

Berlin In May 1945



This photo was taken in Berlin in May 1945. It is the First Polish Army. The picture must have been taken by an army photographer. The commander of this division, Col. Swietlik, is second from the left. His wife is next to him and her sister is fourth from the left. I am third from the right, without a cap. The officer on my right joined this division from Anders' Army.

In 1944, when I was still in Konskowola, the Russian Army and Polish officers arrived. One of them asked what I was still doing there. He told me to go to Lublin to the army and say he sent me. I went to Lublin to look for someone from my family. I went to the Jewish Committee, but I didn't find out anything. I registered in case someone was looking for me. Nobody was. So I went to the army and registered under the name Szymanska. Two women took care of me. It must have been luck among all the misfortunes that I came across that woman who signed me up. I got clothing, I got food, I got an apartment.

In Lublin I worked in the office of General Grosz. Mrs. Zabłudowska was the head of that office and I was her helper. I wrote up orders on the typewriter. And once the order was to transfer somewhere a Col. Henryk Holder, son of Michal. Could it be the husband of my friend Lidka from Kolomyia? Could there be another person of the same name? I wrote to him without thinking much of the future, only because he was someone who knew me, remembered me... He came to visit, which was very kind of him. I told him all about myself and asked about his wife. Both she and his entire family died. So later I thought, 'What do I care which one it is?' Since I knew him from Lidka's stories and believed he was a decent man, we got together.

Then he went to the front and I stayed in Lublin. He was in Warsaw the day after it was liberated [17th January 1945]. I still have a letter from him in which he says that Warsaw was all gone and that the Germans should be shot, beaten, murdered. And I went through that miserable city later, too. I went from Lublin to Berlin with the army as an ensign. I was demobilized in Katowice. In Katowice, in December 1945, we got married.