

Auschwitz in mid December 1944

Description

Floda says:

My Mother spent a few days and nights in Auschwitz in mid December 1944. She was a Ukrainian schoolteacher employed by the Wehrmacht as an interpreter. She worked with a small unit of older German 'soldiers' whose real task was to assess agricultural opportunities in Eastern Ukraine. In 1942 she married one of these men, a Lieutenant and my father. After an incident involving a young German killed by partisans while taking a Ukrainian girl for a moonlight ride on a motorbike, the CO of the unit, a Captain, shot himself as he was not able to take the obligatory retribution out on the Ten local men and boys in a community in which they had formed many friendships.

This left my father as CO, the soldiers had been agitating to retreat ever since the losses at Stalingrad. They left and all mechanized equipment was abandoned, including a Fieseler Storch aircraft but they took a herd of perhaps 100 Horses. It took them over a year to cross Ukraine and reach Germany's most Easterly Upper Silesia. At this point my parents decided to split up and meet again after the war at my Uncle's home in Halle an der Salle, near Berlin.

This left my mother, a stranger in a strange land and losing a terrible war with the whole World. She was 24 years of age and six months pregnant with yours truly. She joined up with other women Germans, all fleeing West as the Red army was now unstoppable. In late December 1944 on a freezing afternoon the group of about 25 women including about half a dozen Nuns came across an enormous 'Factory Complex' in a medium sized Township. It was clearly a Military facility as its Barbed wire and armed Guards in watch towers indicated. The Women were looking for a place to spend the night, it was snowing lightly and getting dark. Two of the Nuns approached a Guard who escorted them into one of the buildings leaving the others waiting outside

This was Auschwitz: Moments later a Nun beckoned the group to come inside. They were able only to stay for several days to give the elderly Nuns time to rest. In 1996 my family asked me to write 'granny's story' so I 'interviewed' her in Moss Vale, about an hour south of Sydney, New South Wales. She was 76 and sharp as a tack:

I asked her what she remembered, what was the mood of people, where she slept, what they ate etc.

Her recall was of a boring place which everybody wanted to leave. She described the SS Guards as old men, some stooped with arthritis but very courteous and delighted to have the Nuns (in particular) in their company so close to Christmas. She remembered having evening meals of Pea and ham soup at a large rectangular table. She also said she had swapped a fine pair of leather boots with a woman there for a Vienna loaf of bread. She was not able to describe the woman. I asked her if she remembered seeing Jewish people there. She said she cannot recall seeing any Jews but that's not to say there were none there.

I asked her if any talk of Germany's imminent defeat was permitted, she gave an odd (but

understandable) reply: 'All the SS men firmly believed the war would end like the first World war, with a laying down of arms on both sides'. That surprised me, poor guys may all have been shot just weeks later. Her overriding memory of it was simply everyone there wanted to go home.

Of course I asked her the most obvious question: She said 'Look we were about 25 women, some highly educated, one was a doctor, women talk. We were in no way restricted as to our movement or to whom we could speak, we spent several days and nights there but the SS men insisted we could not stay longer. Not one of us saw or heard anything which would have made us suspect there was something sinister about the place. It was an ordinary work place, they made things.

Before leaving the Auschwitz KZ Lager the SS Guards solemnly warned the Women to avoid taking shelter in Barns or Stables as epidemics of 'Fleck Fieber,' aka Spotted Typhus were common in Winter and had caused the deaths many hundreds of person in the Camp/Factory including members of the SS Families.

I was born three months later in March 1945 in a Town named 'Konigshutte' not more than 15 or so Kilometers North west of Auschwitz. The name means the 'King's small house'. A week after my arrival the Hospital I was born in was destroyed by Russian Bombers. My mother was rooming with an elderly German couple who were ordered by Polish authorities to vacate their house forthwith. They owned a small sedan and offered my mother a ride to my Uncle's place near Berlin. She declined and commenced an epic journey, again on foot but with me in a pram and towing a cart with some belongings which are with me to this day.

I've heard this story all my life. My mother passed at age 94, she was a tough and resourceful person I am completely convinced the entire gas-chamber part of the holocaust legend is a monstrous fabrication to justify the existence of Israel. Jews suffered in WW2, just like everyone else.