Miriam Weichselfisch was born in 1925 in Chelm, Poland. She lived in the Chelm ghetto, near Lublin. Shortly before the liberation she went into hiding. She was liberated by the Red Army in June 1944, and traveled to Lodz.

“It was clear to all of us that there was no place for us in Poland. Jewish blood was being spilt everywhere. Then we found out about a chance of leaving Poland and getting to Czechoslovakia. We packed our bundles; we took our daughter who was still in nappies and at midnight my husband arrived; he had grown a beard so nobody would recognize him...

“We began to walk to the Czech border, and then we reached Salzburg (Austria). We spent about six months in Salzburg, and then we had to walk through the high mountains - the Alps. It wasn’t easy to walk on those paths with a little girl.

“My husband was a Bericha guide. He was very active, he used to lead groups, and I was dragged along with our little girl on the paths. I had a link with Palestine and I had a bit of ‘pull’, so they hid me with the child, and another woman with her daughter in another box. We sat in the box and no one knew we were there. They covered us with planks, and there was a truck that took all the bundles belonging to those who were walking through the Alps... From Salzburg we went to Milan in Italy... On the way they wanted to give the children sleeping pills so they wouldn’t cry, but as a mother I didn’t want to use the sleeping pills because I was frightened that my daughter might not wake up again... The cold was many degrees below freezing, snow and a very hard winter. My daughter started to cry at the Austrian-Italian border and so they made the motor run very noisily so that they wouldn’t hear her crying...
“From Milan they took us in buses to a place where we could embark on ships and sail. In fact they weren’t ships, but just fishing boats, and I remember it was in the middle of the night... We were packed in the boat like sardines in a tin. We sailed, and out at sea a ship was waiting for us... when we began to sail the English caught us. Our disappointment was tremendous... They took the sick to Haifa and took us to Cyprus...”.

Source: Yad Vashem Archive 03/4209, pp. 24-26 (Hebrew).