

he was either a German or a Hungarian collaborator, they were prepared to shoot him. Stephen convinced the Russian soldiers that he was a Jewish prisoner working under false papers. After one more march and another stay in a forced labor camp, this time under the auspices of the victorious Russians, Steve was allowed his freedom.

He traveled back to Hajdunanas where he learned the terrible news: His parents and younger brother had been murdered in Auschwitz; his only sister was shot while on a death march from Auschwitz. His older brother was killed on the German-Russian front while working in a forced labor camp.

A year later, with Europe still in turmoil, Steve entered medical school in Germany because that country was under the administration of the Allied powers. Although living there was distasteful for him, he found a community of other young Jewish medical students who kept to themselves, studied and socialized.

In June 1946, he was sitting on a train traveling through Munich, reading a physics book. Across from him sat a young attractive girl reading a German novel in gothic print. Behind her, some rowdy youngsters were trying to speak Hebrew, arguing about the pronunciation of a Hebrew word. When she could no longer stand their noisy bickering, she turned around and pronounced it for them.

"Are you Jewish?" Steve asked in surprise.

"Yes," said the young woman. "My name is Lusja Schwarzwald from Lvov, Poland."



Paul Ornstein visited Anna in her hometown of Szendro in the summer of 1942.

Paul Ornstein Late winter, 1944 Austrian border

In June 1944, the Nazis closed the rabbinic seminary in Budapest, and Paul Ornstein was ordered to report to a forced labor camp. From there, he was sent to the Austrian border near the Danube on the front lines, between the Germans and the approaching Russians. His job was to dig ditches.

Subsisting on very little food, Paul still had in his jacket pocket a feast for the eyes: an envelope with 120 pictures of his family in Hajdunanas, his best friend Steve Hornstein and his girlfriend Anna Brunn.

One Sunday morning in late 1944, Paul was digging ditches for the Germans and the Hungarians fighting

alongside them, when the Russians began the heaviest shelling yet. The Germans and Hungarians retreated, leaving the Jews behind. The shelling increased to such intensity that Paul fled, too, leaving his jacket at the ditch.

"I wanted to go back for it, but this friend of mine wouldn't let me," he recalls. "But I had to get those pictures. So we crawled back together on our bellies in the middle of all that shelling. I never let those pictures out of my sight again."

All the while, as he dug trenches, he planned his escape. Admittedly naive about many things — the strength of the German army, for example — Paul decided that he'd feign appendicitis on the theory that, needing healthy men to work, the Nazis would send him to a hospital from where he would make his escape to Hungary. It didn't dawn on him that sick Jews were a hindrance to the Nazi plan and those too sick to work were gassed or shot.

Paul went to sick call every day, feigning appendicitis. The nurses would send him away to wait for the doctor or ordered him to walk to another field hospital where he could be seen by more experienced personnel. If Paul had known anything about the ailment, he would have realized that as he traveled from sick call to sick call seeking an appropriate diagnosis, his appendix would have already burst.

Finally, a doctor discovered his ruse and ordered him furiously to rejoin his unit at the front lines. In another escape ploy, Paul forged his documents to look as if he were supposed to return to a unit in Budapest. That scheme