

Anna Mass In Ukraine



It's me in 1946. We spent two years in Ukraine. There I met my husband, Borys Mass. We lived in Bakhmach; there was a sugar-making kolkhoz there. I worked with my father as watchmaker.

I remember, in Ukraine, there was a loudspeaker in every house, always on. And suddenly, at three in the morning, Stalin spoke. He said an agreement had been signed, the war was over. When the war was over, the whole village took to the streets. At first we drank moonshine, because that was all they had. From three in the morning to twelve noon I drank moonshine. At twelve noon the moonshine ended, they started drinking beer. I don't like beer... So I said to myself, 'Anka, you're drunk, go to sleep.' God! How much we drank then! Everyone with everyone. Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, refugees... People were kissing each other and drinking on the street. The war was over. Wasn't it? That was joy.

But they didn't let us go just then. We left only the following year, 1946. They said if you couldn't prove you were Polish, you couldn't go. And they had taken whatever IDs we had. Only I had hidden the medical insurance ID. When I showed it to them, I thought they'd kill me out of wrath. The NKVD, I mean. But they couldn't do anything. And so we returned home. They sent us to Lower Silesia, to Rychbach... Originally the town had a different name, then it was called Rychbach, and eventually it was renamed to Dzierzoniow.