

Helena Manaster

RG-50.163*0047

May 29, 1917 - born in Lesko, Poland (near Cracow)

October 5, 1939 - Russians nationalized everything, father lost his business

family moved to Lvov, did secretarial work in Russian office

September 22, 1940 - married Norbert Ramer, a medical student

June 22, 1941 - war broke out, family sat in bunker for 8 days

November 1941 - Ghetto established, she and husband who was employed by

Germans to fight typhus went to Orelec, lived with Jewish peasants, saw mother-in-

law in manure wagon with other Jews, they joined her, went to Olszanica along with

120 people. Gestapo released her and husband. Went back to Lesko to her father. The

120 Jews were killed in the forest between Olszanica and Ustianowa

July 1942 - 1st Aktion in Ghetto - 30,000 Jews were taken.

Survived because they had work, hid during other Aktions

Germans looking for a doctor, so Norbert volunteered to go to Radymow labor camp. When project was finished, locked up in clinic until February 18, 1943, after breakthrough in Stalingrad

She was pregnant, got false ID papers with name Dobrowolska. Removed their arm band with Jewish star and went to Sosnica, then to Plzemysl and Cracow to Polish friends' house. Underground gave them money, stayed in different places every night, separated from husband for safety

June 1943 - sat in friend's hallway, then a strange woman got her to a Capucin monastery, had false papers saying she was wife of a Polish officer, worked in kitchen until Mass, husband supported by underground

October 6, 1943 - son Tadeusz, born, Gestapo made her get out of hospital bed. Also given a 2 week old infant to raise, son was baptized

June 1944 - Director warned that Gestapo was coming, left the monastery, saw people taken away

Winter 1944-1945 - Russians encircled the Germans, husband got an apartment

May 1, 1945 - heard that her brother survived, husband's family did not

Stayed in Warsaw for 10 years, had 3 more children, went to Vienna

December 1968 - came to Chicago, husband stayed in Poland

1982 - emigrated to Israel at age 65

1988 - returned to US