

Abram Wirsztel

Members of “Freiheit” Create “Fives”¹

The *Poalei Zion* (Zionist Socialists) youth [group] *Freiheit*”, to which I belonged, conducted a multi-branched cultural activity among the working youth. Members travelled to receive training and then to the Land of Israel. We participated in all enterprises for the “League for a Working Land of Israel”, *Keren Kayemeth*, *Keren HaYesod*, elections to the Zionist Congress, etc.

With the introduction of the Nazi hordes, the entire work was halted. The members Szyja Stroz (Chairman) and Dawid Kaufman (Secretary), who stood at the head of the party, were forced to leave their homes for fear of the Gestapo.

I received a letter from Stroz, [saying] that he had arrived safely in Lithuania but, since then, all traces of him disappeared.

In September 1942, after the selection, we were brought to “Golgota” [the cinema next to Jasna Góra] under heavy escort, where we, the members of *Freiheit*, *Gordonia*, [and] *Ha’Shomer Ha’Tzair*, stuck together, like one family. We shared everything we owned.

In the “Small Ghetto,” the *Freiheit* movement helped to organise the “*kibbutz*,” and “fives” were created. Our instructor was Simek Abramowicz. My “five” comprised Wolf Pressman, Izrael Slomnicki, Awigdor Szyldhaus, Dawid Kantor [and] Abram Wirsztel. Of all these, I was the sole survivor.

Many members went to the forest and we provided them with good boots and warm clothes. All this was carried out with huge effort and risking our lives.

In the “Small Ghetto”, a cache of various weapons was created, as well as of German uniforms, boots, helmets, etc. The stash was in a tunnel at Nadrzeczna 88, but the Germans discovered it and, as a result, numerous comrades fell.

Those remaining in the ghetto were transferred - some to Raków and others to HASAG-Pelcery. My wife and I were among those taken to HASAG, where the labourers were held in horrifying conditions, hunger and filth. Typhus spread and it did not spare my brother and me.

On 15th January 1945, we were sent to Buchenwald.

¹ [TN: Groups of five individuals.]