

Thomas Blatt

Video Transcripts

Video 1: Thomas Blatt Betrayed by his Friend

I look around, I see a good friend of mine [Yanik Napchit?] the guy who has many times sleeping at my place, I slept at his place. Happy, I said, “Yanik, please save me.” Yanik said, “Of course, [Tommy?]. Go to our barn.” His farm, and his barn was very close. So I go over there but there is a big padlock on the gate—I can’t go into the barn. So I walk around to see maybe some panels is broken or whatever. It was an old barn. When I see a woman standing a little bit higher—you see this was a foothill, it stands higher. And she started to yell to me [POLISH?]. I said, “What’s happened?” “Yanik is coming.” “Well, if Yanik is coming, why should I run? He will open the padlock”. But why is she so desperate, I think agitated? I turn my head to Yanik, and I see Yanik with a German—with a soldier. “He’s a Jew, take him.” And he took me, took me down to the marketplace where all the Jews were congregated. I’ve seen my parents are sitting there. Pretty soon two trucks arrived and the front of the two trucks was a jeep with soldiers with a machine gun and the back of the two trucks another jeep, soldiers, machine gun. The trucks were covered with canvas. He told us to go in—we went in. And the trucks started in the eastern direction where Sobibor was, and now we know we’re going to Sobibor.

Video 2: Thomas Blatt Goodbye to his Mother

There’s a German—its him, Karl Franzel. Start to yell, “Men to one side and women and children to another side.” And I was at that time with my mother, but instinctively I felt I have a better chance as a man, so I said to my mother, “Goodbye.” I said it in a way [?] now what’s happened a day before in the ghetto. I was thirsty and I said to my ma, “Ma, could I have a drink of milk” and she said, “Take it, it’s in the icebox,” and probably I drink too much because my ma, at a point said, [Tommy?] “Leave it, tomorrow’s another day.” She meant I should keep it for tomorrow, I should leave some in. And now, when I separate from my ma, instead to take her around and kiss her like all the other people do—brothers, sisters, parents, I said to her “You see? You told me tomorrow’s another day like a broken promise.” And she said, “That’s all I have to say.” And this way, we’ve parted.

Video 3: Thomas Blatt Escaped from Sobibor

When eh—finally after he stopped, we started to yell, “Hoorah,” and we were running through the main gate, and I was running through the main gate. Some people [?] but I was aware that where the main gate is, there were German quarters and there were no mines. This was the only camp in Second World

War—Nazi camp—who had mines around the perimeter, and he didn't know that close to the gate and close to the German quarters there are mines but - alarm mines. They don't hear them—they make alarm only and I was going this way when I noticed this Franzel with a machine gun—this guy again, shouting at us. And I see a friend fall here, fall here, and I hear the whistle of the bullets so I run back. I run back, and I don't remember which way I manage. I did run in the corridor surrounding the camp—the corridor where the Nazi—where the guards were moving around. And probably, I went through this little gate surrounding this hallway. Now I was lucky—I was lucky because in this way two barbed wire fences were left behind so there was three barbed wire fences. I had on the front one barbed wire fence, so I run to the barbed wire fence but I can't do much because I have one little knife. I remember it must be from—I find it sorting this stuff. It must be from a rabbi or whatever was a weak knife written Kosher for Pesach, I remember. Maybe it should be only for the holiday, for the Passover. And I can't cut the barbed wire but pretty soon a guy did come with an ax. He made a hole, and people started to go through. And I start to go through, and exactly when I was half in this hole the guard probably noticed people standing in the line to go through, the guard standing in the tower. Because he start to shoot again, and people then—they'd run away from this line. They started to climb the fence like a ladder. At a point the fence with the weight of the people climbing collapsed and exactly when I went through, the fence fall over me and I was pinned down and I thought "Oh God, I can't go out." People were stepping over me, and I can't go out and this is it, not even wounded in this way. But, I had a coat—a very nice leather coat and the barbed wires were bented a little bit what I managed to slid—when everyone fell down—escaped—I managed to slid out, leaving the coat and escape. There was probably—I was probably the last of the escapees. I fall down a few times thinking I'm hit, but I wasn't hit and in that time, with the barbed wires. I thought I'm lost but now later analyzing this, it actually—this was my miracle, because when I was running, if I would run the first, I would hit the mines because of the whole thing, because laying on to the barbed wire, I would see the mines exploding and now when I started all the mines explode so I made it to the forest.