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Summary of interview with Helen Dub (conducted Jan. 15, 1985)

Helen Dub, born in Vonihove, a small town near Khust, Ukraine, carries out her brother's charge to her to live and "tell the world what is happening." She recalls growing up in an orthodox family, the daughter of a butcher and the third oldest of eight brothers and one sister, surrounded by extended family, speaking primarily Yiddish, but also Czech, Ukrainian, and, later, Hungarian, attending Czech public schools, and learning to be a seamstress; being a member of the religious Misrahi movement of the World Zionist organization; being 19 years old in 1939, but unaffected by outbreak of war until the Hungarian occupation at which time anti-Jewish laws were instituted; in May 1941, being among the Jews rounded up by Hungarian police and transported overnight by train to the Czech/Ukraine border, ostensibly to a place where they would work; being further transported by truck to a hot, dry, no-man's-land, where they were deposited the next night at midnight without food or water and made to walk to the Kamianets-Podilskyi ghetto in Ukraine, the "work" destination; living with her family of (then) eleven in a single room in the ghetto; sewing their blue Star of David armbands and being made to wear it at all times or be shot; working outside the ghetto in civilian gentile homes, sewing dresses and pajamas, and for police, for which she received a bite to eat (often bread spread with [not kosher] lard, which she would scrape away); seeing other ghetto residents toiling for the authorities, cleaning streets, washing toilets, chopping ice from walks, etc.; being outside the ghetto at work in the fall of 1942 when the police rousted her family and other ghetto residents and transported them via cattle car to Auschwitz, where her mother and five siblings perished; being relocated (with her sister) by wagon several weeks later to another ghetto about 30 km from Kamianets-Podilskyi; in February/March 1943, being hidden with her sister by a Polish family, from whom Helen learned that police had taken her aunt, uncle and cousins to a cemetery, forced them to dance naked in the snow and shot them; learning that her father and brother had been reported to the police, who took them to a cemetery, forced them to dig a grave, and shot them; being sent away from hiding by the Polish family at Yom Kippur of 1943, when the area was declared "Judenfrei" and gentiles feared for their own lives; being on the run, hiding in woods, cornfields, haystacks, and potato cellars around Borschchiv, Ukraine; living the entire winter of 1944 in the woods, sharing a dug out bunker with 20 other people, unable to leave for fear of leaving tracks in the snow; losing 15 of 20 people (including her sister) when the bunker caved in; being released from hiding in March 1944 when the Russians arrived; finding her way to Czernowitz, where she found a Jewish couple who knew her parents and who took her back with them to Prague in May 1945; working as a nurse for the army and receiving a government pension; sharing an apartment in Prague with a girlfriend until late 1945/early 1946, when they moved together to Teplice and started a dressmaking business; searching for and locating an uncle (Ben Greenberg) in New York City; marrying a camp survivor in 1946; enjoying relative security in Czechoslovakia until 1948 when the Russians occupied and appropriated businesses; fleeing the Russian occupation to Vienna, and remaining there in a DP camp for 9-12 months; obtaining authorization to travel to Montreal, where her husband worked as a butcher; moving to Cleveland (arbitrary choice) in October 1953; participating as of the date of interview, in Hadassah, ORT and the Green Road Synagogue in Cleveland.