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Summary

In 1939 Ann Cyncynatus (née Gelbart) was 14 years old and lived in Klobuck, Poland. She was attending grade school at the time and wanted to continue her education. Antisemitism was common in her small town and there was one synagogue. At the outbreak of the war, a farmer warned them about the bombs, and she got separated from her family in the chaos. After a few days she reunited with her family. Germans rounded all the citizens of the town and read off a list of rules. Obtained a job on a farm to weed and help the lady in the house. At least three times the couple she worked for warned her that the Germans were coming to take her and her siblings (this was in 1940). Her father was taken away and she never heard or saw him again and he was 42 years of age at the time. A few months after her father was taken, the rest of the Jews in the town were forced to live in the same area of the town. Ann realized that if you had a job you were less likely to be sent away, and she feared being sent away. All the remaining Jews in the town (except the ones who worked at the labor camp) were sent away in June 1942. Met her husband by June 1942 and he was a painter who worked for a German painting company. During this time Ann, her husband, and her sister in law began hiding in an attic of a villa that her husband was painting. Her husband met a group of Jews and a German who let him, Ann, and her husband's sister join them. Ann and her husband married secretly in June of 1942 in a labor camp. Ann said that the German wanted to instill fear. In 1942, Ann's mother was shot and killed. Ann's siblings were smuggled into Klobuck and joined Ann and her husband. Ann was able to have her sister Ester join her in the work camp and she hid her younger brother and sister in the attic since they were too young to work. When Ann's brother turned 13 years old, he was able to work. In June 1943, everyone from her home and everyone else in the labor camp were gathered to be taken somewhere. Ann's husband opened the gate and Ann, her husband, and some other people ran and hid from the Germans. They were recaptured and sent back to the gathering place. Sent to a camp in Blechhammer and the next morning was the selection (men and women were separated). Ann and her sisters were sent to a women's labor camp that became a concentration camp called Langenbielau II. Ann's husband was sent to a camp near Ann's labor camp and since he switched places with someone else, he went under a different name for the rest of the war. Ann and her sisters worked in a factory in the labor camp. On May 8, 1945 the camp that Ann, her sisters, and her husband were in was liberated. When the camp was liberated, Ann was reunited with her husband. Ann and all her siblings survived, and she had three children with her husband Paul.