

Donata Helmrich (1900-1986)



Profession: language teacher, translator

Donata Hardt was divorced, mother of 3 children.

1933: Marriage to Eberhard Helmrich;

1934: Birth of their daughter Cornelia

From 1933: The Helmrichs help Jewish friends

1938: During the Reichskristallnacht they hide the couple Dr. Samolowetz and Dr. Rosenfeld

1942: From autumn Donata takes Jewish women with false documents to Berlin and places them in German households as Polish or Ukrainian domestic helpers. All these Jewish women are saved

1945: Eberhard and Donata separate; Donata raises the children alone. Later she worked as a conference interpreter for the Bonn government.

1986: Shortly after her death honored as "Righteous Among the Nations"

The Altmann family had to leave Vienna with their two daughters in 1938. With purchased papers Donata Helmrich brings Susi Altmann in the name of Helena Baran and her sister Hansi in the name of Theodosia Pankiw from Drohobycz to Berlin as Ukrainian domestic helpers. From the letter from Susi Bezalel (née Altmann) to Yad Vashem (1968):

»It is one thing to help someone flee the country, but it is quite another to bring a young person into one's own family. A family with four children... How could Mrs. Helmrich be sure that I or one of the other girls she took in would not betray us herself - and thus endanger her and her children? When I think back, I wonder how she could have lived with this concern all these years until the end of the war.«

Sources: Yad Vashem, rescue story 4015241; Schmalz-Jacobsen, Two Trees in Jerusalem; Sandkühler, „Endlösung“ in Galizien