allowed to study in higher educational institutions or serve in the army. This was open state-level anti-Semitism and they didn't even make an effort to camouflage it.

In 1944 placed a poster on the building of the village council announcing that all Jews were to come to the village council on Sunday. Our family, my mother's sisters with their families and grandfather Moishe, my mother's father, went there, too. We were taken to Uzhgorod on horse-

driven wagons. The ghetto in Uzhgorod was at the former brick factory. On 24 May 1944 we were ordered to gather near the gate to the ghetto. There was a train with open platforms for brick transportation taken to the spur and gendarmes ordered us to board those platforms. We arrived at Auschwitz.

My brothers and I tried to stay together. We lined up and marched to the Auschwitz work camp in 5-6 km from the central camp. There were big barracks with two-tier plank beds in them. We were given thin striped blankets from the same fabric as our robes. We were also given pieces of cloth with numbers imprinted on them. My camp number was 66. Then we began to go to work. We were to arrange road beds for construction of new roads: we did wood cutting and grubbing, grading with spades and placing gravel.

In January 1945 American troops began to attack. In late January evacuation of the camp began. There were 100 thousand of those who could walk. They shot all those who were weak and ill. We were starved and suffered from thirst. My brother Sandor died in this railcar. 9 days later we finally arrived at the Gleiwitz camp. I saw my brother Marton there. He was swollen and dark blue - it was horrifying to look at him. I, probably, looked no better. My brother and I went to a barrack. The next morning we were taken to a hospital barrack. Three days later my brother died in this barrack. I was recovering.