MARIE WINKELMAN
RG-50.154.0032 (rec. 1987 in Florida)

Marie was born in a small Polish town and had 1 brother. Her father worked in textiles and the family was assimilated and well off. She remembers some antisemitic teachers, but then went to a Jewish private school. The antisemitism wasn't as bad as in Warsaw.

Five days after the Germans took the town, soldiers came into her house where they were holding services for her deceased grandfather and shot everyone except Marie. The anti-Jewish restrictions came next. There was no school, and the Germans burned down the synagogue. Her parents then thought it would be safer to move to Warsaw where they lived with cousins. The house eventually became part of the ghetto. Marie describes trying to help people from the country who came with nothing. She also describes the starvation and the eventual start of deportations. Marie worked for the underground, but they didn't have money or weapons, though she stated that people put up tremendous resistance.

In January 1943 Marie's parents convinced her to go with her boyfriend's family outside the ghetto. They went to a small village and got false papers. She lived in seven different places for the next 2 years. Her boyfriend went back to the ghetto to fight and was killed. At the wars end Marie was 19 and had no family. Eventually she went back to her small town of Wlodawek. There were 5 Jews there who survived and told her a younger cousin had also survived by being left in a park and picked up and sheltered by non-Jews. Marie and her husband found the young cousin and sent her to a kibbutz in Israel. She now lives in Ann Arbor Michigan. Marie's husband had family in the US, and eventually they were able to emigrate via Sweden and Canada.