

Anna Mass With Her Father Jankiel Szwarc



It's me and my father in Dzierzoniow.

We went to Poland in 1946. 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. Very many Jews had come from the Soviet Union, and [Dzierzoniow] was full of them. My husband worked in a textile plant. Then he started working with my father as a watchmaker.

Before the war, my father was an active Bund member in Lublin. The Bund was something like the PPS for the Poles. Socialist. I think he joined as a young boy. In truth, he had communist inclinations. But because he was a coward as far as physical pain was involved, he was afraid that if they arrested him for communism - and so much as threatened with torture - he would give everyone away. So he preferred to be on the Bund, which was socialist but not communist. I'm not the party member type. I joined the Jung Bund on a follow-up basis, but I wasn't particularly active, after all, I had to work. Off peak season I worked for eight-ten hours a day, but in peak season, carnival, holidays, I sat there until midnight. In fact, I was busy all the time. Young people came to visit us. We talked, sang. I once knew very many Yiddish songs but today I can no longer sing.

In Dzierżonów, in the 1940s, my father was a member of the Bund but when the Bund merged with the PZPR, he didn't join. In 1948, when Israel was founded, many Jews started leaving. In 1949, his sisters brought my husband to Warsaw and he started working in the accounting department of the Office of the Council of Ministers [URM]. In 1950, me with my daughters and then my father, we moved to Warsaw. My husband wasn't a party member, but he managed to get a job at the Office of the Council of Ministers. We lived in the Żoliborz neighborhood. Then we moved to our second apartment, and then here. We lived all together: me, my husband, my daughters and my father.

My father, in turn, upon coming to Warsaw didn't have a job for a year. The doctor said it wasn't Parkinson's disease but his hands and the head slightly too were shaking. And no one wanted to give him a job, because what kind of a watchmaker are you when your hands are shaking. Eventually, a certain jeweler gave him a job as watchmaker, and he worked there almost until his death. And he was active until the very end at the TSKZ. When my father died, on 30th December 1959, and I notified them, no one came for the funeral. No one from the TSKZ was present. I felt a bit sad, I thought: he was such an activist and all...