

-TITLE-MARY TARNAWSKI
-I_DATE-
-SOURCE-CHRISTIAN RESCUERS PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-
-IMAGE_QUALITY-
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES-
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
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03:00 Wilhelm and Mary were from the same village. They married one year before the war began.

04:00 Mary was born in 1921. She had four brothers and sisters.

05:30 Her mother died when she was six years old and she lived with an older sister. She was the sixth child in the family. Her father was good to the children, but he was a typical "Jewish father."

07:00 Mary was raised Jewish, and Wilhelm was raised a Catholic.

08:00 Mary was taken as a Catholic during the war. No one knew that she was Jewish. During the war her papers said she was Wilhelm's wife, therefore it was assumed she was Catholic since she was married to an Aryan.

09:30 Wilhelm was born in 1911. He had two brothers and two sisters.

10:30 One of his brothers died during the second World War.

12:00 His mother was very religious. They prayed before they ate, in the mornings and the evenings because of his mother. The atmosphere he grew up in was very religious.

14:00 Mary went to school until the seventh year which would be fifteen years old. Then the war started and she stayed at home.

15:00 Both Wilhelm and Mary were brought up in middle class families.

16:00 It was not allowed at that time in Poland for a Jewish girl to marry a Christian.

17:00 She ran from home to marry him in 1939. She was nineteen years old. It was not a Polish law which forbade their marriage but a Jewish law.

18:30 It was a tragedy for her family at the time to lose their daughter to a Christian.

21:00 Neither Mary or Wilhelm had outstanding moral examples in childhood.

24:00 Before he married Mary most of his friends were Jews were in danger. Mary was very afraid for herself and her family.

25:00 They both knew right at the start of the war that all Jews were in danger. Mary was afraid for herself and her family.

26:00 Since she was Wilhelm's wife, there was no danger for her. No one knew she was Jewish.

29:00 In their village there were about sixty thousand Jews. Every day Wilhelm saw the Germans come and ask for twenty Jewish workers.

30:00 Wilhelm saw how these were about sixty thousand Jews. Every day Wilhelm saw the Germans come and ask for twenty Jewish workers.

31:30 One day, the Germans only took old men and put them in a building and lit it on fire.

36:00 When the Germans first came to their town, they came to Wilhelm and Mary's house. They were both afraid because they thought they came since Mary was Jewish. But they only wanted Wilhelm to work for the police.

38:00 They needed him to repair things and keep order since he knew the mechanics of the entire system. They were very lucky.

39:00 Wilhelm and Mary kept eighteen Jewish people hidden during the war. Six of them were children. The biggest problem was getting enough food for this many people.

41:30 He did not know at first how he was going to get enough food. So he went to a policeman and told him he needed to feed his workers so he got extra food. (This part is very explaining how he got more food)

44:30 It took two and one half years before they found a system to get more food. At first they sold clothes for money.

45:00 The eighteen people had to get out and exercise and there was a lot of danger doing this.

47:30 Two hours a day the people had to get out and exercise and there was a lot of danger doing this.

49:30 They hid the people because if the Germans found out Mary was Jewish they would be killed or if they found eighteen Jewish people they would be killed, so either way they would be in danger.

51:00 Wilhelm decided that he had to do something. He couldn't just sit back and watch.

52:30 They went to Israel in 1957.

54:00 Just after the war they stayed in Poland with their two children. The children did not know that their mother was Jewish at this time. It was Wilhelm's decision to go to Israel.

55:30 He thought it would be a good idea for the children so that they would grow up proud of their Jewish heritage.

56:00 Wilhelm worked for the government so he couldn't go to Israel. But they wanted to go so that the children wouldn't grow up as enemies of their mother.

1:03:00 Mary went to the Jewish counsel. It was in such a state of disorder that they couldn't help her. She finally talked to a man and told him everything and how she couldn't get permission to leave.

1:04:00 She then went to the office in her own town. She went everyday in her village and found the chief of the office.

1:05:00 She told him everything, the whole story even though he was Polish and not Jewish. He cried during the story and told her to wait four days.

1:06:00 After four days he called her and told her she had his permission to get a passport.

1:07:00 The condition was that she had to leave within one week of getting the passport. It was a one in a million chance.

1:08:00 The children were very young at this point.

1:09:00 They went to London first before going to Israel.

1:13:00 During the war, over Christmas, they were sure that no one would bother them on this religious holiday. They decided it would be safe for all of the eighteen people to come down and have dinner at the table. They kept the room dark so no one could see in. Then someone knocked at the door.

1:14:00 It was Wilhelm's boss who had come over for a drink. They quickly hid all the dishes in the bedroom and put all the people in the small closet.

1:15:00 It was very scary for all of them. Mary gave them strong wine and strong vodka. They drank so much that they fell asleep in the living room.

1:16:00 Once she was sure they were asleep she snuck the eighteen people up the stairs to their room.

1:19:00 Once a big German came to their house during the war and decided to stay in their house for a few days.

1:20:00 She told him to go to the village and buy some meat so she would have time to hide the people upstairs better.

1:21:00 He slept in the room next to them. In the night he heard some noises and she blamed the noise on her small children. She offered to switch beds with him so that he wouldn't be bothered.

1:22:00 He was so appreciative that he bought her a present of meat which was enough to feed everyone and he didn't know he was feeding Jews. It was very scary since it could have brought death for the entire family.

1:23:00 The danger is unexplainable. They lived in constant fear.

1:27:00 In the beginning of the war, Wilhelm worked in the police station so he knew before when the Gestapo was coming so he prepared an underground pit under the kitchen floor.

1:28:00 There was not enough air in the pit for eighteen people to survive for very long.

1:29:00 When more SS began to arrive he went and got her family and hid them in the floor.

1:30:00 The Gestapo came into their house and Wilhelm had to tap on the floor to warn the people that were hidden.

1:31:00 After the war was over it was very difficult to tell the children that their mother was Jewish. They were about ten and twelve years old.

1:32:30 The children were distraught when they found out. It was very difficult for them.

1:34:00 Most of her family now lives in America. After the war they went to Israel to visit.

1:35:00 Wilhelm went to Israel first. He decided that if he left his country Poland it would only be to go to her country Israel and not America.

1:37:00 He wanted to make sure the children would grow up in an environment in which they would have respect for their Jewish heritage.

1:38:00 Once in Israel, he fought a strong fight to be allowed to be buried next to Mary so that they could be together after death.

1:41:00 Wilhelm believes now that fighting because of religion

brings about no positive ends and proves to be worthless.

1:43:30 Since the war neither Wilhelm nor Mary have remained religious at all.

1:44:00 Mary can't believe in such things after seeing everything she saw during the war. She saw young children and old men being shot so it is very difficult to believe in religion.

1:46:00 Wilhelm asks "if Nazi's murdered in the name of God, so then where is God?"

1:48:00 During the war they were not aware of any other rescuers, but since then they have met some in Israel.

1:49:00 Friends of his hid five Jews, but they didn't know during the war.

1:51:00 The children and grandchildren think of Mary and Wilhelm as heros, as an example of how to grow up.

1:52:00 The children think Wilhelm is a good kind man who helps others.

1:54:00 Their daughters have grown up with morals, but there has not been the same chance for them to show their goodness like their parents.

1:56:00 Wilhelm and Mary are very happy in Israel now. Their relatives always visit them. It has become home.

1:59:00 Wilhelm worked as a mechanic in Israel.

2:00:00 Wilhelm now has no regrets. He is very happy that he left Poland to go to Israel.
.END.