

Irena Wygodzka With Her Husband Stanislaw Wygodzki, Their Daughter Ewa And Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir



This is a picture of my husband, Stanislaw Wygodzki meeting the prime minister of Israel at the time, Golda Meir.

I am in that picture, too, second from the right and the girl behind me is our daughter Ewa. This photograph was taken in 1971.

In Poland my husband used to earn money in one specific way - he published books. But in Israel you wouldn't receive much even for writing that was published.

We had to get by somehow, so I studied for nine months at a school for beauticians in Tel Aviv. It was very difficult for me, because all those terms were in Hebrew, I didn't understand them, so I had to learn them by heart.

But I somehow passed the exam and received my certificate. I took out a loan and purchased all the equipment necessary to open a beauty salon at home.

At first I waited for a long time, almost for a year, for my first customers. I worked very hard, I had learned how to work hard in Poland. I had lots of customers later.

They were government employees, some executives' wives, storekeepers. They were very nice and it was thanks to them that I learned how to speak Hebrew, because the language had still been foreign to me before.

My husband used to write a bit. Mostly for 'Maariv.' His book 'Zatrzymany do wyjasnienia' was also published. And he started working for Yad Vashem. He prepared definitions for Encyclopedia Judaica for them, he also edited memoirs.

My husband was displeased with many things in Israel: their attitude to Arabs and those Orthodox people, their power in the country. When there were elections we always used to vote for the Labor Party. My husband missed Poland very much, he missed his friends and his past.

He never really belonged anywhere, he didn't go out. He rarely went to those meetings of the Writers' Association, because he decided that all those people keep talking about themselves and not about some topics which could interest him. He got kind of sidetracked in life.