

Prisoner of Nazis Says She Believes Queens Woman Was Guard Who Killed Camp Inmate

BY EDWARD HUDSON

A woman who was once a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp said yesterday that she believed that Mrs. Hermine Ryan was the camp guard who, she said, had killed an inmate and had beaten her and another woman prisoner.

During four hours of testimony at a deportation proceeding against Mrs. Ryan, a Queens housewife, the highly emotional witness, Mrs. Mary Finkelstein of 2150 East 66th Street, Brooklyn, identified Mrs.

Ryan as the guard.

"This was her," she said, pointing to an old photograph of Mrs. Ryan, who is 53 years old.

"If her name is Hermine, it's her," the witness said at another point, motioning toward Mrs. Ryan, who sat with her husband at the hearing.

Later, again motioning toward Mrs. Ryan, she said: "She killed a woman. I saw it."

But later, as Mrs. Ryan's attorney, John J. Barry, sought to cast doubt on Mrs. Finkelstein's credibility, the witness said

that she knew from newspaper stories of the deportation case that "it must be her." But she added that she had not seen a newspaper photograph of Mrs. Ryan.

Mrs. Finkelstein, who is 51 and came to this country as a displaced person in 1949, also told Mr. Barry that she had always had trouble seeing "from a distance."

Mrs. Ryan entered the United States in 1959 as the wife of an American construction worker and became a citizen in 1963. She faces possible de-

portation for failing to tell United States authorities that she had been convicted by an Austrian court in 1949 of tormenting prisoners while she was a concentration camp guard during World War II.

Mrs. Ryan lost her citizenship last September, but she has applied for a suspension of her deportation. Yesterday was the third day of hearings in the case since May 9.

Mrs. Finkelstein said she came to know the camp guard named Hermine after being shipped with other Jews from

Warsaw to a concentration camp at Maidanek, Poland. She said she spent about seven weeks in Maidanek, starting in mid-May, 1943, before she was freed to take a job in a munitions factory.

"She came in with a German uniform, with a stick, with a dog and, once in a while, with a whip," the witness said.

Mrs. Finkelstein said she saw the guard Hermine "clobber" a woman inmate to the ground with a stick because the woman could not stand erect. She quoted the guard as shouting:

"You pig! You goddamn Jew! Stand up straight!" She said the victim "dropped, and didn't get up, ever."

Mrs. Finkelstein, who said that a sister died in a gassing of the train that brought them to Maidanek and that an aunt was later singled out to be taken to a crematorium, did not make clear whether this beating was the killing she had referred to earlier.

The witness said that the guard known as Hermine once struck her on the head with a club as she sought medical aid

for a blood clot on a finger. She also recalled seeing Hermine present at a hanging of a woman prisoner who had tried to escape.

In previous testimony, Mrs. Ryan had conceded that she had known Maidanek was an extermination camp and said that she was "shocked and appalled" but that "it was not in my power to do anything — I was too little."

The hearing is to continue at the Immigration Service offices at 20 West Broadway on June 9.

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