

PERSONAL HISTORIES

AID AND ESCAPE

"So he hid us for several days there, brought us a little food."

Lutz Haase

Born 1914

Wrzenia, Poland



Lutz was one of two children born to religious Jewish parents living in Wrzenia when it was still part of Germany. After World War I, Wrzenia became part of Polish territory. Preferring to remain as German citizens, Lutz's family moved to Nuremberg. There, his father opened a kosher butcher shop. In 1926 the Haases relocated to Berlin and reestablished their butcher shop there.

1933-39: Like many of Berlin's Jews, I was assigned by the Gestapo to a work detail in 1937. I laid electrical cable for which I received a pittance--only 37 cents a day. After the Nazis rampaged on November 10, 1938, destroying synagogues and holy books and smashing Jewish store windows during Kristallnacht (the "Night of Broken Glass"), I was deported with many other Jews to a forced-labor camp outside Berlin. There, we were kept in leg irons and put to work repairing train tracks.

1940-44: After two years of forced labor, I became too weak to work. The commandant condemned me to an underground bunker where few survived more than a day. An SS general who was present when I was condemned had been a classmate of mine before the war. Privately he told me, "I remember you. You helped me start my stamp collection.

Now I'd like to help you."

"General," I said, "Do what you have to." He replied, "If I do that, you'll never see daylight again." Through his connections, he arranged my way to Shanghai.

Lutz arrived in Shanghai in late 1940. There, he published a newspaper with war information obtained from the Soviet news agency and radio

reports. He emigrated to Canada in 1949.

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**Kazimiera Banach
Justynowa**

Born 1893

Mierzen, Poland



Kazimiera was born to Roman Catholic parents in the town of Mierzen. After graduating from a teacher's college in Staniatki, she married Wincenty Justyna, a secondary school teacher. The couple settled in the small industrial city of Piotrkow Trybunalski and raised three children, Jerzy (a boy), Danuta and Maria. Kazimiera worked as a school teacher.

1933-39: With their combined incomes the Justynas were able to buy a plot of land and build a house. The Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and four days later, German troops streamed into Piotrkow. One month into the occupation, the Germans divided the city into a section for the non-Jewish Poles and a ghetto for the Jews. Only a few weeks after the occupation, Kazimiera joined the resistance movement.

1940-44: Kazimiera's house became a contact point and shelter for resistance fighters in the Polish Home Army [Armia Krajowa]. When the Germans liquidated the Jewish ghetto in 1942,

**Kazimiera hid the Szwarc--
a fellow teacher who was
Jewish and her two
daughters, friends of Maria
and Danuta.** Kazimiera used her contacts in the

resistance to get the Szwarc false IDs. In 1944 Kazimiera was arrested by the Gestapo, tortured, and deported to Germany, first to the Ravensbrueck concentration camp later on to the Bergen-Belsen camp.

In April 1945 Kazimiera was liberated at Bergen-Belsen. After the war, she went to Sweden to recover from typhus, and then returned to Piotrkow Trybunalski.

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