

RG-50.488.0329

Summary

Mieczysława Wilczyńska, born in Rzeszów, Poland in 1933.

She describes her life in Lviv (Ukraine) during the war. She had three siblings, two brothers and one sister. Before the war, her father owned a jewelry store and her mother took care of the house. They lived on the Lviv market square in their family's apartment building.

After the Russian invasion, the family moved to a one-bedroom apartment to avoid living with the Russian military. Under the Russian occupation, the family was constantly moving to avoid deportation to Siberia. Every night, they would stay in a different apartment and sometimes the family slept outside, even in the cemetery. For some time, they lived in an apartment that belonged to a Jewish family (Tuch). She has nice memories of this place and of the owner's daughter and her friend, Danka. The Tuch family was later sent to Auschwitz.

Right before the German invasion, the family came back to their downtown apartment. She describes one of her father's Jewish clients asking him to keep a box with gold until he or somebody from the family returned for it. Sometime after the war, somebody came back for it, and the gold was returned to the family.

After the German invasion, life in Lviv changed. She describes dead bodies hanged from balconies and fences. Many believed that Ukrainian military groups were responsible for the deaths, allowed by Germans to kill people for two hours every day. She remembers playing with a Jewish boy who lost his parents and lived in the basement. Soon after, he was also killed.

Her father would regularly take two oldest children, Mieczysława and her brother, to the ghetto to help him deliver food. They walked along the fence and dropped small packages. She doesn't know why he was doing this, but she remembers that her family was supporting and delivering food to many people. She also remembers her aunt, who was delivering food to a Jewish doctor's family that was hiding somewhere underground. The family escaped to Israel and was in touch with her aunt for many years after the war.

She was aware that Jewish families were hiding underground in Lviv and she remembers her aunt leaving a plate with food on the basements steps every day on her way to work.

She describes underground tunnels in Lviv parks, where she played with her friends. Every time they ran through the tunnels, she saw people hiding there.

Under the Russian and German occupations, she went to school with other Polish children but she doesn't remember any Jewish children attending the same school.

After the war, the family stayed in Lviv. Her father worked for a bank, and her mother managed the family jewelry business. Mieczysława moved to Wrocław in 1953 where she got married and settled down.