

From the Testimony of Judith Becker about the Death March

When we left Auschwitz I was told there were a million prisoners leaving Auschwitz. And so the killing was so wholesale, it was so without any "Rachmones" that there were thousands and thousands and thousands of people killed on these Death Marches and the closer we got into Germany, of course, the more anxious they were to kill more because they knew they couldn't do it right in the middle of the city. And that's when I found out that a lot of the Germans cooperated, not only cooperated, would do the same. Not only the soldiers and not only the SS and not only the Ukrainians, but the populations, too. It became very, very obvious to us because the killing took place right in front of the civilian population. So it seems to me, and this is speculating, that since we were marching in sparsely populated farm areas, that they probably let the farmers have whatever they would find and that would be enough to get them very excited and do whatever they needed to be done. When we entered populated Germany near Grossrosen, they took the men into the camp - the camp there is Mauthausen - and the women, at least I think the women, I don't know, we were loaded onto coal wagons, you know, that are open. And it was very hard to get up there. How to you get up? There were no ladders and we didn't have strength, one didn't have strength to get the other up. So a lot of the people got killed actually trying to get onto the trains because if we didn't get on the train fast enough they would shoot. So we were very fortunate, we were standing there trying to figure out who's going to stand on whose head in order to get up there when this kapo, the kapo from the "Druckerei", from the print shop, he happened to come by and he helped us.

Source: Yad Vashem Archives 0.3- 9416