

## **RG-50.031.0116**

### **Summary**

**Anna Heller** (née Grinberg) (her name from her first marriage was Novak) born April 30, 1921 in Krakow, Poland, discusses her parents, two sisters, grandmother (all of whom were killed in Holocaust); her pre-war family life, Jewish holidays, their family store, experiencing anti-Semitism in gymnasium where the number of Jews limited to attend; fond memories of vacations, sports; discussion on Zionism; bombings of Krakow; Nazis entering homes stealing contents (father able to bury some belongings); sister's marriage, Anna's last visit with sister & her new baby; Krakow ghetto formed; after family is able to obtain false papers, sister's boyfriend picked up & outed Anna's family, turning on them; discussion re: a common belief held that Jews were "cooked and stuff made from them"; Anna & boyfriend Henry forced into ghetto - one apartment "with a lot of people,"; loaded on trucks to forced labor cleaning apartments; learning sewing; 1942 deportation from ghetto, taken to Plaszow, Anna's despair watching women mourning their children taken from them; younger sister & parents had gone into hiding in the country; discussion re: sister's traitor boyfriend having survived the war; Anna escapes Plaszow, reunites with boyfriend Henry, he being blonde, blue-eyed, they were able to live under false identity as Poles; finding work in railroad station, fear in being revealed; Henry picked up by Nazis; Henry had encouraged Anna to seek shelter with his family maid who had married a Jew; woman was able to bring home food from her work cooking for Germans; Anna's retrieves buried money; another friend named Henry who worked for a monastery assisted Anna in getting into Austria; finding work as a maid under a cruel Nazi; Russians encroaching to liberate & Anna's fear as their soldiers "known for raping every woman"; marriage; through Austria's Polish Embassy, obtaining US immigration in Truman program enabling 500 Polish Jews (settled in Chicago); learning all of family had been killed, mother had been shot on street; surviving PTSD, constant worry about sons having a Jewish surname, one of which became a president of his temple (also a lawyer), other son, a doctor; Anna's husband Henry builds a store business, passes away in the 1980s; Anna earned a degree & became a social worker; remarried Paul Heller (a Czech doctor), also survivor of 5 yrs. at Auschwitz/Buchenwald; Paul develops close friendship with Edward R. Murrow who had interviewed him when Murrow first entered Buchenwald (their later correspondence); visiting Poland again with sons; Anna compelled to interview in memory of her two sisters who were killed; Anna shares pre-war photographs, a Krakow Nazi ID, photographs of first husband's (Henry) family - also killed by Nazis; photographs of Anna's sons and their children.