The Perkal Brothers - Bespoke Shoemakers of Surry Hills

John Walter Ross

“Retire? You should never retire!”

Morris Perkal

Cover photograph:
Morris and Adam Perkal, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 October 2012.

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Foreword

When Adam and Morris Perkal were growing up in their large family in a small town in Poland, they had a comfortable and peaceful life in the large Jewish community. Until the seventh grade, they went to school every morning and received an orthodox Jewish education in the afternoon. After that, they were apprenticed to a local shoemaker. As teenagers, they attended high school in the next town and joined the Betar Zionist organisation, which also provided a social life. Adam's future wife Raya Ferder also had a happy upbringing in Vilna, in present day Lithuania.

This peaceful life was suddenly shattered in September 1939 when German armed forces marched into Poland, starting World War Two and the Holocaust. Aerial bombardment of their town killed their mother and youngest brother, and the two brothers tried to escape the destruction by crossing into the Soviet part of the country. Only Morris was successful, and he eventually reached the Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan as an evacuee in early 1942. He worked as a shoemaker in the Soviet Union for the rest of the war.

Adam returned to the family in Warsaw. In 1941 they were sent to the Warsaw ghetto, but Adam had obtained the papers of an ethnic German Pole and could live outside the ghetto and smuggle food in to keep the family alive. After a while, Adam moved the family into the more open ghetto in Grojec where they had relatives. When this ghetto was closed, Adam took his father's advice and went to Germany to work there and try to survive the war.

Raya and her family were taken to the Vilna ghetto in 1941, and when the ghetto was liquidated in 1943, they went to a number of concentration camps in Latvia until Soviet troops were approaching. The Germans made them walk to Bromberg, but they managed to escape and were taken in by a farmer until the Russians liberated them in April 1945. Adam worked in Germany, passing himself off as an ethnic German Pole until he was arrested by the Gestapo in 1944. He spent the rest of the war in three concentration camps in Austria before being liberated by American troops in May 1945.

After the war, Adam and Raya made their separate ways to displaced persons camps near Rome, where they met in 1945. They were married in 1947, and migrated to Australia via the United States. By this time, Morris had returned from the Soviet Union and had located their eldest brother Paul living in Munich. Morris and Paul migrated to Australia in 1948 and met Adam on arrival. It was a happy reunion that felt like a miracle. The brothers soon found work designing and making shoes, and in 1954 they started working together in a partnership that would last the rest of their lives.

The Perkal brothers attracted many famous customers to their shop in Sydney's Haymarket. Their best customer was the media tycoon Kerry Packer, who ordered polo boots every month for over thirty years. Despite their celebrity clients, their greatest satisfaction was making surgical shoes for disabled people, helping them walk again.

In 1995, they moved to Surry Hills and continued the craft of bespoke shoemaking, despite the gradual winding down of the leather industry and the lack of apprentices willing to stay in the trade. Their customers remained loyal, and they had no intention of retiring. They were doing what they loved, and they felt healthy and happy working in the shop. Their story is an inspiring one, and deserves to be told.

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Early life

Poland until the twentieth century

History

The Perkal family lived in a country located almost exactly in the centre of Europe, if the European part of the former Soviet Union is included. Its central location means that it has borders with many countries. These have changed throughout its history, but at present it is bound on the west by Germany, on the south by the Czech Republic and Slovakia, on the east by Ukraine and Belarus, and on the north by Lithuania and the Baltic Sea. With a population of over 38 million, it has the sixth biggest population in the European Union and the biggest post-communist member.

The Polish state can be traced back to 966 AD, when the ruler Mieszko I converted to Christianity. Poland has been both amalgamated and taken apart several times since. In 1569, it combined with the neighbouring Grand Duchy of Lithuania to form the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Then in 1795 it was carved up between Germany, the Russian Empire and Austria. This temporarily wiped Poland off the map of Europe until the end of World War I when its independence was regained.

Figure 1 Mieszko of Poland

Economy

For hundreds of years, most of Poland's population remained rural. But in the nineteenth century, urban settlements grew rapidly and people migrated from the poverty of farming life to the jobs of the new industries in the towns. This was a trend right across Europe during the Industrial Revolution.

Poland is relatively abundant in natural resources, especially coal, sulphur, copper and natural gas. Large-scale mining of coal in Upper Silesia began in the nineteenth century. This has given the country a cheap and reliable source of power to drive its economic expansion.

Mszczonów

The small town where the Perkal family lived is 48 kilometres south-west of Warsaw and has a population of about 6,000. Since 1245 it has been destroyed a number of times: in the Polish-Swedish war in 1660, then by fire in 1862, when only 30 of the 203 houses survived.

A Jewish community started to grow in the town in the early eighteenth century, and the town became a stronghold of Hasidism. As was common in Europe, limitations were placed on Jews, such as where they could live and what work they could do. By 1872, the town was blooming again, because of the amount of industry: two breweries, a distillery, three tanneries, and factories making matches, vinegar and tiles. The Jewish population contributed greatly to the development of local trade.

The city suffered in World War I, with the number of citizens being reduced from 7000 in 1910 to 5000 in 1921. At the start of World War II, the number of Jews in the city was estimated at 2,000[1].

Żyrardów

The larger town where the Perkal children went to high school is 11 kilometres north-west of Mszczonów. Founded as a settlement for workers at a textile factory in 1833, Żyrardów developed during the nineteenth century into a significant textile mill city. The population at present is more than 40,000[2].

The Jewish history of Poland

History

The history of the Jews in Poland dates back over a thousand years, and for centuries Poland was home to one of the largest and most significant Jewish communities in the world. The country was the centre of Jewish culture because of a long period of official religious tolerance and social independence. However, this ended with the partitions of Poland that began in 1772, especially with the discrimination against Jews in the Russian Empire.

During the early period from 1025 to 1569, Poland was the most tolerant country in Europe, and became known as Paradise for the Jews. It became a shelter for persecuted and expelled European Jewish communities. Some three-quarters of the world's Jews lived in Poland by the middle of the 16th century. The early Jews in Poland were recognised by the rulers for their usefulness in the development of commercial interests in the country, and in time they formed the backbone of the economy.

By the start of World War II, Jews made up approximately 10% of Poland's population, mainly centred in the towns and cities. Vilna (now Vilnius in Lithuania) was almost half Jewish. One-third of Warsaw's population was Jewish, a total of 375,000. Only New York City had more Jewish residents than Warsaw[3].

Jews were mainly employed in manufacturing and commerce. In many areas, the majority of retail businesses were owned by Jews, who were sometimes among the wealthiest members of their communities. Many Jews worked as shoemakers and tailors, and the professions: doctors (half of all doctors in Poland), journalists and lawyers.

Hasidism

A new fervent brand of Orthodox Judaism was founded in Poland in the early eighteenth century by Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760), and became known as Hasidism. It promotes spirituality through Jewish mysticism as the fundamental aspect of the faith.

Figure 2 Baal Shem Tov

The rise of Hasidism followed a period of turbulence in Poland in the seventeenth century, after which a kind of frontier environment encouraged new people and new ideas. This created a favourable field for mystical movements. Each Hasidic dynasty follows its own principles, so Hasidism is not one movement but a collection of separate groups with shared features. Common among individual Hasidic groups are the underlying philosophy, worship practices, dress and songs.

The Perkal brothers were brought up as followers of Ger Hasidism, a Hasidic dynasty originating in Ger, a small town in eastern Poland. There were in excess of 100,000 followers prior to World War II, making it one of the largest Hasidic groups in Poland[4].

Hasidism in Mszczonów

Jews began to settle in the Perkal family's town in the early eighteenth century. In 1763, a Jewish cemetery was established outside the town and a synagogue next to the cemetery. A local dynasty of tzaddiks (Hasidic spiritual leaders) was established in the town in the nineteenth century, making it a well-known centre of Hasidic activity. By 1921, when the Perkal brothers were coming into the world, the Jewish population was 2,188, making up almost half of the town[5].

Anti-Semitism in Poland

With the weakening of the Commonwealth with Lithuania and the growing religious strife in Europe caused by the Protestant Reformation, Poland's traditional tolerance of Jews began to wane from the seventeenth century onwards. From this time, Polish Jews were subject to the laws of the partitioning powers, which included the increasingly anti-Semitic Russian Empire.

When Poland emerged from World War I with its independence restored, the Jewish population was over three million and the country was the centre of the European Jewish world. But anti-Semitism was a growing problem, both from the government and the general population. Many Polish Jews had a separate culture and ethnic identity from Catholic Poles. During the period between the World Wars, only about 10% of Polish Jews could be considered assimilated into Polish society[6].

After World War I, several hundred thousand Jewish refugees entered Poland from the Ukraine and Russia, escaping persecution. The economic instability caused by this large population increase was mirrored by anti-Jewish sentiment in some of the media, as well as discrimination, exclusion, and anti-Jewish squads associated with some right-wing political parties. This reflected the attitude to Jews in other parts of Europe at that time.

The Applebaum family in England

Jacob David Applebaum (1878-1964), the maternal uncle of the Perkal brothers, was sent from Mszczonów to England in 1905 to avoid being conscripted into the Russian army when the Russian-Japanese War broke out. Under Russian law, Jewish communities were required to provide a certain quota of conscripts for the army, and more in times of war. These conscripts could be called up from 12 years old and would serve 25 years in the army[7]. Jacob was the first member of the Applebaum family to leave Poland. He settled in Liverpool and started a business as a stationer, under the name The Novelty Postcard Company[8].

Figure 3 Ludwik Zamenhof

Jacob Applebaum became very interested in Esperanto, and tried to introduce it as a living language while he was in England. Esperanto was developed as an easy-to-learn language that would transcend nationality and foster peace and understanding between people who would otherwise be unable to communicate with each other. Ludwik Zamenhof (1859-1917), a Polish Jew from Bialystok, published the first book outlining Esperanto in 1887. Jacob became the

President of the English Esperantist Society, and published a number of works in the language: four songs for children, poetry, and a musical play based on the life of the Biblical figure Joseph.

Figure 4 Morris Applebaum

Jacob was followed to England by his younger brothers Arthur John (1885-1955) and Morris (1887-1931). Morris arrived in England in about 1907 and became a renowned painter. He studied at the London Art Academy in 1914 and had his first exhibition in 1918. He was particularly interested in depicting life in the Jewish Quarter in Whitechapel as well as English labourers and sailors he met in local pubs. Morris returned to Poland in 1920, and in 1925 he collaborated with the painter Szmul Cygler and sculptor Chaim Hanft to decorate the whole of the interior of the Great Synagogue of Bedzin in the south of the country. Relying on old designs of wall paintings from the Renaissance era, they completed this large artistic masterpiece.

Morris was responsible for the relief that covered the entire Eastern Wall. The decoration of the synagogue was a great success, and was hailed in the Jewish Press in Poland as an example that Warsaw, Łódź and other cities should follow. The painted synagogue became the main attraction for visitors in Bedzin. Sadly, the synagogue was burned down on 8th September 1939 by invading German forces, and some 200 people died in the synagogue and nearby houses. He settled in nearby Katowice and painted the hardships of Jewish coal miners until his early death in January 1931[9].

Figure 5 Bedzin Synagogue - Eastern wall

Applebaums move to Australia

In 1912, their maternal uncle Arthur John Applebaum moved from England to Australia. He settled in Wollongong, the third largest city in New South Wales, located 80 kilometres south of Sydney. In 1913 he married a Christian woman, Lily Hielman[10]. In 1918, he was an insurance agent[11], but by the time Adam and Morris Perkal migrated to Australia, he was a baker and pastry cook[12]. The Applebaums were active in the local community. Arthur was the President and patron of the Wollongong Surf Lifesaving Club[13] and was an official of the Wollongong Baseball Club[14]. Lily was the President of the Wollongong section of the National Council for Jewish Women[15].

Figure 6 A J Applebaum (right), TAA, 1948

Their first son, Alexander Joseph was born in 1914. He enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II, and remained with airlines after the war. In the late 1940s, he was

the Sales and Agency Manager for Trans-Australian Airlines, the national carrier. Then from 1950 he worked for the New Zealand airline TEAL (Tasman Empire Airways Limited), as the Public Relations and Sales Representative. This airline eventually became Air New Zealand. In 1959, Alexander Applebaum was appointed sales manager of Swissair for Australia and New Zealand[16]. In 1971 he collapsed and died at a barbeque at Huskisson being given by his father for the head of the airline who was visiting from Switzerland.

Figure 7 Gershan Tetelbaum

Then in 1928, their maternal aunt Pearl and her husband Gershan Henoch Tetelbaum migrated from Warsaw to Sydney. The Tetelbaums settled in Newtown, in the inner west of Sydney, and lived next to the Newtown Synagogue, where Gershan was the Reader and acting Rabbi, standing in for Rabbi Israel Rabinovitch when required.

Figure 8 Pearl Tetelbaum, 1950

He was also the acting Rabbi in the Great Synagogue in Sydney. The Perkal family had received permits to migrate to Australia in 1929, but the youngest son had recently been born, so they decided to stay in Poland. They were also approached by Samuel Wynn of Wynn's Wines in 1939 just before the war to move to Australia. Samuel Wynn (1891-1982) was their father's second cousin, born Shlomo Weitraub in Uścimów, eastern Poland and a resident of Melbourne since 1913.

Figure 9 Samuel Wynn

An orthodox upbringing in Mszczonów

Early life

Figure 10 Azriel Perkal, 1935

The Perkal children were born in Mszczonów and were raised in an orthodox Jewish family. Their parents regularly took them to the synagogue. The father was a Ger Hasidic, and in their large home there was a room dedicated as a Gera Shtiebel, or prayer room, for followers of Hasidism. Jewish education for some of the Hasidic children in their area was conducted in this room, and on Friday night and Saturday there were services there. All festivals such as Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah were celebrated in this room.

They went to school from 8am to 1pm, and then went home for lunch. Until to the seventh grade, they went to the cheder (or heder) for an orthodox Jewish education in the afternoons. At the cheder, they learnt the Tanakh and Gemara (Torah and Talmud).

Their town had three synagogues: one had a famous Hasidic rabbi, and people used to come to Jewish festivals from all over the world. The other two synagogues were for Ashkenazim and Sephardim. At home, they only spoke Yiddish, but they spoke Polish at school. Adam spoke English, Yiddish, Polish, Italian, German, and could understand Slavic languages.

When Adam turned thirteen, he started going in the afternoons to a man who designed shoes to learn this trade. For the first two years, his father had to pay for Adam's training. It wasn't like in Australia, where apprentices get paid straight away. The only benefit they gained from the boss was a pair of shoes for Christmas and a pair of shoes for Easter. It wasn't shoemaking, it was shoe designing. Adam started this because he liked designing. He was also an artist, a painter.

Figure 11 Esther Perkal, 1930

They had the biggest haberdashery shop in town, catering for weddings, funerals and even sold perfume. They had to sell everything, because people would come in from the surrounding villages to buy all their necessities. Thursday was market day in town, and people would come in from 50 kilometres away. They used to park their horses and wagons in the large back yard behind the shop. The children's job was to guard the goods against theft, as the shop was always packed on market days. Unfortunately, their father was never well - he had asthma and was a heavy smoker. The mother ran the business, and the eldest sister Feiga managed the home.

Their town just had a public elementary school up to grade seven, like second year high school in Australia. After that, they went to high school in the larger town of Żyrardów, 11 kilometres from Mszczonów. But they couldn't go in winter, as there was no transport. There was only one motor vehicle in town before the war, and the horse-drawn carriages that took passengers from town to town couldn't operate in the winter snow. When Morris was a boy he made a crystal radio set, the only one in the village.

They used to ride bicycles 11 kilometres to Żyrardów, through 4 kilometres of forest. They were not afraid in the forest, but when they went swimming, the Poles used to abuse them or throw stones at them and let down their tyres so they had to walk back. Some of these were even their fellow pupils at school. Outside the school, they behaved very badly to them and were very anti-Semitic. But there was no anti-Semitism in the school, as the Poles were less than half the students. The Jewish children were always scholastically better than the Poles, who mainly came from the little villages around, and Adam thought that was the source of the jealousy.

The Perkal children read a lot of Jewish books in Yiddish, such as Tolstoy and other authors, and also Polish books. Their town had no hospital, only a Polish doctor, and a Jewish doctor who came from Warsaw three times a week. Anyone who needed urgent medical attention had to be taken to the hospital in Warsaw. Most of the workers in their town were artisans: making clothes and shoes or blacksmiths. Very few were well off. There was a chevra kadisha (see Glossary), and a Jewish cemetery. Their rabbi was Yosef Kalish, whose son became the rabbi of Żyrardów.

Zionism before the war

After they left school, they could join Zionist organisations such as Betar, which advocated the formation of a Jewish nation. Adam joined Betar and became the youngest commandant in their town. The members had parties on Friday and Saturday nights, and sang Zionist songs. That was their entertainment in those days.

Figure 12 Vladimir Jabotinsky

Adam heard Rabbi Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of Betar, speak in Warsaw in 1939. His speech was called *The Last Hour*. He warned the Jews to get out of Poland and go to Palestine, even illegally, because he was a visionary and could see that the Holocaust would be on them soon. He believed in fighting, even against the English, to get the Jews out of Poland. Before Jabotinsky's speech that day, a few thousand Betar from all over Poland marched from the centre of the city to the biggest theatre in Warsaw. Adam was on the podium next to the speaker with Menachem Begin, who was also a Betar commandant.

Adam and Morris were planning to migrate to Palestine in 1939. It was arranged that they would go through Romania, but the war broke out, and it was too late to leave.

Relations with non-Jews before the war

Polish Jews were concerned about the rise of Nazism but didn't take much notice until the annexation of the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia in 1938. After this, Jews in Austria and France started to panic, but it was too late by then. In 1939, relations with non-Jews in Mszczonów and Żyrardów were not too bad, because everyone knew each other. Their Christian school friends were very polite with them, but in the countryside the boys on farms used to call them names and they had some fights with them.

The Endeka (the National Democratic Party), the Nazi Party and other right-wingers sensed that war was coming, so they started demonstrations and put signs in Jewish shops telling people not to buy goods from the Jews. But in Mszczonów all the stores except a Polish-owned restaurant were Jewish-owned, and there was tolerance right until the war broke out. The Endekas never demonstrated there, and the Jews were friendly with their Polish neighbours. The Jewish shops put Jewish names above the door.

Anti-Semitism in the media

They used to listen to news on the few radios in Mszczonów. They had local Jewish newspapers, and there was a Jewish daily paper from Warsaw. The Jewish papers disclosed the anti-Semitism in Poland, and reported that before the war the Polish government wanted to stop kosher meat slaughtering.

There were more anti-Semitic things written after the death of Marshal Pilsudski in May 1935. He was the Polish leader from 1926 to 1935 who was tolerant of Jews and other ethnic groups.

Anti-Semitic remarks were made in the upper house of the Polish Parliament. The right-wing papers were very anti-Semitic. Anti-Jewish posters were put up in Warsaw, and in Żyrardów, the next town. Jews were stereotyped as long-nosed bankers who were planning to dominate the world as money lenders.

A middle class upbringing in Vilna

Figure 13 Malka and Fishel Ferder

Adam's future wife was born as Raya Ferder in 1929 and grew up in Vilna, in the north of Poland (now called Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania). Her father Fishel ran a tannery with branches throughout Poland, and her mother Malka ran the home. Raya had two sisters, Feiga (born in c1919) and Sonia (born in 1923), and a brother Akiva (born in c1921). They all went to a private school in Vilna, and spoke Polish, not Lithuanian. They had a very good life before the war. But her sisters were warned about anti- Semitic attacks by students who were members of the right-wing Endeka party. Otherwise their life was normal. Her mother's whole family was in the United States, and they had permits to go there to live as well, but her father didn't want to go.

Figure 14 Feiga, Raya and Fishel Ferder

There was a very active Jewish community in Vilna, but they weren't as orthodox as in Galicia. Vilna was called the Jerusalem of Lithuania. There was a very large Jewish population in Vilna, with two Jewish high schools and quite a few synagogues. Her mother kept a kosher home, as she was more traditional, but her father wasn't. Her father only went to the synagogue on the big holidays, and she used to play outside. This was the Great Synagogue, in Zydu Street (Jewish Street).

The Russians occupied Vilna at the outbreak of the war in September 1939, and they handed the city over to the Lithuanians in October. But when the Lithuanians came into Vilna, they started a pogrom. Raya was in school, and couldn't be picked up as you couldn't walk in the streets, and they were throwing bedding and things out of the windows. She saw this happening and it was frightening. The Russians took Vilna back from the Lithuanians in August 1940 because of that. After the Russians occupied Vilna, they had to go to a district school. Under the Russians, they were encouraged in school to spy on the parents, to find out what they were talking about and report back to the teachers.

If your parents were workers, you became a Young Pioneer, or joined Komsomol and other Communist groups. Her father was not a labourer, and she was very unhappy she didn't get a red tie like the Pioneers. Eventually, she was given one as she did very well at school. They probably had rations under the Russians, but there was enough to eat at home. But things got worse as soon as the Germans occupied Vilna in June 1941.

Figure 15 Young Pioneer uniform

The rise of Nazism

The aftermath of World War I

Redrawing the map of Europe

The end of World War I in November 1918 saw drastic change across Europe, politically, socially and culturally. By 1920 the war came to an official end with the signing of various peace treaties, mainly the Treaty of Versailles. Four empires collapsed during the war: the German, Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Old countries were abolished, new ones were formed and boundaries were redrawn based on agreements reached between the Allied powers.

Austria, Hungary, Romania were redrawn, while Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia came into being as new sovereign states. The new and altered states of the eastern part of Europe all had large national minorities from other states. Millions of Germans found themselves living as minorities in the new states, and one third of ethnic Hungarians found themselves living outside Hungary. The inability to redraw the map of Europe along ethnic lines was to plague the lives of many people and would be one of the drivers of the next World War. The tremendous economic disruption caused by the war created great hardship in many areas of Europe.

One significant post-war affect was that both Germany and the United Kingdom brought in near-universal suffrage, turning them into large electoral democracies for the first time. In the German federal election of 1919, there was proportional representation, voting by women, and for the first time a free and fair all-German election.

German discontent

The one-sided Treaty of Versailles drafted by the victors placed the entire blame for the war on Germany, something that was never accepted by German nationalists. Germany was forced to pay 132 billion marks in reparations (roughly $32 billion), a truly astronomical amount designed to keep the German economy from growing (it was finally paid off in 2010). The Treaty was followed by hyperinflation between 1921 and 1923 when the German government began printing large amounts of money to try and pay its debts.

Under the Treaty, parts of German territory were transferred to other countries: small amounts to Denmark, Czechoslovakia and Belgium, a larger amount to France, and the greatest amount to a re-established Poland. Germany's overseas colonies were taken over by different Allied countries. One distant beneficiary of this colonial carve-up was Australia, which took over the administration of German New Guinea, combining it with British Papua to form the present Papua New Guinea.

But it was the loss of territory to the newly-independent Poland, including the port city of Danzig, which caused the greatest outrage among German citizens. Most Germans thought the Treaty was unfair, and many never accepted the new boundaries as legitimate. This discontent would later be fed by Nazi propaganda and contributed to the support given to Adolf Hitler, who spoke out about the treaty's conditions. In the late 1930s he began to take action against them.

The Great Depression and the election of Hitler

Global economic slump

The Roaring Twenties, the decade that followed World War I, was a period of wealth and excess. But the decade from 1930 saw the world experience a severe economic depression, originating in the United States with the stock market crash of October 1929. Speculation on the market had been widespread, and in the nine-year period from 1920, the stock market had increased ten-fold. It couldn't last, and the collapse was swift and severe.

Both rich and poor countries were devastated by the economic slump that followed. International trade plunged by more than 50% and unemployment rose to 33% in some countries. Cities around the world that relied on heavy industry were hit the hardest. Construction in many countries was virtually halted. Germany was hit hard during the Depression, as the American government stopped the loans that were helping rebuild the German economy. Unemployment soared to nearly 30% by 1932, especially in larger cities.

The Nazi Party comes to power

During the Depression, the German political system veered toward extremism. The widespread hardship bolstered support for both the Nazi and Communist parties. Following the German general election of 1932, the Nazi party doubled its representation to become the largest party in parliament, but without a majority. The two anti-democratic parties, the Nazi and Communist parties would have formed a combined majority, but they would never become allies. Adolph Hitler had led the Nazi party since 1921.

Germany limped along with a minority government until new elections were called at the end of 1932, then again in March 1933. By then, Hitler was installed as Chancellor of Germany, and there were no more multi-party elections in Germany until the end of World War II. The period from 1933 to 1945 was called the Third Reich, and during this time, Germany was transformed into a fascist totalitarian state which controlled nearly all aspects of its citizens' lives.

In the midst of the Great Depression, the Nazis restored economic stability and ended mass unemployment by spending heavily on the military and establishing a mixed economy. Extensive public works were undertaken, including building the autobahns (as much for rearmament purposes as anything), and the return to stability boosted the Nazi regime's popularity. But while this beneficial economic stability was happening, the other face of Nazism was emerging in strongly racist, especially anti-Semitic, policies. The idea of the master race emerged, epitomised by Aryanism, represented by the Germanic people.

Jews and others deemed undesirable or not fitting the Aryan ideal were persecuted or murdered. In addition, all opposition was ruthlessly suppressed, with members of liberal, socialist or communist opposition killed, imprisoned or exiled. The Minister for Propaganda Joseph Goebbels controlled public opinion with films, mass rallies and Hitler's hypnotizing oratory. Meanwhile Germany was re-arming and building up its military, which the Allies had forced it to dismantle in 1918.

The path to World War II

Towards German self-sufficiency

In the late 1930s, the Nazis made increasingly aggressive territorial demands, threatening war if they were not met. Austria and Czechoslovakia were seized in 1938 and 1939. Germany's main goal in World War I had been to gain sufficient land for Germany to become self-sufficient for its large densely-packed population. They intended only a limited war to open up expansion to the east to achieve this. But when the war expanded to the Western Front, the British and French blockade of Germany caused an epidemic of chronic malnutrition, because of Germany's dependence on outside resources.

The carve-up of Germany by the Allies after World War I made it even more dependent on Allied food imports, and one of Hitler's basic objectives was to show that the issue of land, resources and population distribution was far from settled. For access to some foods, he would invade the farmlands of Denmark to the north and France to the west. For more living space, he would turn to the east, to Poland, Ukraine and Russia.

Eliminating non-Aryan minorities

Hitler's long-term intentions were outlined in *Mein Kampf*, the book he began writing in prison in 1923. In this, he made it clear that local populations would not be incorporated into the Third Reich, but would either work as slave labour on German-run farms, or would be eliminated if they were "rootless" Jews and gypsies, who he saw as historic threats to the land-based Germanic farmer of ancient legend. In achieving this, Hitler saw the SS as a vanguard of racial purity sweeping eastwards, conquering land for the German farmer to colonise and provide self-sufficiency for the German people. So anti-Semitism was an important part of Hitler's political program.

The Nazis brought in the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, which greatly restricted the rights of Jews as Germans. The laws prohibited inter-racial marriages, restricted property rights and barred Jews from the civil service, universities, and all professional and managerial positions. The night of 9 November 1935 became known as Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass), a pogrom in which 7,500 Jewish-owned businesses were looted and destroyed, 260 synagogues were burned, and more than 30,000 Jews were sent to the newly-established concentration camps[17].

Germany marches into disputed territories

Hitler's rearmament plan was that by 1937 Germany would have a standing army of 300,000, organised into 21 divisions, which could be increased to 63 divisions in wartime to defend Germany. Between 1938 and 1939, offensive capability would be added, thus setting in motion a timetable for Hitler's aggressive intentions towards Germany's neighbours.

An Allied policy of appeasement was aimed at giving Hitler a little of what he wanted in order to avoid another World War. In March 1936, Hitler sent troops into the Rhineland, reoccupying it after French troops had temporarily moved out. The lack of French resistance to the re-occupation of the Rhineland convinced Hitler that the Allies lacked the political will to resist him, and he was emboldened to push further. He turned his attention to is next goal, reunifying all Germanic Europeans. In 1938, German troops cross the border into Austria to combine the two countries together. The bloodless coup was legitimised with a contrived referendum organised

by the Austrian Nazi party, who claimed that 99.73% of Austrian people supported the creation of a "Greater Germany"[18].

Next in Hitler's sights was the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. Many of its citizens were German speakers who supported amalgamation with Germany. Czechoslovakia would not resist Germany without French or British help. France was unprepared for war, and British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain still thought Hitler could be appeased by handing over the Sudetenland with its German-speaking majority. But the end result was that in 1938 the German army entered Prague itself and occupied the whole of Czechoslovakia, meeting no resistance.

Hitler and Stalin: with friends like these…

But Hitler wasn't finished with his territorial ambitions. He wanted part of Poland back, but he also wanted to keep the Soviet Union on side for reasons of trade. So the Soviets and Germans entered into secret negotiations (conducted by their foreign ministers Vyacheslav Molotov and Joachim von Ribbentrop) and signed a non-aggression pact in August 1939. Publicly, this pact declared that the two countries would be allies in any coming conflict, but secretly it also divided up Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland into Nazi and Soviet partitions. The scene was set for Hitler's biggest move, the launching of a war to the east[19].

World War Two

The short battle for Poland

German and Soviet occupation

Poland had signed the Anglo-Polish military treaty with the United Kingdom and France in March 1939, which was meant to ensure that it would receive their support if it was threatened by Germany. But the British government had adopted a conciliatory approach to the Nazi government. So Hitler thought there was little chance the Western allies would declare war on Germany if he invaded Poland, and if they did, they would be willing to negotiate a compromise favouring Germany. One week after signing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, German armed forces rolled into Poland from the north, south and west on 1 September, 1939, supported by a massive aerial bombardment of Polish towns and cities. The Soviet Union invaded Poland from the east on 17 September.

These actions signalled the start of World War II in Europe. The Polish army defended the borders as well as it could, but was unable to match the superior German manpower, mobility and control of the air. When the Soviets attacked on a second front, Polish forces were forced to withdraw to neutral Romania. France and the United Kingdom declared war on Germany on 3 September, but despite their pact to provide support, in the end their aid to Poland was very limited. The battle for Poland ended on 6 October with Germany and the Soviet Union dividing up the country.

None of the participants – neither Germany, the Soviet Union nor the Western Allies – expected at this point that the invasion of Poland would lead to a war that would surpass World War I in scale and cost, both human and material. Combined with the Pacific War in 1941, the cataclysm known as World War II was about to unfold.

The effect on the Perkal family

On a Friday morning on 1 September 1939, the German bombers came over Mszczonów. They bombed the whole town, killing three people. The Jewish population ran out of the town into the small forest next to the cemetery. A communiqué on the radio announced that all young men had to go to Warsaw to join the army due to the German invasion. That night, their parents said to Adam and Morris that they would be drafted into the Polish army, so they should go to Warsaw.

Adam and Morris walked all night and arrived in Warsaw in the morning. They were in Warsaw until the end of September, and it was hell – they were bombed every morning and every night by planes and artillery. The oldest brother Paul had been living in Łódź, and he went to Warsaw during the bombardment and joined them. The bombing stopped at the end of September when the Germans occupied Warsaw.

The whole of their town was bombed and burned during September 1939, and nobody was left in the town. Before the war in Poland ended, their father, brother and sisters walked 40 kilometres to Grojec to stay with their married sister Feiga Hoffman. Not one house was left in the town, and their store and home were burned to the ground, so they couldn't salvage anything.

Adam, Morris and Paul walked back to their town from Warsaw, but when they were about four kilometres from the town, a peasant woman came over to them, started crying and told them that their mother and youngest brother were burned alive when the Germans bombed the synagogue during Yom Kippur (23 September). Another 35 people were also killed there. Adam and Morris went to Grojec to join the rest of the family. Paul went with them for a while, but then returned to Łódź, because his wife and son were there.

Life in Grojec

The Perkal family opened a little shop in Grojec, and this provided them with an income while they were there. Adam taught himself to repair bicycles, and he made some money doing this. Adam stayed in Grojec until the end of 1940, when the Warsaw ghetto opened. At that time, all the Jewish people from the towns around Warsaw were taken to the ghetto. By them, Adam had obtained a birth certificate identifying him as a Volksdeutscher, an ethnic German born in Poland. His false name was Marian Zelewski.

Adam was given his false papers in Warsaw by the father of a boy who died in the German bombardment of 1939 in Warsaw. The boy had gone to school with Adam, and his father was the caretaker of the building where Adam was living, so Adam knew the whole family quite well. The papers were authentic, and his death wasn't officially registered because of the disruption caused by the war, so Adam could use them as if they were his own.

When the Germans started taking people to ghettos late in 1940, Adam and Morris decided to go to the Russian-occupied part of Poland, to get away from the Germans. The nearest border between the German side and the Russian side of Poland was the Bug River, but when they got there, they weren't allowed through. They stayed at the border overnight, and in the morning, they returned to Warsaw. But on the bridge into the city, Adam said that he wanted to stay with his father and the sisters, but that Morris should go to Russia if he could get through the border.

Morris decided to try again to cross the border. He took the train to the Russian-Polish border, and smuggled himself over to the Russian side by going through the countryside, which was covered in snow, crawling through bushes. Other people with money who tried to cross at the border were sent back by the Russians. Morris didn't have money, so he made his own way across the country, and in this way he got across the border.

By that time, the rest of the family had been sent to the Warsaw ghetto, but Adam's false papers meant that he would be able to live outside the ghetto and help the family from there.

The Ghettos

Keeping the Jews together

As the war progressed, the German government became frustrated with its inability to get rid of the Jews from Germany and its occupied territories. They decided to designate areas of the larger Polish towns and cities as exclusively Jewish and to move all Jews from their homes to these areas, pending other solutions. The Nazis wanted to keep them close together so that they could exploit their labour, send them to concentration camps, or simply exterminate them by

one means or another. For the Germans, there were always too many Jews, and as the war gradually turned against them, German policies reflected this attitude more and more.

Warsaw ghetto

The Warsaw ghetto was established in the heart of the city in October 1940, and over 400,000 Jewish people from the city and surrounds were crammed into a small area of 3.4 square kilometres. The ghetto held 30% of Warsaw's population in 2.4% of its area, and was the largest ghetto in Europe. Because it was marked out in the existing Jewish part of the city, it contained a cemetery, a synagogue and a theatre.

Figure 16 Warsaw Ghetto, May 1941

Trams ran through the ghetto from the outside. By November 1940, the ghetto was closed to the outside world with a three metre barbed wire fence. The gates were guarded by a Polish policeman on the outside and a German gendarme on the inside.

The death toll among Jewish inhabitants of the ghetto, between deportations to extermination camps, the uprising, the mass deportations to the Treblinka extermination camp and the eventual destruction of the ghetto, was at least 300,000. Over 100,000 residents died because of rampant disease, starvation, or random killings, even before the massive deportations started. Surviving the ghetto took a great deal of luck, or an early escape before your luck ran out.

The residents had been told that the deportations were "resettlements" to other places, but by the end of 1942, it was clear that they were being sent to their deaths. Many of the remaining Jews decided to fight the Nazis. In January, 1943, about four months after the last deportations, Germans entered the ghetto intent on another deportation. But this time they were met with armed resistance, which had an initial success, with resistance fighters taking over the ghetto. But on the eve of Passover in April 1943, several thousand Nazi troops entered the ghetto. It was systematically burned and blown up, block by block, and the Germans rounded up and killed anyone they could capture.

Łódź ghetto

The second largest ghetto in Poland was established by early 1940 as a temporary gathering point for Jews and gypsies who were being deported. Łódź was a major industrial area in Poland, and the Judenrat of the ghetto thought that Jewish productivity would ensure their survival. So they forced the population to work twelve hours a day in abysmal conditions making clothes, wooden goods and metalwork for the government, and electrical equipment for the military.

But the typical food ration per day was only 700 to 900 calories, which was not enough to live. So starvation was widespread and diseases like tuberculosis were common. Despite these difficulties, the ghetto survived until August 1944 because of its high productivity, accommodating 164,000 Jews. This was long after other Polish ghettos had been liquidated by the Germans.

Paul Perkal was sent to this ghetto, as he had been living in Łódź. Then when the ghetto was liquidated he was taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in November 1944, 36 kilometres north of Berlin, and from there to Dachau near Munich in the south of Germany. He was liberated in April 1945 from Kaufering, a sub-camp of Dachau.

Vilna ghetto

German troops entered Vilna in June 1941, and established a ghetto in September. The Jews were herded into the ghetto so abruptly that they could only take what they could physically carry. The ghetto was in two parts, and by October 1941, the Germans had killed all the inhabitants of the smaller ghetto, leaving about 20,000 in the larger ghetto, to serve the labour needs of the German government and military. The Nazis carried out systematic deportations of the sick and elderly to the forest on the edge of the city at Ponary, where thousands of Jews were shot and dumped in large ditches.

Despite malnourishment, cold and overcrowding, the Ghetto Health Department was unusually successful in preventing the major epidemics that beset other ghettos. In January 1942, a partisan group formed in the ghetto to resist the Germans. But in the end, their main role was to send young people out to the forest to join the Jewish partisans there.

The Vilna ghetto was known for its intellectual and cultural spirit, resulting in the name "Jerusalem of the Ghettos". Vilna itself had been known as the "Jerusalem of Lithuania" before the war for the same reason. The ghetto was liquidated in September 1943, and most of the Jewish population were sent to concentration camps, or killed in Ponary, or sent to extermination camps in Poland.

The Perkal family in the Warsaw ghetto

Adam's father and the brothers and sisters were sent from Grojec to the Warsaw ghetto. With them went their older sister Feiga, her husband, the husband's parents and the parents' little daughter. But Adam was able to live outside the ghetto, because of his false papers.

There were trams running through the ghetto from the outside and Adam used them to send goods in to his family. Every morning at 6 am, he went to the ghetto gate where the tram went through, paid the Polish policeman and the German gendarme to look the other way, and took the tram into the ghetto, where he would be given a few hundred zlotys by his father as it went through the ghetto.

With the money Adam bought food on the outside such as potatoes, corn, flour, oil, meat, sugar. He also bought coal for cooking and heating. Then at 11 am, he would take another tram into the ghetto and throw the bags of food out where waiting people would pick them up. Adam had six Polish boys working for him, as he didn't want to be recognised by the Poles he knew, because they would try to blackmail if they saw a Jew on the tram, and report him to the Gestapo. They used to buy the food in the city, then he went through the ghetto with them, and they would each throw down a sack of something different to the family.

During 1941 his sister, the third oldest sibling, died of typhus in the ghetto. Once when he went to see her he also got typhus, and had to stay two weeks in bed in the ghetto. After recovering, he went back outside. The older sister Feiga and her husband were lucky that they still had a

haberdashery shop in Grojec, and they were able to take goods with them to the ghetto. They had a large amount of goods from the shop that she could sell in the ghetto. Some of the Poles used to come into the ghetto to buy goods for half price, so Feiga and her family could live by selling their goods.

In the early period of the Warsaw ghetto in 1940 and 1941, Adam used to go into the ghetto on weekends to visit his family. On Friday nights, he went to nightclubs in the ghetto. In those early days they still used to joke about ghetto life, because they didn't know there would be a Holocaust. There were rumours that some people were being taken to concentration camps to work, but extermination camps weren't mentioned.

People were dying in the streets of typhus and starvation – Adam saw women, children and old men lying in the street, some were begging, some were singing to get a few pennies for food. But when you went into the nightclubs, you could buy drinks and forget there was a war going on. There were actors and musicians and they held concerts. The actors and musicians performed anti-Nazi skits and satirised the Judenrat, the Jewish Council that ran the ghetto for the Germans.

In one street there was a Catholic church, and every Sunday it was full of Jewish converts from years ago, possibly the third generation, because it was learned afterwards that Hitler had started to exterminate the third generation of Jews. This was an outcome of the Wannsee Conference in Berlin in January 1942 in which the infamous Final Solution defined the terms of the extermination of all Jews in Europe, including quarter-Jews (third-generation Jews following mixed marriages with Christians).

The Christians in the ghetto were against the Jews, but behaved like the Jews and were begging in the street. The Jews looked at them the way the anti-Semitic Poles used to look at Jews. They thought they would survive because they were Christians. They had Christmas trees, crucifixes, and priests would hold Mass every day. The Polish Resistance used to help the Christians in the ghetto with good food, but they didn't help the Jews. For the poorer Jews in the ghetto, there was no running water, but there was a soup kitchen where poor people went every day. The American-Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (commonly called the "Joint") provided the soup kitchens. Everyone got a ration, but it wasn't enough to survive. People could only survive if they had money or goods they brought in to the ghetto. There was a daily market where people would sell carpets or old and new clothes, to make some money just to survive.

The ghettos had a wall around them, with barbed wire or pointed glass on the top. On the weekend, Adam used to go into the ghetto near Mirowski Square. Just outside the ghetto wall there was a Jewish home, and on the inside there was a cellar with a little tunnel running between the two, under the ghetto wall. Adam used to go through this tunnel on weekends to visit his family. Since Poles weren't allowed in the ghetto unless they had papers to show they were working for the Germans, Adam had to put on an arm band while he was inside the ghetto, then he left the arm band in the tunnel when he went back out.

If Adam didn't want to use the tunnel, he went through the Jewish Gesia Cemetery where there was a gate into the ghetto. Other times he used to jump on a tram that was going into the ghetto, because at one entrance was a Polish policeman, and the other entrance a German

gendarme. He used to risk his life by jumping off the tram in the ghetto, then jumping on another tram to go back out.

So Adam was risking his life on both sides of the ghetto wall: outside because he could be identified as Jewish, and inside because he didn't have a Jewish identification card from the Judenrat or from the Board of Deputies from Warsaw, so if he was questioned he couldn't prove he was allowed to be there. The Jewish identification card entitled the holder to some bread and other things once a week. So he could have been caught on either side, and it would be the end of him. He used to come home from the ghetto on the tram at 6 pm every evening in winter. There were no people around and he used to smuggle himself to his hideout for the night.

One day, he thought he would be found out when some Poles questioned the boys who were helping him smuggle goods into the ghetto. He was afraid they would give his name to them. Another time, a Polish man took all of Adam's money, and said if he saw him again he would go to the German police and tell them he was Jewish and that he was smuggling goods into the ghetto.

Other smugglers in the ghetto who were caught were taken away by the Gestapo. Some were taken to the Pawiak prison, where they were probably finished off. There were signs outside the ghetto and all over Warsaw that it was full of lice and typhus, because the Germans didn't want the Poles to help the Jews. Adam was the only provider for his family in the ghetto, as all their goods were burned in 1939 and they didn't have anything to sell for food. He operated as a smuggler of goods into the ghetto until he went to Germany.

Escape from the Warsaw ghetto

At the end of 1941, Adam got his family out of the ghetto with false papers. He bought papers for his father, his one surviving sister Feiga and his younger brother. The papers still identified them as Jews, but allowed them to travel out of the Warsaw ghetto to a smaller ghetto in the country. With these papers, Adam bribed the police with quite a lot of money to let him smuggle the family out of the ghetto, and they all went to live with his oldest brother Paul's wife in the Częstochowa ghetto, 200 kilometres south-east of Warsaw. Paul was still in the Łódź ghetto, but his wife and son had gone to live with her parents. That is where the Perkal family went, and lived there until 1942. The town is famous for the painting of the Black Madonna.

Figure 17 The Black Madonna

Adam also worked as a smuggler in Częstochowa, buying goods and smuggling them into the ghetto to sell to some of the inhabitants, and to support his family. He gave money to his father, and his father told him that he had enough money to live for the time being. They still thought the war would end soon.

Initially this was an open ghetto, unlike Warsaw, which was closed soon after it was established in late 1940. But after the Germans closed the Częstochowa ghetto in August 1941, they started to take people from the ghetto to the extermination camps, and his father said to him that he should save his life instead of staying there with them. He was very upset when his father told

him he should leave the family. He left reluctantly, and that was the last time he spoke to his father or the other family members who were in Częstochowa.

The Ferder family in the Vilna ghetto

A few months after the Germans occupied Vilna, Raya's family were sitting down having dinner when the Germans came in to the courtyard of their large apartment block and told them they had ten minutes to get ready and go to the ghetto. Her older sister Feiga had been married for a very short time before the war. Her married name was Tabenhaus, and they had no children. She also moved into the ghetto with her husband.

Before going to the ghetto, Raya didn't know much about what was happening, as her parents would not talk in front of her for fear of being reported to the authorities. When in the ghetto, the Germans were always taking people out, and the people knew they were killing them, but didn't know about the concentration camps at first. They were always frightened of the Germans, but not as much as later when they knew what was really happening to the Jewish people.

In the ghetto, they had only what they could gather together and carry in the short time the Germans gave them to get ready. They lived in a flat with about three rooms, shared by ten families or more. There were no inside bathrooms in the ghetto flats, and the toilets were outside. Raya had no extra clothes to wear, and she was growing out of her clothes. Food was rationed. Her mother was almost starving because they were given horse meat and she wouldn't eat it, and there was nothing else. It was very bad, but the Jews didn't give in to their difficult life. They established a small school and the children were taught by volunteers.

The Germans conducted deportations (known as aktions) in the ghetto: they used to come in and take out people who weren't needed for work. At first, they didn't know where they were being taken. To avoid being taken out, they had to have a yellow piece of paper showing that they were a dependent of someone who worked in the ghetto. Raya had a paper showing she belonged to an uncle. But her mother didn't have this yellow paper, so she was at risk of being taken away.

Before the war, the family had a Polish housekeeper named Marisha, who was like a member of the family. Raya used to go to her more than her own mother. Whatever was left in the house when the family went to the ghetto was taken over by Marisha. They got in touch with her from inside the ghetto, asking if she could hide her mother when they knew the deportations were about to start. She wasn't happy about it, but let her mother stay for three days in the cellar with the rats. When her mother returned, she said she would never go there again.

This gave Raya a terrible distrust of the Polish people, because her father had treated Marisha as well as her mother, and brought her presents after he returned from travelling. Marisha was afraid she would lose the things which were left, and she had the use of everything of the family's. In Europe at that time, maids always ate in the kitchen, but Marisha ate in the dining room with the family. She was also from Vilna.

In the ghetto, they were given ration cards each day. They did not have much food, but were not really hungry. You couldn't buy anything in the ghetto, so Raya had to wear her sisters' clothes when she grew out of her own. There was running water and electricity in their apartment.

When a deportation was about to start, the Germans came in to the ghetto. There was a Jewish leader in the ghetto, and the Germans told him that they wanted so many men and women, but they didn't say what for, and the leader had to supply them. A lot of young people escaped from the ghetto and joined the partisans. There was a film called *The Partisans of Vilna*, made in 1986, and her friend Michael Lipenholtz was in it. Also, the son of the doctor who delivered Raya lived in New York after the war. They were some of the ones who got out of the ghetto.

Raya's older sister Sonia, who was five years older than her, had a boyfriend named Iasha Sudelski from before the war. He became friendly with a Lithuanian Gestapo man who was in charge of the ghetto gate, and one night this man smuggled them out of the ghetto to Kailis, a factory in Vilna, to work there. Sonia, Iasha and his mother stayed there until they were taken to the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. Raya didn't see her again until after the war.

Figure 18 Iasha Sudelski

The SS ran the deportations. Raya had nightmares for a long time afterwards remembering the horrible face of the SS commander. Everyone was terrified when he came into the ghetto. Everyone left the streets and went indoors, but the Germans threatened to bomb the buildings, so the inhabitants came out of the houses.

Figure 19 SS insignia

The Germans would put people into two groups: one group to stay, and the other group to leave the ghetto. Raya, her sister and mother were put in a group to stay in the ghetto, but one time her mother turned her face away from the commander and he took her out and put her in the other group. Raya never saw her again. This group selected to go out of the ghetto went to the forest at Ponary, where they had to dig their own graves, were then lined up in rows and were shot in the back. Her mother was 45 years old.

Figure 20 Jacob Gens

The Judenrat leader in the ghetto was Jacob Gens. He was wonderful and did a lot for the Jewish people. Her sister Sonia knew him quite well. He might have been 30 years old or so. He used to select people to go outside the ghetto to work for the Germans. He was in charge, and whatever you needed, you went to him. In the end, he was taken to Gestapo headquarters in September 1943 and shot, ten days before the ghetto was completely liquidated.

There were Jewish doctors in the ghetto, and the prewar Jewish Hospital was within its bounds. Sonia used to work at the cafe in the ghetto with other Jewish girls. They used to distribute soup and the like for the older people. There were no clubs for the children, only the school. The school had some non-professional teachers, where they learned mathematics and other subjects. It wasn't much of a school, but it kept them

occupied. So in almost two years in the ghetto they went to school, but had no other activities or anywhere to go.

The ghetto was only four or five narrow streets, in the worst part of the city. People couldn't leave the ghetto voluntarily, only if they were smuggled out in the middle of the night, like her sister Sonia. If there was a Jewish policeman on the gate, they used to turn a blind eye. There was no organised resistance inside the ghetto, only outside. But one man jumped from roof to roof and got away to join the partisans. This incident was in the film *The Partisans of Vilna*.

Generally, there was a lot happening in the ghetto, but Raya can't remember the details of these events. There was no communication with other ghettos, but there was contact with the city outside the ghetto. They had no idea what was going on in other ghettos. Warsaw had an uprising, but they didn't know about this at the time. The deportations sometimes resulted in people coming back at night from work, but others didn't return. Some were selected to go to Ponary to be killed when the ghetto was liquidated, and others went to a concentration camp.

When the Jews knew the ghetto would be liquidated in September 1943, some 120 to 150 of them went into hiding, under floors, with about 18 people in Raya's group. Raya heard, although did not see, that one baby cried, and the mother suffocated the baby so the other people wouldn't be given away. They hid inside the ghetto for a couple of weeks. In the middle of each night they were hiding, one person used to go up and have a look around. He returned one day to say that they are going to put explosives in the ghetto to find the people who were hiding. That's when they all went out voluntarily. They had very little to eat - only what they could take down with them, but they survived. They had water, but no toilets, so the hygiene was very bad.

Some were selected to go to Ponary when the ghetto was liquidated, and others went to a concentration camp. After coming out of hiding in the ghetto, there was a selection made, and they were put into two rows. Raya's group walked to the trains, and they were taken to Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp.

Her father was put on a train for Riga-Kaiserwald, but a different train to Raya. Feiga's husband was also on a train, but she didn't see him either. There was separation of women and children from men. Only Feiga and Raya were together, and they were together until the end of the war. They never told the Germans they were sisters, as they would have been separated.

Adam in Germany

Henschel & Son

This is a German company that was founded in Kassel in central Germany, in 1810. It is best known during the twentieth century as a manufacturer of transportation equipment, including locomotives, trucks and buses, and armoured fighting vehicles and weapons. By 1935, Henschel was manufacturing Panzer tanks. Later it obtained a licence to make the Dornier bombers and the formidable Tiger tanks.

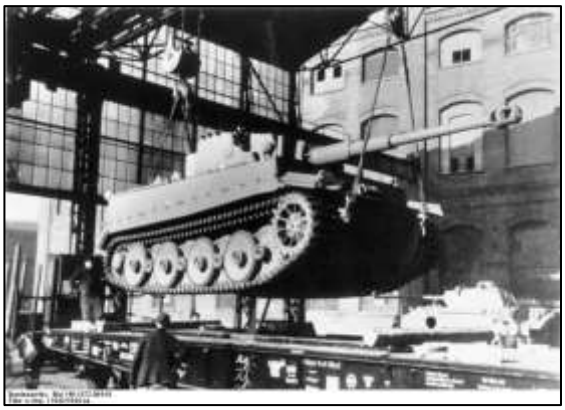

Figure 21 Tiger tank, Kassel 1942-4

By 1945, the company had 8,000 workers operating in two shifts a day of 12 hours each. Forced labour was used extensively, as in most of Germany at the time to aid the war effort. Hermann Göring's staff car was built at the Henschel Werke in Kassel. The Henschel factories were among the most important bombing targets in World War II and were badly damaged by systematic bombing between February 1942 and March 1945. Adam remembered that when Kassel was bombed in 1943 by American planes, the Henschel factory was damaged, but the four walls were still standing. The Germans simply brought in new machinery and in two weeks they were working as before.

Adam working in Germany

Breslau

In early 1942, Adam went through a commission in Częstochowa to get permission to go to Germany. He was lucky that they only asked him a few questions and didn't detect that he was Jewish, so he was allowed to go to Germany. He travelled 150 kilometres north-west to Breslau (called Wrocław in Polish), located in an area of western Poland that was part of Germany during World War II. He worked for a while as a mechanic in a small Henschel Werke factory.

One day in the city he met a Christian woman from his town in Poland, a former school friend of his, who asked him why he was living there and not in one of the Jewish ghettos. He first answered her in German, hoping she would leave him alone, but she followed him and blackmailed him, saying that if he did not buy food for her she would denounce him as a Jew to the Gestapo.

He had a hard time during this episode, afraid he would be exposed. He had extra ration coupons because he was a good worker and used to work overtime Saturday afternoons and Sundays. So he had to go to the shops and buy food for this woman with his ration cards. Because she was Polish, she wasn't allowed to buy food from the shops, only from the canteens. After enduring this for a while, Adam thought he had no alternative but to take the risk of leaving Breslau. So one day he went to the railway station, bought a ticket and went to Kassel, where the headquarters of Henschel & Son was located.

Kassel

Adam had been lucky so far during the war, and for a long time his luck continued in Kassel. In 1942, he got a job as an engineer in the large Henschel factory in Kassel, and became friendly with the engineering manager of the factory. One day, this manager asked Adam if he would like to work in his garden on Sundays. Adam was willing, as he didn't want to be walking around the streets, because there were around 35,000 Poles at a voluntary labour camp near the city. There were a number of labour camps, one was Polish, one Russian, and one Dutch. Adam was always afraid he would meet a Christian Pole who knew him from his town, or in fact any Poles, because he thought that Poles might be able to tell if someone was Jewish.

So every Sunday Adam went to the chief's house to work in the garden, and the chief liked him very much. His 18 year-old daughter Liesel was married to a senior Gestapo officer who was stationed in Paris. The Gestapo man used to come home for vacation for a day or two every few weeks. But the boss hated his son-in-law. Adam heard the chief discuss the French resistance groups, but he never heard him discuss Jews. The chief was very anti-Nazi, and was a very nice German man. He often questioned why Germany had to be in a war, and expressed other sentiments like that. They took Adam in as a member of the family.

At one point, he was called up to the Germany army, and at the medical examination, they didn't notice that he had been circumcised. The German doctor was a woman, she just asked him if he had ever had venereal disease, and he said he hadn't, and that was all. He was not suspected of being Jewish, so he passed the medical. However, the chief's daughter persuaded her father to use his influence to keep Adam out of the army and the war.

But Adam never knew about the Holocaust until near the end of the war in 1944 when he went to Mauthausen concentration camp. In 1941, he only knew that some Jews were taken to different camps, but they weren't extermination camps. Adam had to learn to pass himself off as a German Pole. After leaving Poland, he only spoke German. His German became perfect, with a Polish accent, and somehow he acquired German mannerisms, leaving the Jewish mannerisms behind.

But he was constantly in fear that during the night he would give himself away, by calling out in Yiddish in his sleep. Somehow, in Germany he was able to hold himself together and survive. Eventually he dreamed in German. Only after the war did he have nightmares when he would cry out during the night, but never in Germany. While he was in Germany, Adam used to communicate with the man who sold him the false papers in Warsaw by sending letters to him, so that it would look like the man was actually his father, and the Gestapo wouldn't be suspicious of him.

At Christmas time in 1943, he was given a two-week vacation. He went to Warsaw, but he didn't want to go anywhere because the Jewish ghetto had already been burned down (in April 1943). He heard Poles talking about this on the train from Germany to Warsaw. When he arrived in Warsaw, he slept at the station because he didn't want to go anywhere. He had a friend, a Polish girl, travelling with him, from Kassel. She lived in Kalish, which belonged to Germany when they partitioned Poland – one part was taken by the Russians, the other part the Germans. In the morning, he bought a train ticket and went to her place and stayed there for two weeks. Then he travelled back to Germany, because he didn't want to spend any more time amongst Poles.

Then, sometime after the assassination attempt on Hitler in July 1944, Hitler visited Kassel, and about 100,000 people came to hear him speak in the Town Hall in the morning. His speech was full of venom against the Jews and against America and against the whole world. Hitler said these people all wanted to bring the German people to their knees, but would never succeed.

On the way back home in the afternoon, accompanied by the boss's daughter, he thought that somebody was looking at him the whole time in the tram, and he thought this was suspicious. During August and September, there was another woman who he was very friendly with living in the same building as Adam.

Figure 22 Kassel Town Hall

She was also on the tram that day, and it turned out the man was looking at her. Then one day late in 1944 at about 5 o'clock one morning, the Gestapo came and arrested everybody in the whole housing block and took them to Breitenau, about 15 kilometres south of Kassel. The woman had been spying for the British MI6, but she got away and disappeared.

Morris in the Soviet Union

Evacuation in the USSR

When Germany broke the peace treaty and invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, its advance was very rapid. Because the Red Army was unprepared to defend itself against the large German army, the government decided to move essential industries and much of the civilian population to safer areas. During the months following the invasion, more than 1,000 factories and over 16 million Soviet citizens were evacuated from the war front to the relative safety of the eastern regions. This was the greatest evacuation of civilians in modern history, and it saw the Central Asian republics, such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan receive vast numbers of evacuees.

Apart from workers needed to operate the factories in their new locations, The Soviet government decided to move the scientific and cultural elite and the more vulnerable, such as children and the elderly. Writers, composers and artists were deemed to be important as they would maintain the people's spirit with their writing and performing. For example, the film maker Sergei Eisenstein was evacuated to Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan, and his film *Ivan the Terrible* was completed there. Also the composer Dmitry Shostakovich was evacuated to Kuybyshev in south-eastern Russia and Sergei Prokofiev went to Alma-Ata where he collaborated with Eisenstein.

It was an extraordinary effort to move millions of people from the front lines to the rear. Railways were under heavy bombardment and also under heavy pressure to transport whole factories of machinery and parts over vast distances. On arrival, the Soviet government also had to provide the infrastructure for the rapid reestablishment of factories to keep the war effort going. Many people were attracted to southern regions like Uzbekistan, as it was warmer, and the novel *Tashkent - City of Bread*, had an influence on many people who thought food would be plentiful.

Rationing was introduced early in the war, and people needed a ration card to get food. Even though there were markets full of enticing fruits and other food, the prices were prohibitive. Large numbers of people died due to malnutrition, cold, an inadequate water supply and infectious diseases like typhus and malaria. The people of Tashkent are very proud of the role their city played in the war effort by providing accommodation in their houses, and the welcome showed to evacuees.

Despite the chaos, overcrowding and deprivations, the mass evacuation to the eastern regions was a great success, and was crucial to the Soviet Union's ability to resist the formidable German army. The end of the Battle of Stalingrad in January 1943 was a turning point on the Eastern Front that saw the Red Army begin to liberate towns and cities from German occupation. The human impact of the evacuation was that millions of Russian lives were saved, especially Jews, who made up 25% of the evacuees[20 21].

Morris working in the Soviet Union

After Morris crossed into Russian-occupied Poland at the end of 1940, he came to the city of Bialystok in eastern Poland. But it was so crowded with refugees that he couldn't find a place to stay. He asked someone where he could find a place to sleep, and he was told to go east to the city of Slonim in Belarus, which had no refugees.

So he went to Slonim and came across an old Jewish couple with no children at home who took him in to their house. Their son was a communist, and before the war he was one of a group who was sent to Russia in exchange for other prisoners. Morris avoided being identified as Jewish because he had blond hair and was fair with blue eyes and spoke Russian well, so he was able to pass for a Russian.

Then in early 1941, Morris went to Rostov on Don in Russia and worked there until the German army occupied the city for a few days in June, 1941.

A collective farm in Uzbekistan

After the German invasion, Stalin announced that anyone who wanted to escape from the Germans would be provided with free trains to move elsewhere. Morris decided he didn't want to meet the Germans again, so near the end of 1941 he obtained a ticket to travel to Uzbekistan. The trains were full, and it took him four weeks to travel in one train from Rostov to Tashkent. When he finally arrived in Tashkent, there were so many refugees that people were sleeping in the street. He was sent to work as a shoemaker on a collective farm near Bukhara, an ancient market town to the west of Tashkent.

Morris's registration card on arrival in Tashkent shows that he was a moulder who had been working as a tinsmith in Rostov. He was assigned to the Lenina collective farm in Kishlak (rural settlement) Talman, Bukhara Province. He is recorded as Jewish with the Russian form of his Jewish name Moshe. He remembered that he lived very well on his wages, and didn't even know a war was going on far away. He could buy anything, but other people lived on 400 grams of bread a day. He worked for the government, making boots for the Red Army. But everybody in the factory made an extra pair of shoes to sell in the market so they could live for six months.

While he was in Bukhara, the Polish government began to form a new army to fight the Germans, so he went to a town near Moscow to try and enlist, but was told they wouldn't take him because he was Jewish. After this he went to Chelyabinsk in the Urals where the T-34 tanks were made. He stayed there making shoes until the end of the war.

The concentration camps

Raya in Latvia and Poland

Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp, Latvia

In September 1943, Raya Ferder and most of the survivors of the Vilna ghetto were taken in cattle trains to the Kaiserwald concentration camp in Riga, about 170 kilometres north of Vilna. Her sister Feiga was with her, but the soldiers didn't know they were sisters. Ukrainians were guarding them in the trains going to the camp, and they weren't much different from the Germans. Feiga gave a Ukrainian guard her last ring and asked him if he could bring their mother back, but they heard no more about this.

Figure 23 Concentration camp gate

She doesn't know how long they were on the train, but it seemed to be forever. There was no air, they were squashed in like sardines, and there were no windows. They were only given something like half a slice of bread and some water until they got to the camp. When they arrived at the Kaiserwald, they walked from the train to the camp, but they didn't know where they were. Soon they realised they were in Latvia when they heard people speaking Latvian. There were a lot of people from places like Hungary already in the camp. They were in big rooms with bunks one on top of the other. It was very bad and very frightening.

The Germans took their clothes away when they arrived and gave them the concentration camp clothes. They had grey and blue striped dresses and wooden shoes. Their heads were completely shaved and they were given little white head scarves to wear. All the prisoners were Jewish where Raya was. The camp was different from the ghetto, where almost everyone was Jewish, except for some gypsies, and they wore a yellow star on the arm.

There was no separation into ethnic groups. Everyone was together, wherever they were from. They could mix with others when they were taken to work, or at meals which were in one big room. They had soup from frozen turnips, which was terrible and Raya couldn't eat it, and sliced white bread. They ate at 5 pm, and didn't eat again until 5 pm the next day. As hungry as she was, she wouldn't eat the soup. Some people were able to smuggle food in. There weren't many people from the Vilna ghetto, only the ones who had been hiding. Raya doesn't know where the others went in the earlier liquidation. They were guarded by SS troops and kapos.

Many of the prisoners were taken to work to make parts for aeroplanes, and there were Latvians in charge of them. But Raya worked with a shovel building a road. The shovel was bigger that her and she couldn't lift it very well, and one day an SS soldier hit her on the head with a rifle butt and two teeth fell out. The work was very hard and it was cold. She was 14 years old by then. Every morning they used to count the prisoners, and take some away to the gas chamber, especially the weak or the sick. Feiga's husband caught tuberculosis in the camp and so he was

taken away. Raya was present when he was taken away. He waved to Raya from the truck, and she saw him taken to the gas chamber, but she didn't tell Feiga until the end of the war that she saw this.

Feiga always said that if her name was called, Raya mustn't run after her. In the camp they didn't have any papers, and when the Germans asked them their ages, Feiga put Raya's age up by two years, because she was afraid that the Germans would think she was too young to work and would take her away. She already looked much younger than her age, so she couldn't make her much older. It seemed to be at random how people were selected to be sent to death camps with gas chambers, such as Auschwitz. They became very friendly with two ladies in Kaiserwald. One was a daughter of the Fink family whose married name was Lisa Rathaus. She died in the 1990s in Melbourne. The other friend was Chasia Zalcberg, who was the same age as Feiga or a bit older. She was a school teacher who taught in New York, and who was still alive in 1995.

Barbed wire separated the male and female sections. Once, when she knew she was going to work in a place where her father was, everybody gave her bread to give to her father. She met him and he was behind barbed wire. She gave him the food, but found out later that it was all taken away from him. That was the last time Raya saw her father. Kaiserwald was like a transit camp, so there were constantly people coming and going. She was in Kaiserwald about five or six months. Then they were taken to the camp at Dunawerke, which was also in Riga. They had to walk a long way to reach Dunawerke.

Riga-Dunawerke concentration camp, Latvia

Raya arrived in Dunawerke near the end of 1943, and was there until early 1945. In Dunawerke, Raya did all kinds of work, in the kitchens and elsewhere.

There was an SS man named Becker who was the overseer in charge of Raya's part of the camp and was in love with a German Jewish girl named Liesel. Because of her, he was very good to the other women in Raya's section. He used to bring them potatoes and warn them if a deportation was about to start. After the war, the Jewish people in the camp gave testimony to his good treatment of them, and this saved him. Apparently, he and Liesel were married after the war.

Raya was sometimes taken from Dunawerke to work in Kaiserwald for the day, but not with Feiga. The SS guards did all the guarding in the camp. There was no warning when they would come into the barracks, but the SS man Becker would sometimes warn them if he could. The other guards treated them badly, hitting them, and treating them like animals. He stayed on after they were taken out of Dunawerke. It was only a forced labour camp, and there were no gas chambers there.

There was a little hospital in the camp with a Jewish doctor working there. One night, Raya had a very high temperature and her sister took her to the hospital. But they had to be counted at 4 am the next day, standing in the snow. Feiga went to the hospital and insisted on taking Raya out of the hospital so she could be counted the next day. The doctors said she would die in the cold, but Feiga said that it was better that Raya should die next to her and not in a hospital.

Feiga had a premonition of something, and afterwards Raya asked her how she knew she should take Raya out, and Feiga said she doesn't know. Next morning, there was nobody left in the

hospital, as they had all been taken away to extermination camps, both the doctors and patients. So Raya was very lucky. Without her sister, she would not have survived the war.

She doesn't know how she worked when she was sick, but looking back, the will to live was so strong that people did things they didn't know they were capable of. The food in the camp was still very bad, but the SS man Becker helped with extra food. Every concentration camp she was in was divided between men's and women's sections. They only mixed at work now and then. Their spirits lifted whenever they heard that the English or Americans were bombing Germany. They used to talk among themselves that they wished the world knew what went on inside the camps.

Her brother Akiva was studying dentistry at university in Poland, and left for Palestine just before the war started. He was 18 and studying when a government rule came out that Jews had to sit on the left and Christians on the right. After that, he refused to stay at university, and said he wanted to go to Palestine, but in 1939 you couldn't go there legally. Their father always belonged to Betar, and he went to the Betar leaders who said they would take the son to Palestine if he would pay for two Betar members. Then their father took him to the port of Gdynia, and he left from there.

When she first visited Palestine after the war, she met Akiva and he showed her how he had to swim from the ship to the shore at Tel Aviv, when it was illegal to go there. Not long after he arrived in Palestine, the war broke out in Poland. So he was very lucky to be out of Europe. Raya said to her sister in the camp that if they survived the war and told their brother what happened to them, he wouldn't believe it. When she looks back on her wartime experiences, it is very hard to believe it really happened.

Raya was in Dunawerke until the end of January or beginning of February 1945. Then they were taken back to Poland. During the period in the two concentration camps, they saw allied planes flying over, and this made them very happy. They wished the camps would be bombed, as it was better than being killed by the Germans.

From the beginning of 1944 they knew Jews were being killed, but they didn't know exactly how. People heard rumours of this when they went outside the camps to work. But in Kaiserwald, they used to see a lot of smoke coming from chimneys. They didn't know at the time what this meant, but they realised afterwards that it was from the crematoriums.

Torun and Bromberg, Poland

In January or February 1945, Raya and Feiga were taken by train from Dunawerke to Torun in Poland, located about 170 kilometres north-west of Warsaw. Other people in Dunawerke were sent to Stutthof concentration camp. As soon as they arrived in Torun, they had to walk about 50 kilometres to Bromberg (called Bydgoszcz in Polish). It was snowing and very cold. Raya had small feet and big wooden shoes and it was very hard to walk, but they had to walk all the way. Anyone who couldn't walk, including children, was shot in front of everybody by the German guards. A few times on the road Raya thought she couldn't walk any more, but Feiga pulled her up and told her she had to walk. So with Feiga's insistence, they made it to Bromberg.

But while they were walking, something must have been happening at the front, because suddenly the German guards started running away. Seeing this, a group of twelve women who had kept together decided to escape from the main group. A couple of the women in the group had civilian clothes, but the rest wore the camp uniforms. But they stayed together, despite the fact that the uniforms would give them away. Bombs were falling all around in Bromberg. They hid under doorways during the bombardments, and ran from place to place.

They came to a farmhouse, and a man who was a Volksdeutscher came out. He said he would hide them, but he asked that when the Russians came at the end of the war, the women should tell them that he saved their lives. They agreed, and he put them in a stable full of hay. Then one day some German soldiers came into the stable and put pitchforks into the hay, but they didn't find them. Raya had stopped believing in God during the war, but she thought that if the Germans couldn't find them with pitchforks, perhaps after all there was a God that was looking after them.

After about a week in the stable, the farmer put them in a hot house where he grew flowers in winter. It was down a lot of steps. They were in the hot house a long time, until the end of the war. He gave them food, but they never knew his name. He wanted to whitewash himself from any involvement in the war. Two of the women died from typhus towards the end of their time in Bromberg. Raya was given some grapes, but she ate too many and was very sick. The farmer had a family, and Raya was sure they knew that the women were hiding there.

Adam in Germany and Austria

Breitenau, Germany

Adam arrived in Breitenau in late 1944. At that time it was a concentration camp for political prisoners. The Gestapo's method was that if they thought someone was suspicious or implicated in some crime, they arrested a hundred or so people and questioned them all.

The morning after he arrived, when the prisoners were standing in the square to be counted each day, one of the guards asked if anyone was a tailor. Adam said later that an angel must have taken his hand and raised it up, and he said that he was a tailor. In fact, he did know how to use a sewing machine, because his sister used to sew on a machine at home. They had a big family of eight children, and sometimes Adam used that machine as well.

He worked in the tailor's shop repairing German uniforms the whole time he was in Breitenau. Adam's luck stayed with him: one night, one of the Gestapo men told him to clean up his office. Adam collected all the cigarette butts from the office, went back to the camp and sold them for food. He spent 56 or 58 days in this camp, and was questioned day and night about the girl he knew in the housing block. Adam just said she lived in the same block and they used to go out Saturdays and Sundays, to theatres and so on. But they never asked him if he was Jewish. Their method was that if they still weren't sure about someone after interrogation, they sent them to a concentration camp.

Buchenwald, Germany

From Breitenau, he was sent in late 1944 to Buchenwald, located near Weimar, about 100 kilometres east of Breitenau. But he was only in transit for two days in the city jail, not in the camp, so he had no idea what was going on there.

Mauthausen, Austria

In late 1944 or the beginning of 1945, Adam was sent via Prague, where he spent four days, to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. He was given the job of cleaning his barracks block. He was in the 5th block (called the Jewish Block). This was the same block as Miklos Horthy junior, the son of Admiral Miklos Horthy, the head of the Hungarian government at the time Adolf Eichmann wanted to deport the Jews from Budapest. Horthy had been arrested with the whole government and sent to Mauthausen. The Hungarian Health Minister was Jewish – he was only there two days and was taken away and killed.

Figure 24 Himmler visiting Mauthausen, 1942

The prisoners were given cards to go to the brothel once a month, but Adam was only there two weeks. He heard Jewish girls talking in Polish between themselves, saying that they were murdering Jews in the camp. That was the first time Adam knew about the Holocaust. At first, it was very hard to believe after all those years that something like that could happen, because nobody had ever mentioned it in Germany. He had no contact with the Jewish prisoners, because you couldn't go from one barracks block to another.

Adam could see the violence to the prisoners in the stone-cutting pit from his barracks: hitting them over the head with rifles, and taking some of them away. That was the first time he saw brutality from the Germans. The Jewish prisoners looked very undernourished. Hungarian Jews arrived looking healthy enough, but he could see them becoming thinner and deteriorating after a couple of weeks there.

Melk, Austria

In early 1945, Adam was taken to Melk, a sub-camp of Mauthausen about 50 kilometres to the east, to keep them away from the approaching Allied troops. The Germans thought Mauthausen was going to be liberated soon, as the Americans were on one side and the Russians were on the other side.

In Melk he told them he had been a cleaner in Mauthausen, so was given the job of cleaning the German officers' area. There was an underground factory here, where petrol was produced from coal. They also had a factory that manufactured parts for aeroplanes and military vehicles.

Ebensee, Austria

In April 1945 when the American troops were advancing on Melk, all the prisoners were taken to the south-west to Ebensee, near Salzburg. He wasn't doing forced work in Ebensee as he was still being treated like a political prisoner, not a Jewish one. In all the camps he was in, he wore

the red triangle of a political prisoner. There were gas chambers and burnings in this camp, and he saw this. A kapo from the crematorium told him they were cremating hundreds of people every day.

Inside the camps, the kapos did more of the guarding than the Germans. The kapos were appointed from among the prisoners. 90% of them were gypsies, and they used to beat prisoners to death, including other gypsies. The only time in the war that Adam was hungry was the last four days before they were liberated. During these last days, they were not given any food at all, as the Germans were preparing to abandon the camp to the approaching Americans.

Freedom at last

Adam liberated in Ebensee, Austria

There was an underground factory in Ebensee where petrol was produced from coal. On the morning of 5 May 1945, they could hear artillery fire outside the camp. An SS soldier came over and told the 35,000 prisoners to go into the underground factory, saying they should hide from the approaching Americans in order to survive their artillery fire. But the prisoners noticed that instead of the Gestapo on the observation towers, there were young boys with rifles from the Hitler Youth, and some of them told the kapos not to go inside the tunnels, as the SS had dynamited the tunnel entrances and wanted to kill them all.

Figure 25 Liberated Ebensee prisoners, May 1945

At that time in Ebensee they were burning corpses, but at the time they didn't know they were killing them and then burning the corpses. The prisoners thought they were only burning those who died of starvation or sickness. Every morning there were about 20 dead bodies taken out from every barracks block of people that died during the night. Every morning, the camp commandant used to appear with four or five others to count the prisoners, but that morning they didn't show up.

Suddenly at noon the gate opened and three American tanks rolled in. The prisoners didn't know they were American at first, as they hadn't seen their uniforms before. From the first tank emerged an American officer with the insignia of the Ten Commandments on his lapel. Adam realised he was a Jewish army chaplain (a rabbi). He went over to the chaplain and started crying and told him the story in German of how he was Jewish, and how he survived all those years disguising himself as a German.

Figure 26 Jewish chaplain insignia

The rabbi wasn't convinced and asked him if he knew the Jewish prayers. Adam was able to recite the Shmonesa, the Jewish prayer that is said every morning and evening, and because of that the chaplain believed that he was really Jewish. He was taken to the officers' club and given food, but was told not to eat much as he wasn't used to it. Then the next morning, he looked Adam up in the camp. Then he called over two soldiers with a jeep and they took him to Italy, travelling the whole night, arriving at Modena the next day.

Raya liberated in Bromberg, Poland

One day in the cellar under the farmer's hothouse in Bromberg, the door opened. All that the women could see was a pair of boots, and they didn't know whether or not it was a German soldier. But it was a Russian. It was the 6 or 7 of May, 1945, and they were free at last.

The Russians took the women into the house, gave them food and vodka to drink a toast to Stalin. They were taken in to Bromberg, where Jewish organisations came from the United

States and started looking for relations. They were told that their father had survived the war, but died from typhus, but Raya doesn't know for certain if this is what happened. She still didn't know if her sister Sonia was still alive. They had no strength and were very sick. It was like paradise to be liberated, but they realised they had lost everybody, and they were homeless.

Raya and Feiga did not go back to Vilna, but went to Łódź. Feiga met her second husband there, Josef Eidelson. She had known him when they were living in Vilna. They decided that they wanted to leave Poland, as it was a horrible place for them, with all those bad memories. So they walked illegally from Łódź through the mountains to Austria, walking at night and hiding during the day, eventually arriving in Italy.

Displaced persons camps

Adam in Modena and Rome

Modena

After being driven to a displaced persons camp in Modena (in northern Italy) in May 1945, Adam came across the Jewish Brigade, and they offered to take him to Palestine. But he saw that next to them was a Polish camp, with Polish officers and soldiers. They belonged to the army of the Polish government which was in exile in London. Adam heard one officer speaking Polish, and he asked them about other displaced persons camps.

He was told that there were a number of large displaced persons camps by then, as some concentration camps had been liberated before May 5, and there was a big camp at Cinecitta in Rome that was run by the Jewish-American Joint Distribution Committee. Adam asked the officer how he could get to Rome, and he went there.

Cinecitta, Rome

But soon after he arrived in Rome, he woke up in a hospital, although he couldn't remember how he got there. He had collapsed in the street with malaria, but he doesn't know how he caught it. He had never heard of malaria, even before the war. After he told them he was Jewish, the nuns wanted to convert him to Christianity.

He told them he had heard there was a displaced persons camp there, and he wanted to be sent there. So he was taken to Cinecitta ("Cinema City" – a film studio before the war), and was in the camp hospital for two weeks. While he was in Cinecitta, they asked for some volunteers who could speak German, because they had started making neorealist films in Italy, to portray the role played by the Italian partisans in the war. So he was given a job playing a German soldier. That is when he started to be an actor. In 1945, he appeared in the film *Rome, Open City*, portraying a German, and in 1946 was in *Monte Cassino*, and he made a good living from that.

Adam Perkal as a German soldier in the film, *Un Giorno Nella Vita (A Day in the Life)*. Italy 1946.

Figure 27 A Day in the Life, 1946

His last film part was playing a German officer in the film *Un giorno nella vita (A Day in the Life*) in 1946. He is credited in the cast of this film. In the meantime, he started to mingle with the Jewish people in Rome.

Adam obtained a permit to come to Australia in 1945 through Professor Harold Laski, who was the Labour Party Chairman in England from 1945 to 1946. He was Adam's second cousin. How this came about was that in December 1945 the first post-war Socialist congress was held in Rome (the Fifth Congress of the Italian Communist Party), and Harold Laski travelled to Rome to attend it. During the conference, a jeep with two Military Policemen (MPs) from the British Embassy came over to the place about 55 km from Rome where Adam was making a film and told him to go with them to Rome.

Adam didn't speak any English then, only Italian and German. He was afraid to go with the MPs because he thought his past involvement with Betar was catching up with him. Before the war, Adam had the privilege of meeting Menachem Begin and Vladimir Jabotinsky, and in October 1946 Begin's group the Irgun exploded a bomb in the British embassy in Rome. But when he arrived in Rome, he met a man who spoke to him in German, asking if Adam knew who he was – it was Professor Laski, who said that his uncle Jacob Applebaum in England had discovered Adam's whereabouts through the Red Cross and told him to look Adam up when he was in Rome. Harold Laski said that his uncle Jacob would apply for a permit for Adam to go to Australia.

Figure 28 Harold Laski

Kibbutz Ostia

In late 1945, Adam went to a non-political kibbutz in Ostia, not far from Rome (30km west of Rome on the seaside). It was Zionist, but not Betar, run by Ichud, a non-political Zionist organisation. Adam was made a commandant there. In 1946, he was playing the trombone in a UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) orchestra, going from camp to camp to entertain the refugees.

Figure 29 Kibbutz Yehut, Ostia 1945

Figure 30 UNRRA orchestra, 1946

When Adam arrived in Rome, they didn't believe he was Jewish at first, because he only spoke German, and was still acting like a German. Even in the kibbutz, they didn't believe he was Jewish, and when he had a shower, they wanted to check he didn't have an SS insignia on his arm. Adam decided not to return to his home town in Poland, because he had such a hatred for the Poles and their anti-Semitism, that he didn't want to go back. Even though the family house had burned down, they had a very large property, but he didn't want to live with Poles again.

Raya in Castel Gandolfo

Late in 1945, Raya and Feiga came to a displaced persons camp in Milano, in northern Italy. Then they went to Castel Gandolfo, 24 kilometres south-east of Rome, where the Pope had his summer residence in a big villa on Lake Albano. They were there by November 1945. They were

looking for relations, and at the time she didn't know her mother had been killed by the Germans at Ponary forest in Vilna.

Figure 31 Adam in Florence, 1947

Raya met Adam at the end of 1945. He had Christian identification papers, and when Raya and Feiga met him, they thought he was German, because he had blue eyes and only spoke in German. He had trained himself to only speak German and they didn't believe he was Jewish. But some people asked him questions about Orthodox Judaism, and he was able to answer correctly, because he came from an orthodox family.

Raya went to school in Italy. She had to start at a very low level, as she had to learn Italian at the same time, and also took private English lessons. She could read and write English before she could speak it, and wrote to Adam's family in Australia.

Adam and Raya married

Adam and Raya decided to get married, but they waited two years for a permit for her to go to Australia. In any case, her sister Feiga wouldn't let him marry her because she was too young (Raya had only turned 16 in August 1945), and because Adam was a movie actor. Adam obtained a permit to come to Australia in 1946, and Feiga told Adam to go to Australia and they would follow. But he didn't want to go without Raya.

Figure 32 Adam and Raya, Rome, 1947

Then on 1 August 1947, they were married in the Great Synagogue of Rome. Rabbi Elio Toaff, who later became the chief rabbi of Rome in 1951, performed the ceremony.

Return from the USSR

Morris returns to Poland

At the end of the war, the Soviet government supplied free trains for anyone who wanted to go back to Poland. Morris never thought of staying in Russia and he hadn't had any contact with his family for six years, although he thought they might still be alive. He didn't know much about German concentration camps at that time, but he knew that the Russians had their own concentration camps.

When the war finished, he was repatriated back to Poland. But some Poles in the AK (the Armia Krajowa, the main Polish resistance group) were taking the Jews off the trains that were coming in from Russia and shooting them. Morris was blond and blue-eyed and spoke very good Russian, so he was lucky and was not chosen.

Morris went back to his town in Poland. But there was nobody, no family at all. The house was ruined, completely bombed. In the meantime he wrote a letter to Australia, addressed only to "Mr. Applebaum, Australia". That was all he knew, but the letter reached his uncle Arthur Applebaum in Wollongong. Then before he had a reply from the uncle, while Morris was travelling in Poland, he talked to a man on the train, telling him he was an orphan, and the man said "you've got a brother in Italy". He described the person he knew, and Morris thought it must be Adam.

Morris reunites with Paul

Morris took a train through the Polish-Czechoslovakian border to Innsbruck in Austria, near the Italian border. He didn't have to pay for trains at that time. But some people had killed an American soldier and the border was closed so he couldn't get through. Morris was bitterly disappointed, and he decided to go back to Poland.

While Morris was travelling back through Czechoslovakia, he met another man who was going from Germany to Poland and who told him that there was also a Perkal in Munich, and he was an artist who was the head of the Munich Municipality. This was the oldest brother Paul, who had been in Sachsenhausen, Oranienburg, and Dachau, and survived. He had a wife and two children, but it seems they didn't survive the war.

So Morris went to Munich. He asked the first Jewish man he met, "Perhaps you know Paul Perkal?" The man said that in fact Paul was his neighbour and that he lived in Dachaustrasse, not far from Dachau, after being liberated from the concentration camp. Morris went to the address, but nobody was home. He waited patiently for three hours, and then Paul came home. Paul had gone out of town to buy some fish, which he liked to eat on the Shabbat.

Morris and Paul wrote to Adam in Italy, through the Red Cross, and they found that they were the only three survivors from the whole family. Morris stayed two years in Munich until 1948, and then decided to get a permit to come to Australia because they had a maternal uncle Arthur Applebaum and a maternal aunt Pearl Tetelbaum there. Morris and Paul went to Paris to wait for a plane.

Migration to Australia

Adam and Raya leave Italy

When Adam and Raya left Italy in 1947, they first went to America to visit Raya's aunt, and then travelled to Australia. Feiga stayed on in Italy. In Italy she married her second husband Josef Eidelson, a cantor from Vilna. They went to South Africa but she didn't like it there, so they went to Canada, then on to New York, where they settled in Brooklyn. Feiga died in 1998[22], and Josef died in 2004[23].

Figure 33 Feiga and Josef Eidelson, 1947

From New York, Adam and Raya went to San Francisco, and from there they sailed on the converted troopship *Marine Phoenix* to Sydney, arriving on 21 September 1947. On the ship were 16 other people from displaced persons camps in Europe who also came to Australia through America[24].

Morris and Paul fly to Australia

While in Paris, Morris met Fanny Zabyzny on 14 July 1948, then on 20 July they were married in a civil ceremony. Their uncle Arthur Applebaum paid for the airfare to come to Australia with SABENA, the Belgian national airline. On the way to Sydney they had to wait in Karachi for one propeller, and again in Indonesia when another propeller broke down. The plane was a Skymaster DC-4 with four engines.

Figure 34 Douglas C54 Skymaster

Adam and Raya in Sydney

When Adam came to Australia after the war, he didn't know if Morris was dead or alive. He said that no-one can imagine how he felt, wondering if he was the only one left from the whole family.

When Adam and Raya arrived in Sydney in September 1947, they were met by his uncle Henoch and aunt Pearl Tetelbaum. They stayed at their place for a short time, but their hosts were very religious and Raya wasn't familiar with orthodox Jewish rules. She turned the light on by mistake on Saturday, and didn't know which foods were kosher. The Tetelbaums even took Adam aside one day and asked him if he was sure he hadn't married a Christian girl! Raya didn't feel comfortable in the religious household, so after a few days, they moved into an apartment in Ocean Street, North Bondi. Adam registered with the Department of Immigration using this address[25].

Figure 35 Adam in Sydney, 1947

Wollongong

A month later in October 1947, Arthur Applebaum took Adam and Raya to Wollongong to his house in Keira Street, and wanted to establish them there. He offered to buy them a store and some land. He gave Adam £10 and said with this they could put a deposit on a piece of land in Wollongong. At that time a whole block of 60 by 200 feet was only £100 altogether.

But the orthodox uncle Henoch Tetelbaum came to visit them from Sydney, and told them that if they stayed in Wollongong they would be assimilated and wouldn't be in the Jewish faith like the rest of the family. Arthur Applebaum was married to a Christian woman, and there was a very small Jewish community in the area. In any case, Adam didn't want to work with the family, but preferred to work on his own.

Back to Sydney

So Henoch Tetelbaum took them back to Sydney, and they established themselves there quite well. In December 1947, they rented a room in a house in Darley Road, Randwick, right across the road from Centennial Park. In Sydney, Adam's first job was as a skiving machinist for Park Lane Handbags on Broadway, owned by Albert Sheinberg. But Adam didn't like the work, and after three months he told the boss that he wanted to go back to shoe designing.

A miraculous reunion

Then came a great day for the Perkal family when Paul and Morris flew into Sydney on 29 July 1948 and were very surprised to be met at the airport by Adam. The older brothers knew from the Red Cross and letters from relatives that Adam had survived, but they didn't know he was in Australia, so it was a very happy reunion and it felt like a miracle that they were together again. The three brothers were the only survivors from the family of ten, including eight children.

Morris and Paul obtained residency permits straight away. But Fanny was a French citizen and couldn't come to Australia at the same time as Morris. He obtained a permit for her and she came out on the Greek liner *SS Cyrenia*, arriving in Melbourne on 8 April 1949. Uncle Arthur Applebaum offered to buy Morris a house in Wollongong, but he preferred to live in Sydney.

Morris said that he had a very good start in Australia. Not long after he arrived, he was in a pub when he met a fellow who said: "Morris, do you know anybody who would like to buy crocodile skins already tanned?" Morris said he'd buy them. One customer was a Romanian who worked in Mount Isa. He made boots for mine workers, but was looking for someone to make the uppers. So that was their break. The business they started was on the balcony of Morris's one-bedroom flat, making uppers. In time, they had a lot of bootmakers who came and picked up uppers from them, made the shoes at home, and brought them back. They paid them for the finished shoes.

Morris got a job in 1948 making shoes at an Australian shoemaking firm established for 100 years at 75 King Street in the city. It was owned by the cousins Thomas and Wesley Jones, whose ancestors were convicts on the First Fleet. Adam had been learning to design shoe uppers, and in January 1949, he called Thomas Jones, who hired him. At a time when unskilled wages were about £6 10/- a week, they were earning £25 a week. When Adam was making shoe uppers for Thomas Jones, there were five or six other men working there. Adam used to work in the shop until 5 pm, and then take some design work from the other men home and work until midnight.

They stayed in Randwick until Raya became pregnant in 1950. At first, Raya didn't want to have any children, as she was afraid that the Holocaust would happen again to their children's generation. They decided to buy a house in Cooper Street, Maroubra, for £1,200, plus £200 for furniture. It was a lot of money at the time. They lived there until 1953, when Adam and Raya went to the United States.

In June 1949, the oldest brother Paul married Anne Feller, who was born in England. At the time, Paul was living in Furber Road, Centennial Park. But soon after being married, they moved to Hardy Street, Canterbury where Paul operated a painting and decorating business.

Figure 36 Paul and Anne Perkal, 1949

United States

Raya felt very insecure at first in Australia, as she had no family here, and felt she didn't have anything in common with Adam's family. She was very unhappy about leaving her sister Feiga behind in New York. Memories of the war were still vivid, she only felt safe with Feiga, who had been like a mother to her and saved her life during the war. To Raya, Australia was a strange country with strange people. Now she feels that she wouldn't want to live anywhere else, but at the time she didn't want to stay here.

Adam had promised her that they would stay in Australia for a while, and then go to America. So in 1953, when their daughter Marilyn was 13 months old, they decided to go to America. Adam worked there as a shoe designer, earning good money. When the wages were $42 a week here, he was earning $180 in America. He was a doing well, but he decided to return to Australia. He didn't like the United States because the travelling was too much for him. Also, he had the quiet life in Australia in his head, so after ten months he returned to Sydney in 1954. Raya stayed for about another eight months and then returned to Sydney with their daughter.

Building a new life in Sydney

A shoemaking partnership begins

After returning from the United States in 1954, Adam went into business with Morris, who was also a shoe designer. In April 1954, they applied to the Sydney City Council to use a first-floor room in 209 Hay Street, Haymarket, as a place for clicking boots (see Glossary).

Morris and Fanny were married again in Sydney in January 1956 at the Registrar General's Office, because their civil marriage in France in 1948 was not recognised in Australia. They were living in Bond Street Maroubra at this time, and then from about 1958 until 1968 in Boonah Street Matraville. From 1968, they lived in Wallangra Road, Dover Heights[26]. They had two children, Eric and Esther. Adam and Raya lived in the Maroubra house for 20 years, and then moved to Portland Street, Dover Heights in 1967[27]. Their second daughter, Deborah, was born in 1956.

Figure 38 Inside the Hay Street shop

Figure 37 Outside the Hay Street shop

In January 1961, the brothers applied to the Sydney City Council to use a shop at 126 Hay Street, Haymarket for the manufacture of shoe uppers. The shop was part a large building owned by the Council, right next door to the Capitol Theatre, and contained many other shops. There was Mr. Kolosky who made beautiful evening gowns, men's vests, and other kinds of clothes. Also there were jewellers and other bootmakers, and a woman who was a painter and made lamp shades.

They attract famous clients

Morris remembered that their first well-known customer was Ben Chifley (1885-1951), the Australian Prime Minister from 1945 to 1949. But their career as celebrity shoemakers probably started in 1954 with an order from the young Queen Elizabeth for a pair of golden slippers. The Queen was on her first tour of Australia after her coronation in 1953. The brothers did not actually meet the Queen, but a man from the British Embassy called in to their shop with the measurements and specifications, and came back later to pick up the completed slippers.

Prior to the Queen's 1954 visit, the Perkal brothers made 36 pairs of riding boots for the New South Wales Mounted Police. Sergeant Ron Livermore was the head of the mounted police depot in Redfern, and was in charge of training the 30-horse escort for the Queen's public appearances in Sydney during the visit.

Figure 39 Royal Tour police escort, 1954

But the most amazing pair of shoes they made was for Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Fiji's first Prime Minister and later President, who took size 18½, and stood at 6' 6". The wooden last dwarfed the average-size foot. When he came to the shop, Hay Street was closed in both directions. He arrived in an official car with security people, and talked about politics for an hour. He invited Morris over to Fiji, and Morris stayed in the hotel belonging to the President's mother-in-law as a guest for three weeks. Every year they made him three pairs: two pairs of shoes and one pair of slippers.


Figure 40 Queen Salote, London, 1953

The King of Tonga came in to the shop once in the 1950s, accompanied by Queen Salote (1900-1965). She was a very imposing woman at 6' 3" tall, 250 pounds, with a shoe size of 22. She had endeared herself to Londoners during Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953 as the only head of state to insist on riding in an open-topped carriage through the pouring rain, smiling and waving to the crowd. The Bee Gees came to the shop once in the 1960s to order shoes, but they didn't have enough money to pay a deposit. Their agent, Mrs. Kelly, said she was sorry but the Perkals would have to wait for the deposit, so they held off making the shoes until the deposit was paid.

When the Beatles toured Australia in 1964, they wanted black pointed boots with Cuban heels. Normally customers came to the shop, but there was always a riot when the Beatles went out in the street in those days. So the brothers went to their Kings Cross hotel to take the measurements. The Beatles popularised this style of footwear in the 1960s, and it became known as the Beatle Boot. In 1981, the American actor William Holden came in and ordered shoes. They made him two pairs of boots and two pairs of shoes, of crocodile skin, snake skin and lizard skin. He went back to America and two weeks later he slipped on a rug while he was drinking heavily in his apartment, cut his head badly and died.


Figure 41 The Beatles in Cuban heels

They often found people did not know what "bespoke" meant. Even the former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr, a very knowledgeable man, had to ask them what it meant. While in the shop, he spoke in German, taking the opportunity to polish up his German with the brothers. They also made shoes for Sir William Slim (Governor-General of Australia, 1953-1960), Sammy

Davis Junior, Billy Thorpe, Bob Hawke, and John Laws. They also made patent leather shoes for Frank Sinatra - they took his measurements when he was in Sydney, then sent them to him in America.

Another good customer was John Saunders, the original partner in Westfield with Frank Lowy. Mr. Saunders was a Jewish Hungarian who, like the Perkal brothers, was a Holocaust survivor who had made a successful life in Australia after the war. Also there was a Mr. Jennings who came out from England, and they used to make him five pairs every year. He told them he would pay three times as much in England, and he didn't have to pay for the airfare to Australia.

Figure 42 John Saunders

Stanley Wong of the Tai Yuen Palace restaurant in Hay Street was another very good customer. Whenever they used to go to his restaurant, there was always a bottle of wine on the table, and when the bill came out, he would take it and tear it up. Adam visited Hong Kong on his invitation, and was met by a Mercedes and wined and dined for four days. Stanley Wong was killed in 1985 by Triad agents at his home in Maroubra. But to them he was a gentleman's gentleman and the unofficial Mayor of Chinatown.

Figure 43 Cyril Vincenc

Their customers looked after them with free tickets and the like. Across the road was Cyril's delicatessen, owned by Cyril Vincenc, who emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1949. He could speak to his customers in Czech, Russian, Polish and English. His first customers were post-war refugees from Europe who were looking for a taste of home. The Perkal brothers got on well with everybody in the area. The local Chinese business people called them the White Chinese.

They also made many ice skating boots. There was a famous skating family, the Kennedys, who owned Kennedy's Skate Shop near the former Glaciarium ice skating rink at Central Station (1907 to the 1950s). Ken Kennedy was Australia's first Winter Olympian, competing in speed skating at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany in 1936. He was very friendly with the brothers, and through him they made skating boots for all the ice skating clubs in Australia.

They made skating boots for Pat Gregory, the world champion skater. She was the first Australian to win the International Gold Medal in 1947, the highest award for figure and free skating. As a professional skater, she had a very high profile career as a show skater in Europe with her husband, a ballroom dance champion and show skater.

Figure 44 Pat Gregory, 1957

Kerry Packer - their best customer

When Kerry Packer walked in to the shop in about 1975, the Perkal brothers met the man who was to become their best customer. He arrived at 8 am on a Friday morning with Sinclair Hill, who had introduced Packer to polo. The Perkals had made polo boots

for Sinclair Hill before. He had trained Prince Charles in polo and now he was Kerry Packer's trainer.

Figure 45 Kerry Packer's polo boots

Packer ordered a pair of size 14 polo boots but said he wanted them ready by 10 o'clock the next morning in time for a match that day. The brothers didn't know who he was, and Adam told him that this is not Hong Kong and they couldn't make them overnight. Kerry asked him how much they were, and Adam replied that they were $750 a pair. Kerry said he'd pay them double if he could have the boots by tomorrow morning. At the time, they had six men working for them, so the whole staff worked all night to finish the boots. The next day Kerry's driver came with a cheque and took the boots away.

Figure 47 Kerry Packer (right), 1993

They never looked back after that, because Kerry Packer ordered 13 pairs of riding boots every year until he died in 2005. He would only wear each pair two or three times, then send them back to the Perkals to be given to the homeless. They gave them to the Salvation Army, but he said not to mention to anybody where they came from. He was very generous to them. Morris and his son went every November to the polo Cup at Warwick Farm racecourse as Kerry Packer's guest. They were entertained all day in the Packers' tent and driven home by his staff afterwards. One time, Kerry said: "I envy you Morris, you are a healthy man. Don't stop working". The Perkals kept an unopened a bottle of 1999 Moet champagne that Packer gave them two days before he died in 2005.

Figure 46 James Packer

Since that first meeting with Kerry Packer, they made boots for his whole polo team, and all of the Argentinean polo team. The brothers also made two pairs of boots, two pairs of shoes, a pair of sandals and a pair of slippers for the workers at Ellerston, a Packer-owned pastoral property that contained a polo field. The brothers were driven out to the nearby town of Scone to take the measurements. They also made James Packer's riding boots when he started riding and playing polo.

One year, Kerry Packer's team went to England for the polo World Cup, but somehow on the way they lost six pairs of riding boots. Packer rang the Perkals to order replacement boots and to say he was sending a plane to Mascot. The plane would be waiting to fly

the boots to England. That was a week before the World Cup and they made them in time. The team won the tournament and received the gold medal from the Queen.

After Kerry Packer's death in 2005, Morris was interviewed by a reporter while delivering a condolence card to the family's Bellevue Hill home. He mentioned Packer's generous nature which he kept hidden from the world, and said "He cared about people. He might have been a tough man but inside he was as soft as his shoes". Morris was even present when Packer suffered a near-fatal heart attack playing polo in 1990. "I thought he was going to die that day", he said. "After my parents died I had not cried again until that day"[28].

Types of bespoke footwear

People have their footwear custom made for many reasons. Some because they can't get the style or size they want anywhere else, others for comfort, or because they have difficult-shaped feet. The Perkal brothers did not have any house styles, but believed they could make all types of footwear. This included polo and dressage boots, safety steel cap boots, ladies dancing shoes in soft leather and walking and fishing boots. Telstra and the State Rail were big customers of their safety boots. It took a few days to make each pair of shoes.

But their favourite work was making surgical footwear - orthopaedic shoes for disabled people. Morris said "I love to make shoes for people who are disabled, and make them walk again. That's what I love". They had many clients for this type of footwear: the hospitals, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Spastic Centre. For invalids who could not travel to their shop, the brothers used to drive to their home and take the measurements there. In recent years they continued to make shoes for some invalids, but would tell the customers to take a taxi to the shop and the brothers would pay for the taxi.

Figure 48 Orthopaedic footwear

In the 1950s and 1960s, they worked for the Polio Association, making corrective shoes. An epidemic of poliomyelitis, or infantile paralysis, peaked in the 1940s and 1950s. This was a fearful and highly infectious viral disease with no vaccine and no cure that affected some 40,000 Australians, mainly children under five years old. Acute cases experienced crippling difficulties in walking or breathing[29]. The fear generated by this epidemic led to extraordinary efforts to find a vaccine (which has successfully eradicated it almost everywhere), and in the development of rehabilitation therapy and specialised footwear.

A dying art

The shop's walls were lined with hundreds of strips of leather in every possible colour. Machinery long considered antique was in everyday use, as were the brothers' primitive book-keeping techniques and old-fashioned courtesy. Other walls were lined with thousands of wooden lasts. Every customer had a last made precisely to the shape of their foot. They never threw out any of the lasts in case a customer came back for another order.

Figure 49 Leather on every wall

There used to be a hundred or more shoemakers in Sydney. Now there are no leather merchants left, and the last specialist tannery closed in 2006[30]. Fortunately, the brothers had enough leather in stock to last another ten years. Is there any future in bootmaking? "It's a dying art," said Adam, shaking his head. "We had four different apprentices, and not one of them ended up taking it on".

Shoemakers have always occupied an important place in our society. After all, without shoes we can't go about our daily business. But in today's mass marketed world, shoemakers today seem to be part of a bygone era. In over 62 years, the Perkal brothers employed many bootmakers from all over the world. They had Italians, Poles, Yugoslavs, Serbians, Russians, and more recently some from Lebanon.

The brothers still regarded the Australian leather they hoarded from earlier days as some of the best in the world, and far better than skins they imported from France. "There used to be very good tanners in Australia." said Adam. "We used to have factories making shoes equal to any in the world. Now you can't get good leather in Australia. We used to deal in thousands of kilos of Australian leather. Now it all comes from France. We used to make the best kid leather in the world, and our calf leather was just as good as French leather, or better. Now, even kangaroo skins are processed in Japan."

Miss Saigon sends them to Surry Hills

The Perkal brothers' shop at 126 Hay Street was in a building that belonged to Sydney City Council. In 1987, the Council called for tenders to restore and develop the adjoining Capitol theatre. The successful proposal was from Ipoh Gardens (Australia) Pty Ltd, a Malaysian company, and a contract was signed in March 1992. Part of the Council's plan was to widen the stage to accommodate big musicals like *Miss Saigon* and *West Side Story*. This meant that part of the 126 Hay Street building would be included in the extended theatre.

In 1992, the shopkeepers in the building were given notice to leave by the Council. However, the Council gave the Perkal brothers the use of two shops in a Council-owned building at 35-45 Wentworth Avenue, near the present Vibe Hotel, and only charged them rent for the last month they were there. In November 1992, the brothers applied to the Council to use shop numbers 2 and 3 for the sale and repair of shoes[31]. The Perkal brothers were interested in buying the

building, but the Council sold it to the hotel, who offered them more money. So the brothers had to move for a second time. That building has since been demolished, and the budget hotel named Southern Cross Suites is on the site now.

But the brothers must have realised soon after the Council announced the development of the theatre that they would have find a new shop, because in August 1989 they applied to the Council to adapt the house at 386 Crown Street for use as a surgical shoe shop and leather merchants, at a cost of $5,000[32]. So in 1989 they bought the Crown Street property. It was owned by a woman who had five lodgers paying rent to her. They finally moved in to the new shop in 1995. In the end, it had taken months of work to set up shelves and move all the stock and equipment twice, first to Wentworth Avenue and then to Crown Street.

Figure 50 The Surry Hills shop

Daily life in Surry Hills

The brothers soon settled into their new shop on the busy corner of Albion and Crown Streets in the rag trade suburb of Surry Hills. Lunch at work was a bread roll with a piece of ham or a piece of sausage, a cup of tea and three pieces of fruit. Sometimes they went to the Chlebiček Cafe on the Bourke and Albion Street corner. They didn't use the fridge out the back, as it was packed with food from a Russian man who lived in a Housing Commission flat nearby. Adam did all the driving in the last few years, as Morris lost his licence following an accident. Adam drove them both to work every day from Dover Heights.

They talked about politics a lot, and sport, especially soccer. They listened to the television in the workshop. They agreed on matters of religion. Since the Holocaust, Morris was not a great believer in anything, and the same went for Adam. Where was God when he allowed his chosen people to be slaughtered? All the same, they had a seat together at the synagogue. They were the oldest ones there, all their friends had died. They were chosen to be grooms of the Torah at a special festival at the Central Synagogue, a very big honour. They both loved Jewish tradition, but it was sometimes hard to believe in God when you've seen people going into the gas chambers.


Figure 51 Sewing the shoes together

They spent more time together than with their wives or children. They worked together six days a week, and on the way to work on Saturdays they went to Paddy's Market for some fruit and vegetables. They didn't have any disagreements at home, and that is because their wives didn't

have any idea what they were doing there at the business. They were happiest when they were working together making beautiful shoes. They always kept themselves busy. Adam did the tops of the shoes, and Morris did the soles and the lasts. That's how they always worked together. Morris was quite a handyman, and was very good with machinery and electrical things. He used to fix all the machines in the workshop.

Figure 52 Shaping the shoes

Morris went for walks with his son in the evenings after dinner. Adam wished he could go too, but he had an operation on his back, and it was very difficult to walk much. Morris wasn't in a concentration camp, he said. Even when Adam walked two blocks down the road to visit the barber, he had to stop a number of times to rest.

The brothers didn't socialise much in later years. Previously they used to go to parties and dinners. Adam worried about Morris – Morris loved talking to people, he was very sociable, but not his wife, she didn't like to socialise as much. They didn't discuss their children - that was taboo. Adam had three grandchildren, but Morris's children never married, and Adam thought he was a bit jealous.

Adam thought the secret of their longevity was to have work, good food three times a day, and not to worry about the whole world with terrorists and wars and all the problems. Morris, on the other hand, thought it was due to having wives – someone to argue with! Morris said that when he went home after work, he had a little bit of whiskey and some fruit, then a glass of wine with dinner. He didn't like to sit in front of the television set like a zombie.

The Perkals' shop was a rare pocket of authenticity in a suburb almost entirely given over to gentrification now. They were still working in inches when they took measurements with a tape measure. They didn't use a computer. They did have one once, but after a while they put it outside the shop with a sign saying "Please help yourself". It was an old computer and they threw it out. All the invoices were made out by hand, with no typing. But they used a fax machine to send their invoices out.

Morris said that in the last few years his customers were afraid they were going to retire, so they were ordering three or four pairs of shoes at once. If they did retire, they would be taking with them the treasured art of shoemaking, and Sydney would be the poorer for it.

The aftermath of the war

Adam didn't talk much after the war – the Mauthausen concentration camp affected him. It affected everybody, seeing people killed every minute. He was changed physically and mentally. Adam and Raya didn't talk about the concentration camp too much, because it upset him. He was an innocent boy at the start of the war, just 18 years old.

Adam continued to have nightmares about his wartime experiences, more than sixty years later. Sometimes he called out in his sleep that the Gestapo agents were after him, and Raya had to

wake him. It was still in his head, and he couldn't forget a lot of things that happened in Germany. During one bombardment in Kassel, Adam was manning an anti-aircraft gun on top of the factory, and a German friend of his standing next to him had his head chopped off by shrapnel. Miraculously, nothing happened to Adam. After all these years, it was still a vivid memory.

Not only the Germans were after him, but also the Poles, which is why he never went back to Poland. After so many years, he still couldn't stand the Poles. He didn't even speak Polish at home, only English, so their children don't understand Polish at all. Sometimes if Adam and Raya didn't want the children to understand what they were talking about, they spoke in Yiddish. Adam's grandchildren wrote essays in school about the Holocaust, so they that knew what the survivors went through. Adam and Raya never talked about the Holocaust until the children researched their school projects, complete with photos.

For years, they never mentioned it, except to their friends like Stan Grossman or others who went through it, because they had the same experiences and would understand. Otherwise, they didn't talk about it, as it was too painful a memory to get out of the system. They'd never be free of it, and had to live with it all of their lives. Adam saw some movies set in that time, such as *Europa Europa*, which brought back memories. Raya said that about half of the action in this film was what Adam went through, passing himself off as non-Jewish, and the ghetto, and surviving for nearly five years from 1940 to 1945. It was very hard for him to play a part in order to survive, and very dangerous.

Adam said that he didn't much fear for himself when he was in the war – he was like a robot with a role he had to perform and he was able to carry it off when he was with other people. Fear only came at night when he was alone. During wartime, he forced himself to not show any fear, or to look suspicious. He had to play a part, and he played it successfully.

When Adam and Raya were living in America in 1953, Adam found himself dreaming of a peaceful life in Australia. In later years, it was very hard for him to imagine the life of fear and deception he led in the war. He was grateful over the years that he could do so well in Australia. He was happy with his family and with his life, despite a little bit of sickness, but he thanked God for it.

After her wartime experiences, Raya had nightmares and was very sick. In 1951, she had to have an ulcer operation and a gall bladder operation, because she couldn't eat the right food when she was growing up in the ghetto and the concentration camps. In 1977, she suddenly got a haemorrhage in the eye. At the time, her specialist didn't think this was related to the war treatment, but her older sister Sonia insisted that she get further advice. She had to be careful bending and lifting. Then in 1993, she went blind in her right eye. The left eye was also very bad. The doctor told her it would be very dangerous to operate, so nothing could be done.

Raya had to give up driving. Then a friend, Helen Grossman, who had also been in a concentration camp, suggested that Raya go and see her own doctor. She was sent to a retina specialist, who found that there was congealed blood behind the retina, and Raya had to think about whether to take the risk of an operation. Raya decided to have the operation, as she'd

rather die than be blind, so she had the operation, then there was a very long period of recovery, but it was successful.

Then in 1994 the same operation was performed on her left eye. The doctor said it would be very straightforward compared to the other eye, but she thought afterwards that something was not right, and when the bandages came off, she couldn't see properly out of the left eye, only objects on the right side. It improved a bit, but then she got double vision in the left eye.

She was sent to Dr Graham Peter, a specialist in double vision, who said that double vision comes from the brain, not the eye, and that the operation on the left eye had been a success. The specialist asked Raya about any injury on her head, and she told him about the rifle blow during the war. He said that is what caused it, but it had been dormant, and the operation seemed to bring it out. She still has double vision, but she can drive again, and has a prism in the glasses to help this.

Holocaust awareness

The Holocaust raised tough questions about God and religion for many people. Morris said that religion started the biggest wars in the world, and the brothers didn't like to discuss religion. Raya thinks that everyone should know about the Holocaust, and she gets very angry when someone claims that it did not happen. Her sister-in-law Anne (Paul's wife) was on a bus and a young man asked her how she liked the books of David Irving, who has written that there was no Holocaust. Anne told him she was married to a man who was in Dachau. But this young man said he didn't believe her, and he was on his way to a meeting, and that the Holocaust did not happen.

Raya says that now, if someone makes an anti-Semitic remark, or insults the Jews, she becomes very upset. She would never let anyone talk to her like that, nor would her children. Her girls were known to be Jewish in SCEGGS, and had to kneel like the Christian girls in the Anglican Church, but they had no trouble from being Jewish. She says there is still a lot of anti-Semitism in the world, and it is very sad. The film *Ship of Fools* is about a German-born Jew on a boat, who didn't want to believe the Holocaust.

Family and cultural activities

Adam and Raya had two daughters and three grandchildren. Both of their daughters went to SCEGGS (Sydney Church of England Girls' Grammar School), and had a very good education. The older daughter Marilyn was a Hauptmann for 20 years when she was first married. She was divorced, and is now happily married to Eric Shapiro. She has a daughter, Lisa Hauptmann. Marilyn is a solicitor who practises in family law. She co-wrote a book titled *When It's Over: A Guide to Separation and Divorce* in 1995. The younger daughter Deborah is a qualified pharmacist. She is married to an architect, Alex Moldovan, and has two sons, Daniel and Aaron. Deborah works as a travel agent now.

Figure 53 Raya and Adam, Sydney, 1995

Morris and Fanny have two children: Eric, who is an accountant, and Esther, who is a business manager. Both of them live at Dover Heights, looking after their mother.

Adam's hobbies were painting and watching sport. He used to play soccer with his grandchildren until his health deteriorated in his last few years. Adam spoke Hebrew because the grandchildren received a Jewish education at Moriah College in Queen's Park. Adam used to paint as a schoolboy. Then when Paul died in 1983, Adam inherited his old brushes and started painting again, mainly landscapes and portraits. Morris had one of Adam's paintings in his house. But Adam had to give up painting in his last few years because of macular degeneration.

Figure 54 Sonia Sankey, Sydney, 1995

Adam and Raya's Holocaust experiences did not affect how they identified as being Jewish. They were very involved with Jewish organisations: the United Israel Appeal, Jewish National Fund, and the Jewish Board of Deputies, and were benefactors to all the Jewish causes, and to the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army. They belonged to most of the Jewish organisations, although Raya is not active now as she hasn't been well, but they supported each organisation.

Sadly, both Adam and Morris passed away within two weeks of each other in December 2013. Along with their wives, they had lived through terrible times in their youth, and survived to build happy and successful lives in Australia after the war. They dedicated themselves to their chosen field of making high quality footwear while knowing that theirs was a dying art. The great interest shown in them by the media in recent years was evidence of the esteem in which they were held by everyone they met.

In their own words

The Perkal brothers gave many interviews for magazines, newspapers and television programs in their last ten years of their lives. Some of the things they said seem to stand out as expressions of their personalities and their view of the world. These quotations are presented here in no particular order.

Morris: “You should never retire!”

Morris: “Ask me about any customer and I will tell you where they live and what they do. I have short hair but a long memory”.

Morris: “The wooden lasts for each customer are all in boxes. Everyone is in a box - unless they die, then they are in another box”.

Our father said: “Learn a trade and you will never go without in your life”.

“Kangaroo leather is the best leather in the world”.

“Helping a disabled child to walk, that is our favourite work”.

Morris: “Work is the best medicine in your life. If you stop working you either get Youngheimers disease or Old Timer’s disease!”.

Morris: “Of course we both get on well together. Otherwise we would have divorced each other. We would have needed a divorce lawyer”.

Morris: “Hard work didn’t kill anyone, it only made you miserable”.

Adam: “When I am working in the shop, I don’t feel sick, or have any aches or pains”.

“My patients won’t let me retire - I have to help people to walk”.

Morris: “We’ll be working together at 120. Only the good die young”.

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Glossary

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC): Commonly called the Joint, this was a worldwide Jewish relief organisation that offered aid to Jewish people around the world through social and community assistance programs. During the Holocaust, the JDC provided safe havens for refugees outside the war zone. Then after the war, it kept survivors from mass starvation with millions of pounds of food, medicine and clothing.

Armia Krajowa (AK): Called the Home Army, it was the dominant Polish resistance movement in German-occupied Poland. Its main activity was the sabotage of German military operations. The attitude of AK members towards Jews varied widely: they provided Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto with firearms prior to the 1943 uprising, but there were also reports of anti-Semitic behavior from some AK units.

Aryan: A term that originally referred to ancient Indo-Iranians. But it is nowadays used for the blond blue-eyed physical ideal of Nazi racial theory, a group more Nordic than Middle Eastern. In particular, the Nazis proposed the ideal of an Aryan master race, excluding Jews as non-Aryan.

Ashkenazim: A Jewish ethnic division tracing back to immigrants who settled in Central and Eastern Europe over a thousand years ago. Hasidism was developed by Ashkenazi Jews, and they were also the main victims of the Holocaust in German-occupied countries. Their language was Yiddish.

Betar: A right-wing Zionist youth movement founded in 1923 by Vladimir Jabotinsky. Betar was active in World War II in the formation of militia groups to resist Nazi forces and other assaults on Jewish communities. Betar directly aided in widespread illegal immigration of Jews to Palestine during the British Mandate in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Cantor: A Jewish singer trained in the vocal art who leads the congregation in songs of prayer.

Cheder: A traditional elementary school teaching the basics of Jewish religion and culture and the Hebrew language. Boys attended cheder from about 5 years old to 13 or 14, ending with a bar mitzvah.

Chevra kadisha: A Jewish funeral society of men and women who prepare bodies for burial according to Jewish tradition.

Clicking: The skill of cutting out the upper leather sections of a shoe template from sheets of leather using a sharp knife.

Endeka: National Democracy, a Polish right-wing nationalist political movement notable for its anti-Semitic program aimed at excluding Jews from Polish life. It was active in demonstrations and attacks on Jews in the 1930s.

Gestapo: The secret police of Nazi Germany. Its agents investigated cases of treason, espionage, sabotage and attacks on the Nazi Party. Officially operating above the law, countless thousands of German dissidents were arrested and executed without due legal process during the Nazi era.

Ghetto liquidation: This was the closing down of a ghetto when it had reached the end of its useful life as a supplier of forced labour to German industry. Prisoners were either sent to extermination camps, or if they were lucky, to another concentration camp to provide more forced labour.

Ichud (also called Ihud): A small Zionist political party founded in 1942 and dedicated to Arab-Jewish reconciliation.

Irgun: A right-wing Zionist paramilitary group that believed that any means necessary to establish the Jewish State of Israel was justified, including terrorism. Most famously, the group carried out the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946 when it was the head office of the British authorities in Palestine.

Italian neorealist cinema: A national film movement from 1943 to the early 1950s. Because studios such as Cinecitta were heavily damaged in the war, neorealist films were shot in the streets and countryside, often with non-professional actors. The hardship of working-class life after the war was a common theme, as was the role of Italian partisans in resisting German occupation.

Jewish Brigade: A military formation of the British Army in World War II from 1944, made up of mainly Jewish soldiers fighting under the British and Zionist flags. After the war, Brigade members assisted Holocaust survivors to immigrate illegally to Palestine.

Judenrat: A Jewish Council or administrative body that the Germans required Jews to create in occupied territory, such as ghettos. The most controversial task of the Judenrat was to turn over Jewish community members to the Germans for deportation to forced labour or extermination camps.

Kapo: A concentration camp prisoner assigned by the SS as a camp guard. A kapo supervised forced labour or carried out other administrative tasks. Usually selected for their violent and criminal tendencies, they enabled the Germans to maintain order in the camps with minimal involvement by the SS.

Kibbutz: A collective community in Israel, traditionally based on agriculture. Kibbutzim started in the early twentieth century as utopian communities combining socialism and Zionism. Those established in Europe were intended to prepare people for a future farming life in Israel.

Komsomol: Soviet youth organisation, for ages 15 to 28. It was the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and aimed to teach the values of the Party to youngsters. Membership gave access to state-sponsored holidays and higher education. Active members received privileges and promotion.

Kosher: This refers to food that may be consumed according to Jewish religious dietary laws. Among the many laws are prohibitions on consuming unclean animals (pork and shellfish), meat and milk at the same meal, and the requirement to slaughter mammals and birds by a qualified Jewish butcher.

Malaria: A mosquito-borne infectious disease that causes fever and headache, and can progress to coma and death. While it is mainly a tropical disease, parts of Italy have been known to produce the right conditions for malaria.

Patent leather: A superior type of fine grain leather that has been glazed and polished to achieve a high gloss finish that is also waterproof.

Pogrom: A violent riot aimed at persecution or massacre of an ethnic or religious group, particularly Jews. The term originally described nineteenth century attacks on Jews in the Russian Empire. Pogroms in the 1880s gave a boost to the early Zionist movement.

Rosh Hashanah: The Jewish New Year. It is a two-day celebration that occurs 163 days after the first day of Passover, between early September and early October.

Sephardim: A Jewish ethnic division tracing back to immigrants from the Middle East who settled in Spain and Portugal a thousand years ago. They were forced out of the Iberian Peninsula in the 1490s, and moved elsewhere in Europe and North Africa. The language of the Sephardim is Ladino.

Shabbat: The Jewish Sabbath, or day of rest, extending from a few minutes before sunset on Friday to the appearance of three stars on Saturday evening. Observant Jews should not work, but should rest, eat festive meals, and spend time with family. Other restrictions are observed by Orthodox Jews.

Shoe last: A contoured model of the customer's foot. The shoemaker measures the foot carefully then files and sands a piece of hardwood or plastic to match the size and shape the foot.

Skiving: The process in leather crafting of reducing the thickness of leather to facilitate bending or folding. It is also used when joining two edges of leather together.

SS (Schutz-Staffel): A small paramilitary unit originally created as Hitler's bodyguard. It grew under Himmler's leadership into a large and powerful organisation, fiercely loyal to Hitler, which carried out most of the war crimes of the Holocaust.

Talmud: A central text of Judaism, it contains the teachings of thousands of rabbis, giving instruction in Jewish law and interpreting the Torah to guide the daily lives of all Jews.

Torah: The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, from Genesis to Deuteronomy, known as the Five Books of Moses. The rabbinic commentaries on the books are often regarded as part of the Torah.

Typhus: A bacterial disease spread by infected lice that ravaged many communities throughout history. It was particularly virulent in prisoner of war camps, ghettos and concentration camps where prisoners were held in unhygienic conditions. Even larger epidemics after the war were averted by the use of the newly-invented DDT to kill lice on millions of refugees.

UNRRA: The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was an international aid agency, operating from 1943 to 1947, providing aid to war victims in the form of food, fuel, clothing, shelter and medical care. It was a major player in helping the repatriation of displaced persons after World War II.

Volksdeutscher: A term used by the Nazis to describe an ethnic German living outside Germany, in the German Diaspora.

Wannsee Conference: A meeting of senior Nazi officials held in a suburb of Berlin in January 1942 to plan the implementation of the Final Solution to the Jewish question. Under this plan, most remaining Jews in German-occupied Europe would be deported to Poland and exterminated.

Yiddish: A High German language of Ashkenazi Jews that emerged about 1000 AD in Central Europe. Yiddish as a dynamic living language was largely destroyed by the Holocaust, and Hebrew was chosen over Yiddish as the language of the new state of Israel in 1948.

Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. It occurs between mid-September and mid-October each year, and is traditionally observed by spending most of the day in synagogue services.

Young Pioneers: A mass youth organisation in the Soviet Union similar to the Scouts, for children aged 10 to 15. Virtually all Soviet children joined the Pioneers. The main symbols of the organisation were the red banner and red neck scarf.

Zionism: The movement to create a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the Land of Israel. Its motivations are to uphold Jewish culture and identity and to be free of anti-Semitic discrimination in the Diaspora.

Zloty: The Polish unit of currency.

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Perkal Family Tree

Generation 1 and children

- Azriel Perkal (1882-1941) – Esther Rivka Applebaum (1886-1939)
    - Paul (1910-1983)
    - Feiga
    - Daughter (xxxx-c1941)
    - Morris (1919-2013)
    - Myer (xxxx-c1941)
    - Adam (1921-2013)
    - Daughter (xxxx-c1941)
    - Son (c1930-1939)

Generation 2 and children

- Paul Perkal (1910-1983) – wife in Poland
    - 2 children
- Paul Perkal (1910-1983) – Anne Feller (c1905-2006)
- Feiga Perkal – xxx Hoffman
    - Daughter
- Morris Perkal (1919-2013) – Fanny Zabyzny (c1923-)
    - Eric
    - Esther
- Myer Perkal (xxxx-c1941)
- Adam Perkal (1921-2013) – Raya Ferder (1929-)
    - Marilyn (1951-)
    - Deborah (1956-)
- Daughter (xxxx-c1941)
- Son (c1930-1939)

Generation 3 and children

- Marilyn Perkal (1951-) – xxxx Hauptman
    - Lisa
- Marilyn Perkal (1951-) – Eric Shapiro
- Deborah Perkal (1956-) – Alexander Moldovan
    - Daniel
    - Aaron

Generation 4

- Lisa Hauptmann
- Daniel Moldovan
- Aaron Moldovan

Applebaum Family Tree

Generation 1 and children

- Xxxx Applebaum (c1852-c1894)
    - Jacob David (1878-1964)
    - Unknown
    - Arthur John (1885-1955)
    - Esther Rivka (1886-1939)
    - Morris (1886-1931)
    - Matla Perla (1895- 1979)

Generation 2 and children

- Jacob David Applebaum (1878-1964)
- Unknown
- Arthur John Applebaum (1885-1955) – Lily Hielman (xxxx-1958)
    - Alexander Joseph (1914-1971)
    - Arthur John (c1915-xxxx)
    - Trevor Zola (1917-1983)
    - Rita (1924-1999)
- Esther Rivka Applebaum (1886-1939) – Azriel Perkal (1882-1941)
    - (see Perkal family tree)
- Morris Applebaum (1886-1931)
- Matla Perla Applebaum (1895-1979) – Gershan Henoch Tetelbaum (1891-1974)
    - Hides Mindle (1919-)
    - Sheva Hendel (1922-)
    - Cyril (1923-)
    - Pesil (1931-)

Generation 3 and children

- Alexander Joseph Applebaum (1914-1971)
- Arthur John Applebaum (c1915-xxxx)
- Trevor Zola Applebaum (1917-1983) – Margaret Helen Watkins (1920-2000)
- Rita Applebaum (1924-1999) – Eric Flynn
- Hides Mindle Tetelbaum (1919-)
- Sheva Hendel Tetelbaum (1922-)
- Cyril Tetelbaum (1923-)
- Pesil Tetelbaum (1931-)

Ferder Family Tree

Generation 1 and children

- Leon Ferder
    - Abraham
    - Fishel

Generation 2 and children

- Abraham Ferder
- Fishel Ferder – Malka Sykris (c1898-1943)
    - Feiga (1909-1998)
    - Akiva (1916-xxxx)
    - Sonia (1923-)
    - Raya (1929-)

Generation 3 and children

- Feiga Ferder (1909-1998) – xxxx Tabenhaus (xxxx-c1943)
- Feiga Ferder (1909-1998) – Josef Eidelson (1916-2004)
- Akiva Ferder (1916-xxxx)
- Sonia Ferder (1923-) – Israel (Sam) Sankey (c1920-1995)
    - Danny
    - Larry
- Raya Ferder (1929-) – Adam Perkal (1921-2013)
    - (see Perkal family tree)

Generation 4 and children

- Danny Sankey – Kaylene xxxx
- Larry Sankey – Robyn Rachel Brass (1954-)

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