

Zuzanna Mensz In A Military Hospital In Lublin



This is a photo from military hospital in Lublin, where I worked in 1944 as a nurse. I am standing second from left. The men around me are mainly our patients. I don't remember their names.

I volunteered to Polish Army in 1943. The air was such that I wanted badly to fight, it seemed to me I wasn't doing enough. So I wrote a couple of letters to Berling, to the ZPP, and got a draft notice some time later. I went to Sielce near Ryazan, a city ca. 180 km southeast of Moscow, where the camp of the Second Dabrowski Division was located. It was in August 1943. I was assigned straight to the medical battalion - the sanbat. I wanted to be on the frontline as soon as possible so I volunteered for the assault battalion. I came to Lublin in 1944 with the army.

I worked in Lublin as a nurse in the hospital of my military unit. It was a very small hospital. At first it was located in Majdanek in one of the barracks, then we were given some different place. Generally we treated only sick soldiers, there were no wounded. My husband and I were quartered with some strangers. We were not exactly married yet, I didn't care for all the weddings and formalities. You had to go the commander and announce you were a couple, and you'd be quartered together. We were later transferred to Katowice, to a unit stationed there. I was pregnant at the time and my husband said I ought to at least be able to get a benefit in case he was killed, and so we had a civil marriage. Our eldest son, Julek, was born in February 1946. I quit the military right after my maternity leave, I didn't like the institution.