

LAZOWSKI, Henryk

- 001 Henryk Lazowski (*_azowski*) was born on April 27, 1920, in Cracow, Poland. He was a son of Jozef Lazowski and Bronislawa née Loch (*_och*). The family lived in Cracow, at 10 Topolowa Street. In 1930 his father retired and the family moved to Dabrowa Tarnowska, a town 103 kilometers East of Cracow.
- 046 Henryk volunteered in the Army in September 1939 to fight the Germans, who had invaded Poland. He fought under the command of his older brother, who was commander of the company. On September 21, 1939, his brother was taken by the German Army as a POW.
- 220 After the defeat of the Polish Army, Henryk, with a small group of fellow soldiers, turned to the East. When they learned that the Russian Army had invaded the eastern part of the country, they turned West to avoid any contact with the Russians, who were known for their cruel treatment of POWs.
- 323 In the early morning of September 22, they came across a group of Jewish refugees who were well-to-do merchants from Lodz. They had a horse cart full of expensive overcoats. An old Jew offered coats to Henryk and each of his friends. They were much more comfortable wearing the coats and were very grateful for the gift. Under the coats they could hide their military uniforms and they returned home safely. Henryk thinks that this is an example how Poles and Jews were closely bound together.
- 462 In 1940 Henryk joined the Underground Army.
- 485 In 1940 Henryk was arrested by a German patrol in Mielec, because he was on the street after curfew. He explained to the patrolman, that he was an unemployed turner looking for a job. As a turner, he was sent to a labor camp in Mielec. In that camp, the Germans had a war production aircraft plant and needed skilled workers. He worked the night shift from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am. After two months of exhausting work and insufficient food Henryk decided to escape.
- 576 Once he was brutally beaten by a guard for smoking a cigarette in a latrine. He escaped from the camp during a heavy snowstorm on his way from work to the barracks.
- 655 On March 1, 1941, the Germans started to organize ghettos. Henryk met Regina and Moses Haber at his grandmother's place. They were Jews who escaped from Cracow. Mr. Haber asked Henryk to go to Cracow and rescue Rozia (*Rózia*) Lezer, who was Regina Haber's niece. Henryk knew Rozia well, because they played together as kids in Radwa, a small farming village, where Henryk's grandmother and the Habers were neighbors.
- 705 On March 2, 1941, he went to 75 Krakowska Street, in Cracow, where Rozia lived in a big apartment house owned by her family. Mr. Haber was a well-to-do wholesale grocery merchant. The building seemed to be deserted. The few people there were in hiding in one apartment. Henryk took Rozia to the Railway Station. They were stopped by German Police under suspicion of being Jews. Henryk had an identification card and was not circumcised and the Germans let him go. Rozia who had no documents was sent to the Montelluppi jail in Cracow but was later released.
- 864 Henryk returned to Dabrowa Tarnowska, which was 103 kilometers East of Cracow. With great difficulty he procured 54 passes and took the passes back to Cracow. Using those passes the relatives of the Habers escaped from Cracow. Among them were Rozia and three families: the Lezers, Salmons and Krauses.

- 956 On March 10, 1941, Henryk learned that the Jews had to move into ghettos. Rozia's father, Mr. Moses Lezer, and Rozia's cousin, Ruchcia-- who was married to Romek Amsterdam-- decided to go to the ghetto and they reported to the ghetto in Dabrowa Tarnowska. They didn't listen to Henryk's advice. They didn't want to go into hiding.
- 047 The last transport of Jews from Dabrowa Tarnowska was directed to Belzec, the camp near Tomaszow Lubelski. The whole group from Cracow that had passes stayed in the farming village of Radwa and worked secretly for farmers. But German searches for Jews forced the Jews from Radwa to escape into the forest near the farming villages Dulcza Wielka and Dulcza Mala, and to build bunkers for hiding. To get food the Jews had to walk at night to friendly Polish farmers. Henryk's family was frequently visited by the Jews from the forest. The distance from the forest to Radwa was about 15 kilometers, but along the way there were other people whom the Jews could trust and ask for food.
- 150 The bunkers were very primitive, very shallow and crowded. People could only lie down on their sides. Once Rozia's cousin smoked a cigarette there and the smoke rose through the brushwood.
- 318 At this time a group of German soldiers was passing the forest and they noticed the smoke. One of them said "Some people must be there." Fortunately they didn't start searching and they went away. Another time a German soldier was passing by and his foot slid into a bunker. He became suspicious and started to check the ground with the pointed part of bayonet. He didn't hurt anybody and he left.
- 349 In the farming village Radwa, Henryk's grandmother, Anna Loch, gave shelter to a Jewish friend, who was the grandmother of Rozia Lezer. She hid her in the closet and let her out only at night to feed her, to wash her and to go on walks. For safety reasons the presence of a Jewish women was kept completely secret.
- 396 Rozia Lezer had a little sister named Milusia. She was a sweet girl. Out of the group of fifty four people that left Cracow thanks to Henryk's help, only sixteen people survived the war. The Germans searched every inch of the forest looking for Jews in hiding. In 1944 the frontline ran through the forests around the villages of Dulcza Wielka and Dulcza Mala.
- 425 People in the bunkers were caught between two fighting armies. The terrain was mined. Under the cover of falling snow one group tried to pass the front line and reach the Russians. Milusia stepped on a mine and was wounded. She was carried by the others. The group reached their destination and Milusia was taken to a field hospital, where Milusia died.
- 512 Rozia went to Austria in 1945. Henryk and Rozia didn't see each other for the next sixteen years. Henryk emigrated to the United States in 1961 and Rozia found him there. She lives at 128 19th Cronston Avenue, Belle Harbor, NY 11694. Rozia and Henryk are close friends now as they were in their childhood.