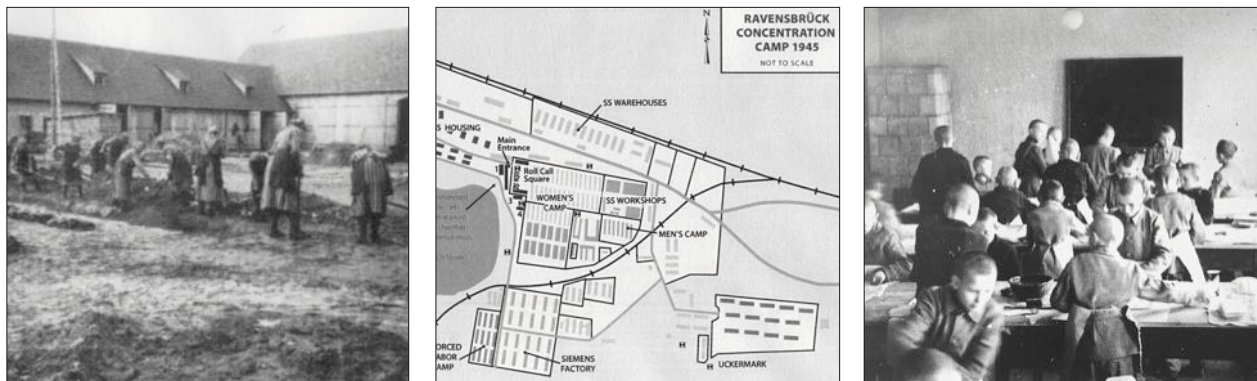


The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

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THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Encyclopedia of CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

VOLUME II

Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe

Part A

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PREFACE

Shortly after the first volume of the Museum's *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos* appeared in 2009, a group of the Holocaust survivors who inspire us through their presence as volunteers at the Museum gathered to discuss the volume with its editors. In the course of the discussion, one thing became very clear: the survivors and the editors appreciated the work from very different perspectives. The editors saw the volume primarily as a groundbreaking reference work, a work that would allow laymen and scholars alike to learn about the complex universe of Nazi concentration camps and to carry out further research. The survivors, on the other hand, while recognizing the Encyclopedia's utility, saw the work's deeper value in the fact that it documented all the unknown or barely known places where they and their fellow victims had suffered. Camps such as Auschwitz, Dachau, Buchenwald, and Bergen-Belsen are almost household names, but hundreds of other camp sites remain unrecognizable and "nameless" to all but the people whom the Germans and their allies incarcerated there and to a handful of scholars. The survivors were immensely gratified to see those sites, and their victims, lifted out of obscurity at last.

This second volume of the *Encyclopedia* aims to continue in that vein. Many people have heard of the ghetto in Warsaw and perhaps of others in places such as Kaunas and Łódź. Some people may even have heard that there were "hundreds" of ghettos. But how many people would guess that the Germans alone set up more than 1,100? These Holocaust sites of perpetration existed in a great swath of territory from Poland to Russia, from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Approximately 75 percent of all the victims of the Holocaust lived in that area, and about half of that huge number endured a ghetto experience during their ordeal. This volume serves the purpose, first and foremost, of memorializing the ghettos established under direct German authority, of literally preserving their memory and that of the people who lived and died in them. Entries address key questions about the ghettos: when they were created, who "managed" them, how long they existed, what life inside them was like, and their inhabitants' ultimate fate. Finally, as in the first volume, this one includes numerous references to extensive ghetto-related documentation located in the holdings of dozens of repositories worldwide, to provide a basis for further research. No other work provides the same level of detail and supporting material.

Five more volumes of the *Encyclopedia* are still to appear. The next of these will cover sites (including over 220 additional ghettos) set up and run by other states—states such as Slovakia, Hungary, Vichy France, and Romania—that affiliated themselves with Nazi Germany in one way or another. Later volumes will cover prisoner-of-war camps, extermination camps, forced labor camps, prisons, euthanasia centers, as well as other categories. Our goal remains to produce the most comprehensive examination possible of Nazi sites of deten-

tion, persecution, and murder. By the time the entire project is finished, it will have involved the labor of hundreds of people, working from locations and institutions in many countries.

The *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos* is one of several recent efforts by the Museum and its Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies to open the way for future research and teaching about the Holocaust. In addition to its determination to provide Holocaust survivors with information long denied to them, the Museum played the central role in opening the archives of the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, Germany, with the same purpose in mind. The Center's Jewish Source Study Initiative is focused on understanding the Holocaust through the perspective of the targets of Nazi brutality and has helped produce a series titled *Documenting Life and Destruction* that includes source volumes to present and analyze the responses of Jewish individuals, organizations, and communal authorities to assault. Through these efforts and others, the Museum is fulfilling its commitment to memory and to enhancing the breadth and depth of knowledge about the Holocaust, its perpetrators, and its victims.

Anyone who reads through any significant portion of this volume will find the contents chilling. There is a dismal sameness to each of the stories here: of the Germans' arrival; of increasing persecution, theft, displacement, abuse, and murder; of the formation of a ghetto and the deteriorating conditions within it; of the inhabitants' desperate efforts to live and to resist their oppressors; and in every case, of the ultimate destruction of the entire community, save for a tiny number of traumatized survivors. These stories are central to understanding the Holocaust. Individually and collectively, they highlight the willingness of perpetrators to participate in acts of violence and barbarism that, sadly, are part of the human potential. They also illustrate the confusion, the brutality, the suffering, and the hopelessness that the victims experienced, and their mixed reactions to circumstances beyond their control or understanding. These are stories that give back to the victims a small part of what the Nazis took from them. We hope that their experiences will provide a measure of understanding and wisdom for those who read this work.

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A Jewish policeman stands guard while Łódź ghetto residents wait in line to cross one of the pedestrian bridges, n.d.
USHMM WS #48564, COURTESY OF BENJAMIN (MIEDZYRZECKI) MEED

INTRODUCTION

The existence of ghettos in the German-occupied territories of Poland and the Soviet Union was so ubiquitous, on the one hand, and in hindsight so useful to the Nazi goal of total extermination of Polish and Soviet Jewry, on the other, that the temptation to see Nazi ghettoization policy as a uniform, centralized, and calculated preparatory step for the “Final Solution” was irresistible to many historians in the early stages of Holocaust scholarship. For example, one of the most insightful pioneers of Holocaust research, Philip Friedman, wrote that Nazi Jewish policies in Poland from 1939 to 1941 “were not of a spontaneous or accidental nature, but were rather part and parcel of an unfolding plan, which began with the concentration of the Jews” and, furthermore, that “ghettos were designed to serve the Nazis as laboratories for testing methods of slow and ‘peaceful’ destruction of whole groups of human beings.”¹ And Andreas Hillgruber described ghettoization of the Polish Jews as a step parallel to Hitler’s conquest of France, securing himself in both cases for the simultaneous war for Lebensraum in the east and the Final Solution, which together constituted the nucleus of his long-held “program.”²

A younger generation of historians, emphasizing improvised local initiative rather than calculated central planning, has portrayed ghettos as the means by which local authorities pursued a ghetto policy of willful destabilization and then pressed the central government to sanction ever more radical measures. For instance, Ulrich Herbert has written:

The administration of the General Government therefore endeavored to portray as ostentatiously as possible that the living conditions of the Jews were “untenable.” . . . To the reports coming from everywhere over the “untenable circumstances” and urgent inquiries as to what now must be done with the Jews, the Berlin authorities reacted with continual instructions and subsequent sanctioning for ever more radical measures, which once again accelerated the anticipatory actions taken regionally.³

In short, in this view local ghettoization policy was an important element in a process of “cumulative radicalization” of Nazi Jewish policy that led to the Final Solution.⁴

Neither interpretation is convincing. The Polish ghettos of 1939–1941 did ultimately serve to concentrate, debilitate, and decimate the Jews, as well as provide an ideal control mechanism and staging area for eventual deportation to the extermination camps, but they were not initially created and managed for that purpose. The ghettos did present an “impossible situation” and “untenable circumstances” for beleaguered local authorities but most sought—albeit with only partial success—to stabilize ghetto conditions out of their own conception of

duty and self-interest, not to aggravate such conditions to manipulate and pressure central authorities to sanction a policy of ghetto liquidation and Jewish extermination.

There is no single interpretive framework that encompasses ghettoization in the German-occupied east throughout the war years. Rather, there are two distinct regions and two distinct periods that must be taken into account. For German-occupied Poland in 1939–1941, ghettoization occurred in different places at different times in different forms and for different reasons. Insofar as there was a common thread in this welter of local decision making, it was that, among local ghetto managers, more often than not “productionists” attempting to harness and profit from ghetto labor prevailed over “attritionists” eager to decimate the incarcerated Jews through starvation and disease.⁵ Beginning in the summer of 1941, ghettoization was extended to the newly occupied Soviet territories east of the 1939 demarcation line, including the Baltic states and the eastern territories of pre-war Poland. In sharp distinction to earlier ghettoization further west, ghettoization was now both simultaneously and inextricably connected with the implementation of the Final Solution. Here indeed ghettos served as holding areas for Jews who could not be killed immediately in mass executions by gunfire, and exploitation of ghetto labor—though not absent—was often peripheral. With the onset of the Final Solution in the territories already occupied during 1939–1941—beginning in the Warthegau Region in December 1941 and in Distrikt Lublin of the Generalgouvernement in March 1942—the ghettos now indeed took on the additional function as staging areas for deportation to the extermination camps as well. It is to the examination of ghettoization in these two distinct phases and two distinct regions that we now must turn.

THE CREATION AND MANAGEMENT OF POLISH GHETTOS, 1939–1941

On September 21, 1939, Reinhard Heydrich met with the division chiefs of his security apparatus, the leaders of the Einsatzgruppen in Poland, and his adviser for Jewish affairs, Adolf Eichmann, to clarify issues of occupation policy in the newly conquered Polish territories. Concerning the fate of the Jews, Heydrich was quite explicit: “The Jews are to be concentrated in ghettos in cities, in order to facilitate a better possibility of control and later expulsion.” While the expulsion of the Jews would extend over the next year, it was “urgent” that “the Jew . . . disappears from the countryside.” Thus the initial concentration in cities, Heydrich insisted, “must be carried out within the next three to four weeks.”⁶ Opposition from the military to the negative economic consequences of such an abrupt demographic upheaval, however, forced Heydrich



Portrait of Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Security Police and the SD, and Acting Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, 1942.
USHMM WS #91199, COURTESY OF NARA

to relent, and on September 30 he informed his Einsatzgruppen leaders that the timing of Jewish concentration would depend on not disturbing military interests.⁷ Thus Heydrich's initial directive for widespread ghettoization as a short-term measure facilitating Jewish expulsion was not implemented. What remained of his first attempt to set uniform Jewish policy was the instruction to impose Jewish Councils on all Jewish communities and the recognition that "obviously the tasks at hand cannot be laid down in detail from here."

The first Polish ghetto was created in Piotrków Trybunalski, a medium-sized city of about 50,000 inhabitants—some 30 percent of them Jews—located 40 kilometers (25 miles) south-southeast of Łódź, but just beyond the border of the "incorporated territories" annexed to the Third Reich, in Distrikt Radom of the Generalgouvernement. An eager German occupation official, Hans Drechsel, who was first appointed by the army and then confirmed by the subsequent civil administration to be in charge of the city, ordered the usual barrage of anti-Jewish edicts in the last months of 1939. Unlike local German occupation officials elsewhere in Poland, however, he also ordered the formation of an "open" ghetto (that is, not enclosed by walls or fences) restricting Jewish movement and residence on October 8, 1939.⁸ However, it was not obscure Piotrków but rather the much larger city of Łódź to the north

and just within the incorporated territories annexed to the Third Reich that became the first site for extended debate and experimentation over Nazi policies of ghettoization and the model invoked and studied by others thereafter.

Located in an administrative district designated as the Warthegau, Łódź was the largest city and largest Jewish community in the incorporated territories. The goal of the Nazi regime, articulated in the fall of 1939, was to "Germanize" these territories by expelling the entire "alien" population of 7.5 million Poles and 500,000 Jews and replacing them with repatriated "ethnic Germans" from the territories ceded to Stalin in the Nonaggression Pact. A total demographic revolution on such a staggering scale proved impossible to realize immediately under the exigencies of war. Though some Łódź Jews were indeed expelled and others fled eastward of their own accord, the vast bulk—though targeted for expulsion—remained, and their continued presence constituted a problem in the eyes of local authorities that demanded a solution.

As early as December 1939, Warthegau authorities recognized that an "immediate evacuation" of the Łódź Jews was not possible and proposed sealing them "temporarily" in a "closed ghetto" so that the wealth they had "hoarded colossally" would have to be "given back" in exchange for food. The ghetto was to be only a "transition measure" for extracting wealth; thereafter, the Germans would "burn out this plague boil," and the city would be "cleansed of Jews."⁹ Several other constituencies joined in support of ghettoization to pursue their own agendas. Urban planners looked forward to making the city now renamed "Litzmannstadt" a model of German culture and beautification, on which work could begin by removing Jews to the most squalid corner of the city. And German public health officials argued for the "irrefutable necessity" of "hermetically" sealing off the Jews, who were deemed the



Adolf Eichmann listens to the proceedings through a glass booth during his trial in Jerusalem, 1961. Pictured in the foreground are defense attorney Dr. Robert Servatius; prosecutor Gideon Hausner; Hausner's deputy, Gabriel Bach; and (from behind) possibly the prosecution advisor, Jacob Robinson.

USHMM WS #24373, COURTESY OF ELI ROSENBAUM



A group of Jewish men stand outside the entrance to the *mikveh* [ritual bath] in the Piotrków Trybunalski ghetto, May 15, 1942.
USHMM WS #04099, COURTESY OF BEN JACHIMOWICZ JAMES

carriers of epidemics endangering the rest of the population.¹⁰ The ghettoization decree was announced on February 8, and some 162,000 Jews were sealed off on April 30, 1940.

As the expulsion of the ghettoized Łódź Jews was expected by the end of July 1940, and the interim goal was to force the Jews to give up all of their wealth in return for food, the German authorities had little interest in organizing and exploiting Jewish labor. However, when it was clear by the end of summer 1940 that the Łódź Jews could not be expelled in the foreseeable future, that little in the way of “hoarded” wealth was any longer being extracted to purchase food, and death rates in the ghetto were skyrocketing, German authorities had to reassess their policies towards the ghetto. Alexander Palfinger was unconcerned by the evidence of rising death rates and continued to argue that only the “most extreme exigency” would induce the Jews to part with their wealth. And in any case, “the rapid dying out of the Jews is for us a matter of total indifference, if not to say desirable.”¹¹ Palfinger’s immediate superior and ghetto manager, Hans Biebow, argued for a different course; he wanted “to facilitate the self-maintenance of the Jews through finding them work.” Biebow’s position pre-

vailed at a meeting of German officials on October 18, 1940, where “it was established at the outset that the ghetto in Łódź must continue to exist, and everything must be done to make the ghetto self-sustaining.”¹² Therefore, the character of the ghetto had to be “fundamentally altered” from that of “a kind of holding or concentration camp” designed for “drawing off the wealth of the ghetto inhabitants” into an “essential element of the total economy, a one-of-its-kind large-scale enterprise.”¹³

Łódź was the first major sealed ghetto created and the first whose long-term duration was reluctantly accepted. Here the argument between the attritionists and productionists had first been waged, and the productionists had prevailed. It would also become, therefore, the first site of an experiment in harnessing the labor of ghettoized Jews to make the ghetto self-sustaining. It was destined to be not only a model that other German authorities studied and modified but also “a ‘tourist attraction’ that never failed to excite the most lively interests of visitors from the Old Reich.”¹⁴

Throughout 1940 and 1941, most but not all of the smaller Jewish communities in the Warthegau were ghettoized as well. Some were open, but many were enclosed. Local authorities cited various reasons, especially the housing shortage, fear of epidemics, and the alleged key role of Jews in the black market.¹⁵ But the real center of ghettoization had shifted to the Generalgouvernement and particularly to the largest Jewish community in all of Nazi-occupied Europe, Warsaw. There, in contrast to Łódź, the move towards ghettoization proceeded in fits and starts, and attritionists initially prevailed over productionists until the head of the Generalgouvernement, Hans Frank, and his economic experts intervened from outside.

In the fall of 1939, an SS initiative for establishing a ghetto in Warsaw was indefinitely postponed by the army.¹⁶ In the following spring of 1940, the head of Distrikt Warschau’s Resettlement Division, Waldemar Schön, proposed a ghetto across the Vistula River on the east bank, which was rejected by city officials as economically too disruptive.¹⁷ Schön’s next proposal for two suburban ghettos received impetus from a major conference on the use of Jewish labor in the Generalgouvernement, which concluded in early June 1940 that all cities should erect work camps, concentration camps, and ghettos “so that the Jews cannot move about freely.”¹⁸ But this impetus was nullified a month later when Frank ordered a sudden halt to all ghetto building in the Generalgouvernement, which was now deemed to be “for all practical purposes illusory” in view of Hitler’s recent approval of the Madagascar Plan and the seemingly imminent deportation of all of Europe’s Jews to that island in the Indian Ocean.¹⁹

After many false starts, the final impetus for creating the Warsaw ghetto came from public health officials. The chief public health official in Distrikt Warschau, Dr. Lambert, argued that “with absolute certainty” deadly epidemics would sweep the Distrikt in the coming winter and that ghettoization of Jews was urgent to protect the increasing concentrations of troops there. This position was endorsed by Frank’s chief health official, Dr. Jost Walbaum, and on September 12, Frank approved the creation of a sealed ghetto, “above all” due to the

danger to public health posed by Jews “roving about.”²⁰ At the same time, other towns in the Distrikt were also to construct ghettos, and Schön’s Resettlement Division was entrusted with the implementation. For the sake of time, his idea of two suburban ghettos was abandoned in favor of locating the ghetto in the most densely Jewish section of the city. There the Warsaw ghetto was sealed on November 30, 1940.

If the warnings of public health officials had tipped the scales in favor of ghettoization, many other justifications were offered in its favor both before and after: removing Jewish political, cultural, and moral influence on life in Poland; ending Jewish black marketeering and price speculation; the aesthetic removal of the “Jewish imprint” from Warsaw; and the ability to control large numbers of Jews with a relatively small claim on German supervisory personnel.²¹ In Warsaw as in Łódź, though more gradually, the creation of the ghetto became a consensus policy. Likewise in Warsaw, the subsequent struggle between attritionists and productionists was more prolonged.

With the sealing of the Warsaw ghetto, all economic exchange was to run through the Transfer Station (Transferstelle) established by Waldemar Schön, who pursued the announced goal of extracting all of the ghetto’s “hidden” wealth while avoiding “premature impoverishment” before the ghetto inhabitants could be expelled to Madagascar.²² In reality, Schön constructed a coalition of attritionists, hiring the disgruntled Alexander Palfinger away from Łódź and siding with Karl Naumann, the Distrikt’s head of the Division for Food and Agriculture, who deliberately withheld food supplies from the ghetto. As reports of surging starvation in the Warsaw ghetto spread, Frank’s economic experts, Walter Emmerich and Rudolf Gater, presented him with a stark alternative: one could view the ghetto either “as a means . . . to liquidate the Jews” or as a source of labor that had to be sufficiently fed to be capable of productive work.²³ Overcoming the mendacious denials of Warsaw officials, Emmerich prevailed: “The starting point for all economic measures has to be the idea of maintaining the capacity of the Jews to live.”²⁴ In May 1941, Schön and Palfinger were given other duties, Heinz Auerswald was appointed commissioner of the Jewish district, and the banker Max Bischof was placed in charge of the Transfer Station. Together they worked for a productionist solution, specifically “improvement in the hygienic situation in the interest of combating epidemics” and “the prevention of an initially feared economic failure” through the “employment of a large number” of Jewish workers.²⁵

Ghettoization in the other Distrikts of the Generalgouvernement—Krakau, Radom, and Lublin—followed yet another trajectory and timetable. In April 1940, Hans Frank determined that his capital city of Kraków should become the “most Jew-free city” in the Generalgouvernement, so he and his officials could “breathe German air.” Thus the vast bulk of Kraków’s 60,000 Jews were to be expelled from the city and dispersed among the smaller towns and villages of the Distrikt, while only 5,000 to 10,000 would be allowed to

remain as indispensable skilled workers.²⁶ Even as expulsion on this scale proved utterly impossible to implement in Kraków, German Distrikt governors in Radom and Lublin—citing above all a shortage of housing—attempted the same policy of reducing the urban Jewish populations of their capital cities as well. In short, dispersal, not concentration as an alleged preparation for deportation to extermination camps, was one initial German goal in these Distrikts. With the massive buildup of German troop levels in the Generalgouvernement in preparation for the invasion of the Soviet Union, the housing shortage intensified further, and ghettoization of more Jewish communities in the cities and towns throughout Distrikts Krakau and Radom was ordered in late March and early April 1941. When the ghettos in the larger cities were sealed, they contained far larger numbers of Jews than the German authorities either desired or anticipated—in Kraków and Radom, 40,000 and 25,000, respectively, rather than 10,000; in Lublin, 40,000 rather than 20,000. Needless to say, the larger number of Jews was not accommodated by giving them more housing but rather by crowding them together more densely. Open ghettos were more prevalent in the smaller towns in Distrikts Radom and Krakau. “In Distrikt Lublin,” one German official reported nearly a year later, “with one exception, regular and sealed ghettos do not exist. There are many Jewish quarters and special Jewish communities, but these are not specially isolated.”²⁷

Since detailed arrangements were left to the local authorities, the process of establishing ghettos was extremely decentralized and drawn out over more than two years. In Distrikt Radom, for example, it lasted until the summer of 1942, when the deportations to killing centers began. Both open and closed ghettos were established, with the latter type predominating from the spring of 1941. In the case of some small ghettos, the inhabitants were simply ordered not to leave the limits of their village. In the fall of 1941, concerns to suppress the spread of typhus and black market activities led German officials to intensify restrictions on Jews’ freedom of movement and introduce a more systematic ghettoization, which produced more than 100 ghettos in Distrikt Radom. By December 1941, Distrikt governor Kundt had proclaimed the death sentence both for Jews leaving their place of residence and for Poles sheltering or providing assistance to Jews. Signs were to be erected marking the boundaries of the Jewish districts (*Jüdischer Wohnbezirke*) and informing the Jews of the death penalty for leaving them. In response, several Kreishauptmänner declared remaining villages with a Jewish population to be ghettos by early 1942. Subsequently in Kreis Opatow, 17 specified ghettos were to be established by June 1, 1942.²⁸

As a general rule, the more hermetically sealed the ghetto and the larger the Jewish population, the greater the task of sustaining that population against the threat of death through starvation and disease. Thus Łódź and Warsaw above all presented the greatest difficulties to both the German productionist ghetto managers and Jewish leaders in harnessing Jewish labor and establishing viable ghetto economies. The respective

ghetto managers, Hans Biebow and Heinz Auerswald, and their respective Jewish counterparts, Chaim Rumkowski and Adam Czerniaków, followed divergent strategies. In Łódź, Biebow's ghetto administration kept a tight and centralized control over workshops set up within the ghetto as well as the inflow of food and raw materials and outflow of goods produced. Private contracting and smuggling were effectively prohibited. Rumkowski in turn assured the assignment and discipline of labor and tolerated no dissent or challenge to his authority. In Warsaw, Auerswald and Bischof allowed for the emergence of a "free enterprise" ghetto economy in which German businessmen were invited to set up shops inside the ghetto, confiscatory controls on currency and accumulated wealth were lifted to encourage Jewish business activity, and a blind eye was turned towards the considerable economic traffic in and out of the ghetto outside the supervision of the Transfer Station. And Czerniakow, in contrast to Rumkowski, permitted pluralistic political as well as economic activity.

Ghetto production rose in both Łódź and Warsaw, the soaring death rates stabilized, and the ghettoized Jews did not simply die out as the attritionists had hoped. Nonetheless, life within the ghettos remained miserable and precarious, and the triumph of the productionist ghetto managers was only partial for several reasons. First, the ghettos were still viewed by German occupation authorities as a "most unwelcome" but "necessary evil" granted no permanent right to exist.²⁹ As Auerswald noted, "[T]he best solution would apparently still be the removal of the Jews to some other place."³⁰ Thus even German authorities with a vested interest in the productivity of the ghettos could not resist putting immediate and predatory pillaging of ghetto "profits" ahead of long-term investment in the sustenance of ghetto labor. Most notoriously, Gauleiter Greiser of the Warthegau skimmed off 65 percent of the proceeds from ghetto production for his own coffers, leaving the malnourished ghetto workers to a fate of gradual decline. Greiser's windfall from the Łódź ghetto, combined with his close personal ties to Himmler, saved it from the fate of general liquidation and the transfer of a remnant of survivors to labor camps, the fate that other Polish ghettos suffered in 1942–1943. But the Łódź Jews suffered an agonizing and prolonged process of debilitation and decimation until the final liquidation of the ghetto in the summer of 1944.

Second, the ghettoized Jews were at the bottom of the Nazi racial hierarchy and thus had the last claim on resources. Pleas for more food for the ghetto workers and more resources for the ghetto economies were, in a wartime situation of overall and growing shortages, constantly met with the rejoinder that no one else could be "impaired or disadvantaged even in the slightest for the benefit of the Jews."³¹ Thus ghetto managers were free to improve ghetto economies only as long as they worked with marginal resources not previously claimed by others. What they could not do was achieve a reallocation of resources to benefit ghettoized Jews at the expense of anyone else. This meant, moreover, that unrepentant attritionists were generally free to sabotage productionist efforts with im-

punity. Requests for food and raw materials were met with the standard reply that nothing was available for the Jews. In vain, one frustrated German official noted: "It is thereby completely overlooked that these requests serve much less the interests of the Jews than the appropriate exploitation of Jewish manpower for the good of the Reich."³²

Under such circumstances productionist ghetto managers gradually changed the terms of their argument. Initially, they had argued that Jews must be put to work to feed the ghettos at no expense to the Reich and thereby avoid the calamitous consequences of widespread starvation and unchecked epidemics. As the ghettos became more productive, they then argued that their Jewish workers must be fed to continue producing for the German war effort. When Berlin opted for mass murder, by their own revised argument they had already abandoned nonworking Jews to their fate.

GHETTOIZATION IN THE SHADOW OF THE FINAL SOLUTION: OCCUPIED SOVIET TERRITORY AFTER JUNE 1941

In preparation for the "war of destruction" that Nazi Germany would wage against the Soviet Union, Hitler called for the removal of the "Jewish Bolshevik intelligentsia." The military guidelines for troop behavior called for "ruthless measures" against "bolshevist agitators, guerrillas, saboteurs, Jews." Economists planned to decimate the urban population through deliberate starvation. And Heydrich specifically ordered his police units to execute "Jews in state and party positions." However ominous the implications were concerning the long-term fate of Soviet Jewry, pre-invasion documents were quite vague about specific measures. Even Alfred Rosenberg, who in his capacity as the designated future Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Territories churned out a veritable blizzard of memoranda, mentioned specific ghettoization policies only briefly and inconsistently. On one occasion he specified "forced labor, ghettoization" as a "temporary, transitional solution" to the Jewish question.³³ Just a week later he wrote that a "definitive solution" would be obtained through the "creation of ghettos or work columns. Compulsory labor must be introduced." Crossed out was the additional qualification "as is already being done in practice in Litzmannstadt [Łódź]."³⁴ Clearly Rosenberg looked to the Polish model and saw the exploitation of Jewish forced labor and ghettoization as two aspects of a single policy.

But the installation of Rosenberg's civil administration, limited to the western portions of the occupied Soviet territory, did not begin until many weeks and months after the invasion. Aside from the initial policies of instigating murderous pogroms, followed by the selective mass murder of Jewish adult males, especially those deemed Jewish leaders or professional elites, carried out by various SS police units, the more mundane policies for controlling the remaining Jewish population were introduced by local military authorities. In addition to marking, forced labor, exclusion from various economic



Defendants Hans Frank and Alfred Rosenberg stand during a recess of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, n.d. Also pictured, from left to right, are Alfred Jodl, Franz von Papen (from the back), and Artur Seyss-Inquart.

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activities, confiscation of property, and the mandated creation of Jewish Councils, these local regulations often included restrictions on movement and relocation to specified areas of residence, both to facilitate control of the Jewish population and to free up housing for the benefit of the local population. The result was that in many regions a decentralized and unsystematic but nonetheless *de facto* ghettoization process was set in motion.

In midsummer two developments began to occur simultaneously on Soviet-occupied territory: the gradual installation of Rosenberg's civil administration in rear areas and the re-targeting by SS killing squads from adult male Jews to now include women, children, and elderly that signaled the onset of the Final Solution. These simultaneous developments set the stage for a conflict between the civil administration and the SS over the viability of extending the Polish model of ghettoization to Soviet territory. The so-called Brown Folder of Rosenberg's ministry proposed "preparatory measures" for a postwar European-wide solution to the Jewish question. Jews were to be expelled from public life, restricted in movement, and separated from the rest of the population through "a transfer into ghettos." Given the priority of economic concerns during the war, however, anti-Jewish measures were not to damage economic interests, and Jews were to be harnessed

to "productive" manual labor.³⁵ In early August 1941, Hinrich Lohse, Rosenberg's appointee as Reichskommissar Ostland, circulated "guidelines" whereby Jews would be cleared from the countryside and concentrated in "hermetically" sealed ghettos in the cities. Private employers would pay the civil administration for the use of Jewish labor, which in turn would fund minimal provisions for the ghettoized Jews.³⁶ Quite simply, this was a copy of the "practice in Litzmannstadt."

Walter Stahlecker, head of Einsatzgruppe A in the Baltic, objected to the guidelines, which were "not in agreement" with the orders—which could "not be discussed in writing"—that he had been given for the treatment of the Jewish question. In trying to regulate the Jewish question on the model of the Generalgouvernement, Lohse ignored "the radical treatment of the Jewish question now possible for the first time" in the east, namely, "an almost 100 percent immediate cleansing of the entire Ostland of Jews." Moreover, Stahlecker asserted, because of the collapse of the economy, there was no shortage of workers, and therefore, considerations for the use of Jewish labor could be excluded.³⁷

The conflict between a Polish model of ghettoization and an "almost 100 percent immediate cleansing" was resolved through compromise. Lohse informed his men that the civil administration could proceed with ghettoization "where and so long as further measures in the sense of a Final Solution to the Jewish question are not possible." Stahlecker informed his men that while they were not in a position to implement their own "difficult" measures at the moment, they had to keep their focus "on a Final Solution to the Jewish question with quite different measures than those envisaged" by Lohse.³⁸ In short, in Reichskommissariat Ostland (RKO), ghettoization would be a temporary measure, carried out by the civil administration and tolerated by the SS only where and as long as elimination of the Jews through mass execution was not possible.

In August, September, and October 1941, a cautious and conditional consensus on ghettoization was being reached by other agencies in other regions of the newly occupied Soviet territories as well. In mid-August the Army High Command articulated its policy, according to which ghettoization could be carried out "if" it was "useful and necessary" and "if" the means were available to accomplish it without disadvantaging other more urgent priorities (*italics added*).³⁹ On September 5, 1941, Erich Koch, Lohse's counterpart in the south, ordered the establishment of ghettos in those regions in which the civil administration was being established in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine.⁴⁰ On September 28, even the SS-Cavalry Brigade operating in the Pripet marshes of Belorussia welcomed ghettoization as an expedient under some conditions: "If a unit is stationed in one place for a long time, Jewish quarters or ghettos are to be set up directly, if they [the Jews] cannot be exterminated immediately."⁴¹ Last on board were the German occupation authorities in Eastern Galicia (Distrikt Galizien), which had been joined to the Generalgouvernement in August 1941. They initially experienced the ban on further ghetto building that was in force throughout the Generalgouvernement "because the hope exists that the Jews

will be deported out of the Generalgouvernement in the near future.” Pleading their special case, Distrikt authorities obtained permission in October 1941 to erect ghettos at least in the major cities of Stanisławów, Tarnopol, and Lwów to isolate “the Jews from the rest of the population as quickly and as extensively as possible.”⁴²

Given the lack of a single, uniform policy, the emerging pattern of ghettoization in the newly occupied Soviet territories was therefore an uneven patchwork that depended on a number of variables, including above all the timing and logistics of the massacre of the local Jewish populations, on the one hand, and the decisions of local authorities balancing the demands for food and housing and need for Jewish labor, on the other. Five general configurations can be identified.

First, in the occupied territories further east and closest to the front, where much of the Jewish population had had a chance to flee and where destruction of urban areas was great and economic activity slight, immediate mass executions were sometimes carried out without any ghettoization at all. The classic example of mass execution without preliminary ghettoization is of course the massacre of more than 33,000 Jews in the ravine at Babi Yar on September 29–30, just days after the German occupation of Kiev. Also among the largest mass killing Aktions that took place without prior ghettoization were those in Dnepropetrovsk (November 15, 1941) and Simferopol (December 9–13, 1941).

Second, and more commonly, very brief, makeshift measures of concentration were carried out prior to mass killings in 1941. The term *ghetto* was used, often to camouflage German intentions and create the illusion of long-term viability among the victims, but liquidation occurred before these ghettos took on many of the institutionalized characteristics of the “Polish model.” In Lithuania the Germans began concentrating Jews outside the major cities in improvised camps in mid-July, and more systematic killing began in mid-August.⁴³ In Latvia, some of the “provincial” Jews were concentrated in mid-sized towns like Jelgava and Litene and held for two to three weeks before their execution, while others were killed directly in their home villages and towns.⁴⁴ In central Ukraine, the Jews of Zhytomyr were concentrated on July 9, and successive waves of executions had destroyed the Jewish community there by mid-September. Less incrementally, most of the 15,000 Jews of Berdichev were ghettoized on August 26 and killed in a massive Aktion on September 15–16, 1941. In Vinnitsa the Jews were concentrated in a brick factory and several other buildings shortly before more than 10,000 Jews were killed on September 19, leaving only a remnant of 5,000 alive until the next spring.⁴⁵ In southern Ukraine, the Jews of Kherson were ghettoized on September 7 and killed on September 24–25, and the Jews of Mariupol were placed in barracks on the edge of the city on October 18 and killed on October 20–21.

Starting somewhat later than in the Baltic and Ukraine, German occupation authorities liquidated the ghettos of eastern Belorussia, beginning with Mogilev on October 2–3 and 19. In Vitebsk some 15,000 Jews had been concentrated in a ruined factory, and perhaps as many as two thirds had already

perished from starvation and epidemics when the rest were killed on October 8–10. Ghetto liquidations followed in Borisov on October 21–22; in Gomel’, Bobruisk, and Orsha in November; and Polotsk in early December.⁴⁶ In Generalkommissariat (Gk) Wolhynien und Podolien the order for ghettoization was issued in early September 1941,⁴⁷ which was implemented only quite slowly in practice. Apparently desirous of a capital city virtually “free of Jews,” the local authorities carried out a carefully planned killing Aktion that took the lives of 18,000 to 21,000 Jews in Równe on November 5–6, 1941, which prepared the way for the establishment of a ghetto for the remaining 5,000 Jews there in December. The bulk of the 130 ghettos in Gk Wolhynien und Podolien were established between October 1941 and May 1942, to collect Jews in the Rayon centers, as in almost all locations only partial killing Aktions had been conducted in the summer and fall of 1941. The main wave of ghetto liquidations here occurred in the summer and fall of 1942.⁴⁸ In eastern Ukraine, Khar’kov was not occupied until late October. The more than 10,000 remaining Jews were moved to a tractor plant outside of town on December 16 and killed in early January 1942.

A third configuration—prevalent in Distrikt Białystok and Gk Wolhynien und Podolien—most closely followed the “Polish model.” Here the Einsatzgruppen and other German police units carried out massacres of thousands of Jews in the summer of 1941 but then quickly moved eastward, leaving the bulk of the Jewish populations still alive. They were incarcerated in ghettos that were then left relatively undisturbed until their final liquidation many months later. During this period of relative stability, especially in places where both German authorities and Jewish leaders were similarly inclined, Jewish workers were extensively mobilized and significant ghetto economies were created. In the city of Białystok, German Order Police battalions killed thousands of Jews in two Aktions in late June and mid-July 1941. Thereafter, Ephraim Barash pursued an unabashed policy of “survival through labor” and cultivated a network of German authorities willing to profit. The Białystok ghetto became a beehive of factories and workshops producing for both the Germans and the underground economy. Even when the small ghettos of Distrikt Białystok were liquidated in November 1942 and the larger ghettos of Łomża, Prużana, and Grodno were liquidated in early 1943, the Białystok ghetto—despite a partial deportation of 10,000 of its population in February—continued in existence until its final liquidation in August 1943. In the area across the Bug River that would become Gk Wolhynien und Podolien, the Jewish communities of Brześć and Pińsk were savaged by massacres in early July and early August 1941, respectively, as the German advance passed through, but here, too, stability followed. In Brześć an alliance of SS and civil administration authorities consciously sought to maximize the economic exploitation of Jewish labor, citing the model of Odilo Globocnik’s economic ventures in Distrikt Lublin of the Generalgouvernement. Many of the ghettos in Gk Wolhynien und Podolien were cleared during the summer of 1942, and in late August 1942, Koch ordered a “one hundred percent cleansing”

with no exceptions. Despite the explicit protestations of the German authorities in Brześć, after more than a year of relative peace, the ghettos in Brześć and then Pińsk were subjected to sudden and total liquidation in October.⁴⁹ Following the murder of 4,000 unskilled workers in Włodzimierz Wołyński in November 1942, only a small remnant ghetto there for about 1,000 Jews existed as the last ghetto in Gk Wolhynien und Podolien until its final liquidation in December 1943.

The fourth and perhaps most prevalent configuration for ghettoization in the newly occupied Soviet territories involved an ongoing interplay between ghettoization and massacre. In these cases, mass killing often preceded initial ghettoization, and thereafter the surviving remnant was subject to the constant threat of renewed selections reducing the ghetto population even further. In some places and on some occasions the depleted ghetto populations would be reinforced by contingents of Jews brought in from the outside. In this ongoing process of periodic selection and ghetto reduction, Jews deemed useful to the war economy were advantaged over those classified as nonworkers, as the Germans attempted to exploit Jewish labor and advance towards completion of their “Final Solution to the Jewish question” simultaneously. This was the pattern of events most evident in the Baltic, western Belorussia (Gk Weissruthenien) and Distrikt Galizien.

In Wilno (Vilnius), some 5,000 Jews were killed in July 1941 and another 14,000 in the first days of September at the infamous execution site of Ponary, before the remaining Jewish population of some 40,000 was forced into two ghettos. After nonworkers had been concentrated in the second ghetto, they were killed in October. Two further selections and killing Aktions in the main ghetto in November and December reduced the Jewish population to 20,000. Only then did a period of stability set in, with the bulk of the ghetto population working in the war economy. Nearly half the Jewish population was dispersed to labor camps before the final liquidation of the ghetto in September 1943. In nearby Kaunas, some 10,000 Jews were killed in the summer of 1941, before the surviving remnant of 30,000 was ghettoized in late August. A series of selections in the fall of 1941 claimed the lives of 12,000 more Jews before a period of stabilization set in. Close to 7,000 Kaunas Jews were dispersed to labor camps in the fall of 1943. Then the ghetto was administratively transformed into a concentration camp and finally liquidated in July 1944.

In pre-war Polish territories of Gk Weissruthenien the Germans killed Jewish leaders and intelligentsia in the major towns of Słonim, Nowogródek, and Baranowicze and some smaller towns in July 1941. In Słonim the Jews were placed in a ghetto with two sections, one for workers and families and the other for nonworkers. On November 14, 1941, the Germans killed 8,000 Jews derisively referred to as “useless eaters” by Gebietskommissar Erren.⁵⁰ The ghetto was repopulated with Jews brought in from the surrounding area. Then 8,000 more Słonim Jews were killed on June 29, 1942, and the remnant ghetto was then liquidated the following December. In Nowogródek 5,000 Jews were killed on December 8, 1942,

and additional Jews were brought from the surrounding area into a newly established ghetto that was divided into three sections. Two of these sections were liquidated in succession on August 7, 1942, and February 4, 1943, before most of the few remaining Jews escaped through a tunnel on September 26, 1943. In Baranowicze the mass killing started somewhat later but followed the same pattern. After 2,300 Jews were killed on March 2, 1942, some additional skilled workers were brought in from surrounding smaller ghettos. The ghetto was liquidated in two further Aktions, which started on September 22 and December 17, 1942. A few Jews remained alive in various work camps in Baranowicze until the fall of 1943.⁵¹

An even more complex interaction of massacre and ghettoization occurred in Eastern Galicia. Following the first wave of killing in the summer of 1941, the Distrikt authorities obtained permission to begin ghettoization in three cities: Stanisławów, Tarnopol, and Lwów. In Stanisławów this led directly to the infamous “Bloody Sunday” massacre of 10,000 Jews on October 12, since the space allotted for the closed ghetto that was finally established in December was so small. The open ghetto established in Tarnopol in September was likewise closed in December, but the attempt in Lwów failed. Some 60,000 Jews were uprooted; forced into two narrow passageways through a railway embankment, where a murderous selection of thousands who were deemed unfit took place; and resettled on the site of the prospective ghetto. Before the last 20,000 Jews in Lwów could be moved, however, the Aktion was broken off in early December when epidemics spread through the city.

In March and April 1942 a vast four-pronged attack on the Jews of Distrikt Galizien was set in motion: (1) open ghettos were established in a number of the major towns, often divided into three sections for skilled workers, manual workers, and nonworkers; (2) from there many thousands of Jews deemed least useful for labor were sent either to the gas chambers at the Bełżec extermination center or shot locally; (3) Jews in the outlying areas were concentrated in the urban centers where the Jewish populations had been reduced; and (4) slave labor camps were set up for road construction (the Durchgangsstrasse [highway] IV [DG IV] camps) and outside Lwów (Janowska). This massive uprooting and killing operation gradually subsided after Bełżec was temporarily shut down for enlargement and could take no further transports from Distrikt Galizien. By then the killing campaigns of the summer of 1941, late 1941, and the spring of 1942 had claimed some 7,000, 30,000, and 40,000 Jewish lives, respectively, but over 400,000 Jews still remained alive.

On July 19, 1942, Himmler ordered the liquidation of all Jews in the Generalgouvernement by the end of the year. In an extraordinarily intense killing campaign that lasted from late July into December, the German authorities in Distrikt Galizien claimed another 260,000 victims, most through deportation to the now-enlarged extermination camp at Bełżec. Having decimated the Jewish community of Lwów by nearly half in August, a sealed ghetto was created there in early September after a grotesque public hanging of the Jewish Coun-

cil. The same pattern was followed elsewhere as closed ghettos were created to hold the decimated survivors. Here, the completion of the ghettoization process was not a preparatory step for mass murder but a measure to control the remnant of survivors. At the end of 1942, some 160,000 Jews were in fact still alive in Distrikt Galizien, interned in either labor camps or around 35 permitted “work ghettos” (*Arbeitsghettos*) that were often scarcely distinguishable from labor camps. Despite the Himmler order of the summer before, the deteriorating military situation and the vast roundups of Ukrainian workers sent back to the Third Reich (as well as the limited killing capacity of Bełżec) had made the total liquidation of Jewish labor by the end of the year unobtainable.

Numerous killing Aktions continued in the first four months of 1943, especially another roundup of 10,000 Jews in the Lwów ghetto in January. Thereafter the ghetto was officially reclassified as a *Julag* or “Jew camp.” The final sweep of ghetto liquidations occurred in May and June 1943 on Himmler’s orders, immediately in the wake of the security panic that resulted from the Warsaw Uprising. The remnant of 21,000 Jews then still alive in labor camps were mostly killed in the liquidation of the DG IV camps in July and the Janowska camp in November 1943.

The fifth and rarest configuration for ghettoization in occupied Soviet territory involved just two cities—Riga and Minsk—which became the sites for ghettos of German-speaking Jews deported from the Third Reich in late 1941 and early 1942. In September 1941 Himmler had obtained permission from Hitler to commence the deportation of Jews from the Third Reich, but as yet no extermination camps had been constructed and the regime was still uncertain in any case as how best to proceed with the potentially more politically sensitive killing of German Jews. Thus the deportees were initially to be sent to eastern ghettos before being sent “yet further to the east next spring.”⁵² Some 20 transports were sent to Łódź, after which Minsk became the next recipient. To make space for the new arrivals, approximately 18,000 local Jews were killed in two Aktions on November 7 and 20, 1941. German authorities in Minsk protested the arrival of the transports of Central European Jews so vociferously that the influx was stopped after 7 transports. The deportees were interned in a “German ghetto” separated from that of the Belorussian Jews by an internal wire.

In Riga, following early pogroms and numerous killing Aktions in the nearby Bikernieki Forest, German authorities ordered the formation of a ghetto in late July 1941. When finally sealed on October 25, 1941, the ghetto held 29,600 Latvian Jews. On November 30 and December 8, all but 5,000 (confined to a “small ghetto”) were killed in two horrific mass shootings at Rumbula. The main ghetto as well as nearby camps at Jungfernhof and Salaspils were filled with some 20,000 Jews from the Third Reich, who arrived on 20 transports between November 30, 1941, and February 10, 1942. Mass executions and high attrition cut the population of newcomers in half within months. A remnant of some 8,000 Jews was transferred to the concentration camp at Kaiserwald and

its subcamps before the ghetto was dissolved in November 1943.⁵³

LIQUIDATION OF THE POLISH GHETTOS, 1942–1944

When Joseph Goebbels visited Hitler’s headquarters on August 19–20, 1941, he referred to Hitler’s Reichstag speech of January 1939 prophesying that another world war would result in the “destruction of the Jewish race in Europe.” Goebbels then recommended not only the marking of German Jews but also their deportation to the east. Convinced that his prophecy was “being confirmed,” Hitler approved the marking decree but made an important distinction in the timetable for the realization of his prophecy. “In the east the Jews are paying the price, in Germany they have already paid in part and will have to pay still more in the future.” But this future was not distant. The deportation of German Jews would begin “immediately after the end of the campaign in the East.”⁵⁴

The renewed Nazi offensive from early September to early October led in rapid succession to the surrounding of Leningrad in the north, the capture of Kiev in the south, and the double encirclement victory of Vyazma and Bryansk on the Central Front. With victory now seemingly in sight, the Nazi regime also made a cluster of decisions in September and October 1941 that would extend the Final Solution that had sealed the fate of Soviet Jews to the rest of the European Jews within the German sphere, namely, the decisions to begin the deportation of Jews from the Third Reich to the east that Hitler had still shied from in August, to begin construction of a fleet of gas vans and two prototype extermination camps at Chełmno and Bełżec, and to forbid any further emigration of Jews from the German sphere. In short, the previous vision of a solution to the Jewish question through decimating expulsion had been replaced by a new vision of total and systematic mass murder through deportation to camps in the east equipped with gassing facilities.

In turn, Polish ghettos that had previously functioned as temporary holding areas for Jews until they could somehow be expelled now became staging areas for selection and deportation to extermination camps. However, immediate implementation of the new policy was not possible until the new killing centers had been constructed and they as well as the techniques of ghetto liquidation and deportation had been tested. The Nazi regime was venturing into totally uncharted territory, and necessarily there would be a significant “lag time” between the fateful decisions of the fall of 1941 and the extension of the Final Solution from the Soviet territory to the European Jews in practice.

Once again the Łódź ghetto was a key site in the history of Nazi ghettoization, where the course of events was shaped by four distinguishing factors. It was already the first ghetto in which, due to the joint efforts of ghetto manager Hans Biebow and Jewish Council chairman Chaim Rumkowski, an extensive employment of Jewish labor had been harnessed to the German war economy. It was the only Polish ghetto (in addition to Minsk, Kaunas, and Riga further east) to which German,

Austrian, and Czech Jews were deported in the fall of 1941, posing the problem of overcrowding and evoking strong protest from local authorities. It was now the first major ghetto from which Jews were selected and deported to their deaths by poison gassing (in this case in the gas vans of the Chełmno camp), beginning in January 1942. And in the end, as the major Polish ghetto furthest from the reach of the advancing Red Army and the ghetto most profitable to local German authorities, it would be the last to be liquidated.

The dovetailing of Rumkowski's strategy of survival through labor with the needs of the German war economy and the interest of local Nazis in enriching themselves meant that the Łódź ghetto was targeted for the elimination of all nonworking Jews but not total destruction. This also meant that the Łódź ghetto was a major site of one of the most excruciating dilemmas facing some but not all Jewish Councils, namely, participation in the selection of who would live and who would die. Between January and May 1942, Rumkowski's ghetto bureaucracy chose more than 55,000 Jews to be sent to Chełmno, and Jewish ghetto police escorted the unfortunate victims to the waiting trains. However, when the Germans demanded renewed deportations in September 1942 of the sick and unfit as well as all those over 65 and under 10 years of age, they had to enter the ghetto in force to carry out with terrible violence the deportation of an additional 16,000 Jews. While attrition from starvation continued within the ghetto unabated, that was the last deportation until the final liquidation of the Łódź ghetto in the summer of 1944.

Elsewhere in Poland there was no such prolonged pause in the ghetto liquidation process. Within the Generalgouvernement the Lublin ghetto was the site of the crucial "trial run" for mass ghetto-clearing and the operation of the Bełżec extermination camp. Beginning on March 16, squads of SS, Order Police, and East European auxiliaries (euphemistically called Hiwis or "volunteers") struck the ghetto on a daily basis. By April 14, over 30,000 Jews had been sent to Bełżec, thousands had been shot in the course of the violent roundups, some 4,000 were approved for transfer to a makeshift work ghetto, and another 4,000 "illegals" managed to evade the roundups and join the temporarily spared workers. In short, within one brief month over 80 percent of the inhabitants of the Lublin ghetto were murdered, and a remnant of less than 20 percent clung to life under a precarious stay of execution.

One Nazi official immediately perceived the significance of what had happened: "The Jewish resettlement has proved, therefore, that the action can be carried out also on a large scale, that is[,] for the entire Generalgouvernement."⁵⁵ And Goebbels recorded in his diary: "Beginning in Lublin, the Jews in the Generalgouvernement are now being evacuated eastward. The procedure is a pretty barbaric one and not to be described here more definitely. Not much will remain of the Jews. On the whole it can be said about 60 percent of them will have to be liquidated[,] whereas only about 40 percent can be used for forced labor."⁵⁶ Deportations to Bełżec were extended simultaneously to other parts of Distrikt Lublin and two other Distrikts—Galizien and Krakau—in the spring of

1942. The ghetto clearance Aktions at this time were accompanied by the establishment of a number of short-lived ghettos designed primarily to assemble the Jews for deportation. Very quickly the limited gas chamber and burial capacity of Bełżec was overwhelmed. Operations there were halted in May while larger gas chambers were constructed, but a new camp at Sobibór opened, and construction of a third Generalgouvernement extermination camp at Treblinka began.

In mid-June the ghetto-clearing and deportation Aktions were temporarily halted due to a lack of trains, owing to the demands of the renewed German offensive on the Eastern Front. During the brief pause Himmler pushed for an even more sweeping liquidation of the ghettos than reflected in Goebbels's estimated ratio of 60 percent liquidation/40 percent labor. The existing arrangements for the employment of Jewish labor were voided, and Himmler imposed new, much more stringent conditions for its use. Then on July 19, 1942, directly following a meeting with Hitler and a visit to Auschwitz, Himmler set a deadline for "total purification" of the Generalgouvernement: "I order that the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the Generalgouvernement be carried out and completed by December 31, 1942. As of December 31, 1942, no person of Jewish origin may reside in the Generalgouvernement except in internment camps. . . . All other labor projects that employ Jewish labor must be completed by then, or if this is not possible, transferred to an internment camp."⁵⁷

Just days later, on July 23, the trains rolled again, and the newly opened extermination camp at Treblinka began receiving massive transports from the Warsaw ghetto and Distrikt Radom. The five months following the setting of Himmler's deadline were undoubtedly the most lethal in the history of the Holocaust, as every ghetto in Poland was devastated, and the vast bulk of Polish Jewry perished in the face of the manic Nazi assault. While the largest ghetto, Warsaw, had to be emptied incrementally, most were liquidated quickly. For instance, from Częstochowa 50,000 ghettoized Jews were sent to Treblinka in a single brutal Aktion lasting two weeks. Other ghettos, like Międzyrzec Podlaski, were virtually emptied, refilled with Jews from the surrounding region, and then emptied again in repeated Aktions. Only by the narrowest margin was Himmler's end-of-the-year deadline not met. From January through September 1943, the "remnant ghettos" were in turn liquidated. Thereafter, Jews in the Generalgouvernement survived either in work camps or illegally in hiding or under false papers.

Alongside Łódź, the other major concentration of Jews in the "incorporated territories" of western Poland was found in Eastern Upper Silesia (Ost-Oberschlesien). Just as Łódź was the site of the first work ghetto, Eastern Upper Silesia was the site of a widespread system of forced labor camps, run by Organisation Schmelt. And just as the Germans found a compliant Jewish leader in Łódź in Chaim Rumkowski, in Eastern Upper Silesia, Moshe Merin of Sosnowiec proved so useful that—contrary to the normal practice of keeping Jewish Councils isolated from one another—he was given author-

ity over all Jewish communities in the region. Perhaps for these reasons, Himmler felt less urgency here. Two massive selections in May–June and August 1942 sent 35,000 non-working Silesian Jews to Auschwitz, but closed ghettos for those Jews not already in work camps were not created until the spring of 1943, most notably in Sosnowiec, Będzin, and Zawiercie. In stark contrast to the Generalgouvernement, at this point in time the majority of Jews in Eastern Upper Silesia were still alive, though sealed in either ghettos or labor camps. The Warsaw ghetto uprising, however, induced Himmler to change course. Contrary to the fate of Łódź that remained in existence for another year, the Silesian ghettos were liquidated in August 1943.⁵⁸

JEWISH COUNCILS, GHETTOS, AND STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL

Despite the variation in Nazi ghettoization policy that differed widely according to time and place, once incarcerated the ghettoized Jews had certain common experiences and faced certain common dilemmas. From the start of the camp system in 1933, the Nazis had employed a method of prisoner control—the so-called Kapo system—that involved granting some prisoners the power to control other prisoners in return for special privileges. This cynical method of divide and rule was applied to the Jews of occupied Poland, when Heydrich ordered the creation of Jewish Councils in each community in September 1939, with the collective responsibility for disseminating German orders and implementing German policies. As Heinz Auerswald, the ghetto manager in Warsaw, noted, the imposition of Jewish Councils—a German policy to serve German purposes—had two distinct advantages. The councils proved to be a valuable instrument through which the Germans exercised maximum control with minimum manpower. Moreover, the councils served as lightning rods for the anger and frustration of other Jews. “When deficiencies occur the Jews direct the resentment against the Jewish administration, and not against the German supervision.”⁵⁹

For the most part, the Jewish members of the councils, who at least initially were drawn primarily from the cadres of traditional community leaders and activists, thought of themselves not as Nazi puppets but rather as community representatives given the thankless task of trying to protect Jewish interests under the most difficult of circumstances in which they had no choice but to carry out German orders. To mitigate German demands and Jewish suffering, they resorted above all to two strategies of survival: bribery and labor. In the first they sought out corruptible German officials who individually could be given a vested interest in continued Jewish existence and at least minimal well-being. In the latter they pursued the same logic on a broader, systemic level. In the words of Ephraim Barash of Białystok, the Jews had to make “every effort to penetrate the economy” through providing essential labor, so that “we should be missed if we were destroyed.”⁶⁰ At least initially in Poland, both strategies dovetailed with the interests of productionist ghetto managers and

appeared to be successful. What Jewish leaders had trouble imagining was that local German authorities, who wielded the power of life and death over their communities, were just minor functionaries with no power to influence, much less determine, the ultimate goals of Nazi Jewish policy. The policies of mitigation of Jewish Council leaders that worked before the implementation of the Final Solution would prove tragically illusory and counterproductive thereafter.

As Isaiah Trunk noted in his classic study of Jewish Councils, *Judenrat*, ghettoization posed tremendous problems to Jewish leaders, who with few resources all had to deal with hopelessly inadequate food supplies, terribly overcrowded housing, and the constant threat of epidemics.⁶¹ They also needed to help create innovative ghetto economies for self-maintenance. In occupied Poland, there was at least a period in which most councils could deal with these “normal” problems of ghettoization before they were confronted with the excruciating threat of the Final Solution. In occupied Soviet territory, all these problems converged.

By the time the Jewish Councils in occupied Poland faced the supreme challenge, their composition had tended to change in two ways. First, there was a process of “negative selection” as the Germans replaced less compliant with more compliant members. Traditional community leaders played a declining role as the Germans handpicked subservient outsiders more suited to their purposes.⁶² Second, collective leadership gave way to the domination of individuals, as the Germans preferred to work with those of more authoritarian temperament who mirrored their own preference for the *Führerprinzip* (leader principle). The culmination of the latter trend, atypical in the extreme it reached, were two men whom Philip Friedman dubbed exemplars of the “messianic complex”—Chaim Rumkowski of Łódź and Moshe Merin of Eastern Upper Silesia.⁶³ In those ghettos where incremental decimation rather than total liquidation faced Jewish Councils with the “choiceless choice”⁶⁴ of participating in the Germans’ selection process in the hope of limiting losses and



Judenrat chairman Mordechai Rumkowski (left) poses with Moshe Merin, the chairman for the Jewish councils in Eastern Upper Silesia, during the latter's visit to Łódź, 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #29066, COURTESY OF YIVO

buying time, Jewish Councils and ghetto police often tragically complied with the succession of German demands for ever more victims. But Rumkowski and Merin went beyond this. Convinced that they alone were destined to be the saviors of a surviving remnant, they were exceptionally intolerant of opposition to their policies of total compliance. Rumkowski included those he deemed “troublemakers” in the first transports to Chełmno, and Merin denounced his opponents to the Gestapo. At the other end of the spectrum of Jewish Council response to German demands to participate in the selection process were Adam Czerniaków of the Warsaw ghetto, who took poison rather than comply with German demands to round up children, and Artur Rosenzweig of Kraków, who chose to march at the head of the first column of deportees sent to Bełżec rather than sacrifice others to temporarily save himself.

Ultimately, Jewish leaders had no option or choice at their disposal that could save their communities. Whether the Germans ghettoized their victims for varying periods of time or killed them immediately, as in Kiev at Babi Yar, and whether Jews complied to the end, as in Łódź, or turned to a “resistance of the doomed,” as in Warsaw, the catastrophic and tragic end result was determined by German intent and power, not by Jewish decisions. The ghettos constitute an essential chapter in how and where the destruction of the European Jews occurred, but they do not explain why.

Christopher R. Browning

NOTES

1. Philip Friedman, “The Jewish Ghettos of the Nazi Era,” in Ada J. Friedman, ed., *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), pp. 61, 69. See also Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), p. 61.

2. Andreas Hillgruber, “Die ‘Endlösung’ und das deutsche Ostimperium als Kernstück des rassenideologischen Programms des Nationalsozialismus,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 20:2 (1972): 133–153.

3. Ulrich Herbert, “Vernichtungspolitik,” in Ulrich Herbert, ed., *Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik 1939–1945: Neue Forschungen und Kontroversen* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1998), pp. 58–59. See also Götz Aly, *Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1995), pp. 317–324.

4. For the concept of “cumulative radicalization” as a key to understanding National Socialist policymaking, see Hans Mommsen, “National Socialism—Continuity and Change,” in Walter Laquer, ed., *Fascism: A Reader’s Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 183.

5. The author has examined ghettoization in this region and time period in three publications: “Nazi Ghettoization Policy in Poland: 1939–41,” *Central European History* 19:4 (December 1986): 343–368, subsequently reprinted in Browning, *The Path to Genocide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 28–56; “Before the ‘Final Solution’: Nazi Ghettoization Policy in Poland (1940–41),” in *Ghettos 1939–1945: New Research and Perspectives on Definition, Daily Life, and Survival* (symposium presentations printed as an occasional

paper of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2005), pp. 1–13; and *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), pp. 111–168.

6. NARA, T-175/239/272836-40: Report of September 29, 1939, on meeting of division heads and Einsatzgruppen commanders on September 21, 1939. Heydrich’s infamous Schnellbrief of September 21, 1939, summarizing the same meeting, included mention of concentrating the Jews in cities with good rail connections as a “short-term goal” but did not use the term *ghetto*.

7. Klaus-Jürgen Müller, *Das Heer und Hitler. Armee und nationalsozialistisches Regime 1933–1940* (Stuttgart: DVA, 1969), pp. 671–672 (Doc. No. 47: Heydrich to Einsatzgruppen leaders, September 30, 1939).

8. Leni Yahil, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 193–195; Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), pp. 27, 48, 228, 230, 261. Promoted to Kreishauptmann of Kielec in 1941, Drechsel was arrested for corruption in 1944.

9. Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord* (hereafter *FGM*) (Berlin [East]: Rütten & Loening, 1960), pp. 78–81 (Rundschreiben of Übelhoer to party and police officials, December 10, 1939); BA-BL, BDC: Greiser Pers. Akten, Besuchs-Vermerk of the staff of the Führer’s Deputy, January 11, 1940.

10. For the consensus of German officials on ghettoization, see Gordon J. Horwitz, *Gettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 34–56.

11. YVA, JM 799/193 (A. Palfinger Aktennotiz, July 16, 1940); and O-53/78/76-82 (A. Palfinger “critical report,” November 7, 1940).

12. *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3, *Getto Łódzkie*, ed. Artur Eisenbach (Warsaw: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół CZWH w Polsce, 1946), pp. 102–104 (conference of October 18, 1940).

13. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 177–179 (Marder to Übelhoer, July 4, 1941).

14. *Dokumente Occupationis Teutonicae* (Poznań, 1949), vol. 8, pp. 57–58 (undated document of the Reichsjustizamt).

15. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 193–206.

16. Israel Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 49.

17. *FGM*, pp. 108–109 (Schön Report, January 20, 1941).

18. Hans Frank, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen*, ed. Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer (Stuttgart: DVA, 1975), pp. 227–239 (Wirtschaftstagung, June 6–7, 1940).

19. *FGM*, p. 110 (Schön Report, January 20, 1941).

20. YVA, JM 814 (Lambrecht Report, September 3, 1940); International Military Tribunal, ed., *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. 29 (Nuremberg, 1947), p. 406; Frank, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 281 (Abteilungleitersitzung, September 12, 1940).

21. YVA, JM 1112 (Auerswald Report “Zwei Jahre Arbeit,” September 26, 1941); O-53/48/792-816 (complete Schön Report).

22. Ibid., O-53/48/792-816 (complete Schön Report).
23. Ibid., JM 10016 ("Die Wirtschaftsbilanz des jüdischen Wohnbezirk," March 1941), also published in *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 9, *Bevölkerungsstruktur und Massenmord: Neue Dokumente zur deutschen Politik der Jahre 1938–1945*, ed. Götz Aly and Suzanne Heim (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1991).
24. Frank, *Diensttagebuch*, pp. 343–346 (conference of April 3, 1941).
25. YVA, O-53/49/132 (Auerswald's retrospective report on his activities in Warsaw, n.d. but after January 1943).
26. Frank, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 165 (entry of April 12, 1940).
27. YVA, O-53/82/465 (Lublin department of population and welfare to Kraków, February 6, 1942).
28. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 121; Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 247.
29. *Dokumenty i materiały*, vol. 3, pp. 241–242 (Łódź conference of October 24, 1940). In almost identical language Frank termed the Warsaw ghetto a "lesser evil" and temporary wartime measure that was not to be a "permanent burden." Frank, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 361 (conference of April 19, 1941).
30. Auerswald to Medeazza, November 24, 1941, printed in *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, ed. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kermisz (New York: Stein and Day, 1969), p. 402.
31. *Dokumenty i materiały*, vol. 3, pp. 241–242 (Łódź conference of October 24, 1940).
32. YVA, JM 798, auditor's report for February 1941. This document has now been published in Aly and Heim, *Bevölkerungsstruktur und Massenmord*, pp. 39–71.
33. IMT, *TMWC*, vol. 26 (Nuremberg, 1947), p. 561 (1024-PS, Rosenberg memo, April 29, 1941).
34. Ibid., vol. 26, p. 571 (1028-PS, Rosenberg memo, May 7, 1941).
35. Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), pp. 33–37 (excerpt from the "Brown Folder" concerning "Treatment of the Jewish Question").
36. Ibid., pp. 38–42 (Lohse to HSSPF Riga, August 2, 1942).
37. Ibid., pp. 42–46 (Stahlecker position paper, August 6, 1941).
38. Ibid., pp. 46–48 (RK Ostland to Generalkommissaren, August 18, 1941).
39. Cited in Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die Deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999), p. 525.
40. DAZO, 1151-1-22, RK Ukraine, September 5, 1941, to all Gebietskommissars in Podolien and Volhynien.
41. Cited in Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 529.
42. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 154–158; Thomas Sandkühler, "Endlösung" in Galizien: *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 155.
43. Christoph Dieckmann, "The War and the Killing of the Lithuanian Jews," in Ulrich Herbert and Gotz Aly, eds., *National Socialist Extermination Policies* (New York: Berghahn, 2000), pp. 260–262.
44. Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 221–230.
45. Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in the Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 74–76, 153.
46. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 587–602.
47. DAZO, 1151-1-22, pp. 1–5, Reichskommissar to Generalkommissar and Gebietskommissars, September 5, 1941.
48. Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews: 1941–44* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 106, 111–115.
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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

From the time that work began on this volume in January 2002, unique challenges arose that made the production process different than it was for Volume I. The existing lists of ghettos were by no means complete and were somewhat contradictory. In addition, there was no clear definition of what a ghetto was. Even the wartime German authorities themselves had varying conceptions of a ghetto, using it to mean quite different things according to the time and place. They also made only very sporadic attempts to record where ghettos existed, other than the few major ones. Whereas the concentration camp system was highly organized with a considerable degree of internal documentation, ghettoization was at best a regional—and often, a local—phenomenon. What soon became clear was that there were many more ghettos than recorded on the previous lists and that a great many sites would have to be examined closely to determine whether or not a ghetto existed. In addition, due to the scarcity of German documentation, a considerable amount of reliance would have to be placed on the accounts of survivors and postwar investigations.

Fortunately, the timing of this project was very opportune. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of most archives in Eastern Europe, a flood of primary documentation became available in the 1990s. A new generation of scholars soon started to mine these sources, writing detailed monographs on the Holocaust for many regions of Eastern Europe, such as the groundbreaking work of Dieter Pohl for Eastern Galicia. Partly inspired by German compensation for forced and slave laborers, the State Archives in Belarus and Ukraine published their own lists of camps and ghettos. For Poland, a similar comprehensive list of camps and ghettos had been prepared at the end of the 1970s, which also included detailed references to back its claims. Most Western lists, which estimated that somewhere between 400 and 800 ghettos may have existed, were based primarily on the list published by the International Tracing Service (ITS) after the war, which unfortunately contained large gaps, especially for the former Soviet Union.¹

The joint tasks facing the project, then, were clearly linked: to establish a satisfactory definition of a ghetto and to draw up a new list of ghettos that was as comprehensive and accurate as possible.

For much of the duration of the project, the main working definition of a ghetto was primarily the language used to describe it in the contemporary documentation and survivors' accounts. German documentation uses a number of different terms, including *Wohngebiet der Juden* or *Jüdisches Wohnviertel*, as well as *ghetto*, to describe a separate and consolidated Jewish residential district in which non-Jews were not permitted to reside. Polish-language sources refer also to a *dzielnica*

Żydowska, or “Jewish quarter,” and similar terms can be found in Yiddish and Russian (e.g., *kvartal*).

About halfway through the project, another very important source, the Visual History Archive of the Shoah Foundation (abbreviated in this volume as VHF), became available for direct access at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). This was of great significance, as VHF's approximately 50,000 survivor interviews had by then been indexed for references to ghettos. Despite a few probably mistaken references, these interviews proved immensely useful, mainly to corroborate other sources on details about the ghettos and, in a few cases, to assist us in identifying ghettos mentioned in few, if any, other sources. The hundreds of recent interviews of local Ukrainians collected by Yahad-In Unum (YIU), led by Father Patrick Desbois, many of which are now accessible at the USHMM, provided an additional useful resource for a number of ghettos in Ukraine.²

By the end of the project in 2009–2010, a more coherent definition of a ghetto had crystallized from the many diverse examples documented. In essence, a ghetto is a place where the Germans concentrated the Jews. For this volume, in determining whether or not a ghetto existed, the most important indicator was establishing whether the German authorities ordered the Jews to move into a designated area, where only Jews were permitted to live. Since the Germans established a great many open ghettos, not enclosed by a wall or fence, the existence of such barriers could not be used as part of a definition. Likewise, other simple tests that had been proposed previously to define a ghetto, such as poor and overcrowded housing conditions or the existence of a Jewish self-administration, were equally unhelpful. As Dan Michman has noted, the establishment of Jewish Councils often preceded ghettoization by a considerable period of time, and therefore no causal link between the two can be assumed.³ Many places had Jewish Councils but no ghetto.

Using the above straightforward definition still leaves the question of what distinguishes ghettos from forced labor camps and other camps used to detain Jews. A number of distinctions offer themselves. First, in most cases ghettos contained larger family units and remained close to the original location of the Jewish community, as opposed to many labor camps based in factories, at other work sites, or at some distance from previous Jewish settlements. Most labor camps differed in a number of other ways from ghettos; for example, often men and women were segregated and most inmates were housed together in barracks. Nevertheless, as a number of entries in this volume demonstrate, many ghettos closely resembled labor camps, and vice versa. Ultimately in most borderline cases, the editors have sided with the favored designation used by the German authorities or by most survivors,

wherever such a distinction can be discerned in the sources. Of course, a number of debatable cases remain, and some—but not all—of these have been included to demonstrate the range of situations that existed. In a few cases, a possible ghetto was not included due to the simple lack of detailed or clear-cut information. A few smaller ghettos or possible ghetto sites are mentioned briefly in the entries for the larger ghettos nearby.

Christopher R. Browning's Introduction to this volume lays out how historians have understood the role of ghettos within the development of the Final Solution, illustrating the complexity of that relationship. The aim of the next several pages is to highlight briefly a few of the regional patterns that have become apparent through our research and to distill out one or two of the most striking insights gained from this uniquely comprehensive view. For more detailed regional analysis, please go to the 19 regional essays, which review the main features of ghettoization in each region.

From the start, there were a number of surprises regarding the patterns of ghettoization, and new discoveries were made in every region. For example, the Germans established several small improvised ghettos in Pruchnik, Sanok, and Leżajsk, all in the Kraków Region (Distrikt Krakau), in late 1939, just after the first documented ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski (Radom Region, Distrikt Radom) in October. These smaller ghettos were formed once initial German expulsion efforts in these towns had failed to drive all Jews across the Soviet border nearby.

Another major surprise was the comprehensiveness of ghettoization efforts in the Lithuania Region (Generalkommissariat Litauen) during the summer of 1941. Ghettoization orders were issued by the German and Lithuanian authorities throughout much of the country, and local evidence confirms that these were implemented in various ways at around 100 locations. Many of these ghettos were short-lived, leading us to use the term *destruction ghettos* for those places that existed for less than two months and served mainly for the concentration of the Jews prior to their murder. Examples of this type were also the ghettos in Khar'kov, Nikolaev, and Kher'son in Ukraine, which were directly linked to the destruction process.

Another region that contained more ghettos than expected was on Occupied Russian Territory, where the Germans established some 50 ghettos. Most of these were concentrated in the former Pale of Settlement—in areas already captured by the Germans up to October 1941. Here German genocidal plans were still pursued in stages, of which ghettoization was sometimes a part. A few of these ghettos, such as that in Smolensk, existed for several months into the spring and summer of 1942.

In the Weissruthenien Region (Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien) and the Volhynia and Podolia Region (Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien), the Germans set up the most comprehensive networks of ghettos, establishing them in almost all Rayon centers, as well as in a number of other small towns and villages. The period of ghettoization

spanned from the summer of 1941 until the summer of 1942, with Jews from many small communities not concentrated in ghettos until the spring or summer of 1942, just prior to the ghetto liquidations. In many places, some Jews were selected for work before or during the liquidations and placed into labor camps or remnant ghettos. Most of these Jews did not remain alive for more than a few weeks, as the Germans intended for the liquidations to be complete. In several ghettos in these regions, the Jews responded with armed uprisings once the ghetto was surrounded, such as in Łachwa and Nieśwież, but the most common response was for Jews to prepare hiding places or attempt to flee.

Whereas the major ghettos in Warsaw and Łódź, which were enclosed behind high walls, have dominated our understanding of what ghetto life was like, hundreds of other ghettos remained unfenced or open. This facilitated vital economic contacts with the surrounding population, despite official German prohibitions. Some ghettos, such as that in Koźienice, initially remained open, but a fence was set up later, as German restrictions intensified. Many open ghettos were marked by signs, warning non-Jews not to enter, as well as prohibiting the Jews from leaving. Some were guarded, but others were not.

A variety of reasons were given by the German authorities for establishing ghettos, such as fear of the spread of disease, the need to free up housing space, or controlling black market activity, as well as the desire to isolate Jews on both ideological and security grounds. In the Warsaw Region (Distrikt Warschau), a number of short-lived, mostly open ghettos were set up to the west and south of the city in the summer and fall of 1940, primarily as concentration points and staging posts for the transfer of the Jews into the Warsaw ghetto by April 1941, as the respective Kreise were to be cleansed of Jews. These clearances were accompanied by the first order to shoot Jews caught outside the ghettos, announced in Kreis Grojec in January 1941.

This shooting order was subsequently extended to the entire Generalgouvernement in October 1941 and clearly had an important impact on ghettoization. Some historians have argued that all places where Jews continued to reside after this time became *de facto* ghettos, as Jews could be shot for leaving. Similar movement restrictions and punishments were applied to the occupied territories of the Soviet Union soon after the German invasion. For the purposes of compiling this volume, however, we have looked where possible for evidence of resettlement of the Jews into a specific part of a town or village, as well as the collection of Jews from surrounding places, as clear evidence of ghettoization. Nonetheless, in the Radom Region, for example, the announcement of the shooting order caused several Kreishauptmänner to declare those places where Jews resided to be ghettos. In some cases, signs were placed around the borders of the settlement, warning the Jews not to leave, without changing patterns of Jewish residency.

In the Lublin Region (Distrikt Lublin), the discussion of ghettos was further complicated by successive waves of deportations and resettlements, which brought in Jews from the Polish territories incorporated into the Reich, from within the

Generalgouvernement, particularly from the city of Kraków (as well as Jews expelled from the city of Lublin), and also from Germany, Austria, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and even Slovakia. Many of these expellees were housed together in temporary accommodations that resembled ghettos in many respects. However, close examination of the sources, especially contemporary reports of the German authorities and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), revealed that only a few of the destinations of these resettlements were viewed at the time as ghettos. In some places, the aim was rather to disperse the Jews, not concentrate them, and it was not uncommon for mixed patterns of residency to persist with no concentration of the native Jews.

The decisive evidence for a number of places was to be found in answers to a questionnaire distributed to many local branches by the central office of the JSS in Kraków in the spring of 1942. These forms included the question, "Was there a separate Jewish residential district [*dzielnica Żydowska*] in the town?" Rarely used by historians previously, these questionnaires provide contemporary evidence from the Jewish communities themselves, answering yes or no and, in some cases, giving more details. Using these sources, as well as postwar testimonies from yizkor books and many different archives and also a variety of postwar governmental investigations, careful efforts were made to disentangle where ghettos existed and where they were absent.⁴

The term *transit ghetto* has been used only sparingly in this volume, despite its previous use by historians such as Robert Kuwałek, mainly to avoid confusion with a number of transit camps that existed within the area covered by the volume. These transit camps were usually located near railway stations and were used mainly as temporary holding pens for Jews in transit. An example of this would be the camp at Działdowo (Soldau), used to assemble Jews from the Zichenau Region (Regierungsbezirk Zichenau) for transfer into the Generalgouvernement.

Another common ghetto type was the remnant ghetto (*Restghetto*). These ghettos were often formed for a select group of workers, sometimes with their families, who were spared from the main liquidation Aktion against a ghetto or a previously unghettoized Jewish community. Apart from retaining some Jews for work, these ghettos had the additional function of attracting Jews out of hiding, who had managed to evade the Aktions. In October and November 1942, these ghettos achieved an additional significance when the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (Higher SS and Police Leader) in the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, ordered that Jews were only permitted to reside in a few nominated remnant ghettos or otherwise in enclosed labor camps. In the Eastern Galicia Region (Distrikt Galizien), more than 30 places were named as remnant ghettos, many of them in locations without ghettos previously. These ghettos came at the end of a lengthy process of deportations, murders, and consolidations, lasting from the summer of 1941 until the end of 1942. This had reduced the Jewish population in Eastern Galicia, which numbered some 540,000 people at the time

of the German occupation, down to around 160,000, who were then interned either in labor camps or in the remnant ghettos that now closely resembled labor camps. The last ghettos in Eastern Galicia were in turn annihilated over the next six months, in bitter struggles, as German and Ukrainian police rooted out Jews from bunkers and other hiding places, who by then had no illusions as to their fate.

The very brutal nature of the ghetto liquidations and deportation Aktions throughout the broad area of Eastern Europe covered by this volume, documented here in hundreds of individual entries, is itself an important statement regarding the essential character of the Holocaust. Even in the Generalgouvernement, where a majority of the Jews were deported by train to be murdered at only a few killing sites, the liquidation Aktions were usually accompanied by widespread killing of Jews found in hiding or trying to escape. In many locations, those who were elderly or unable to walk were killed locally rather than added to the transports. The searches for Jews in hiding, involving the participation of local auxiliaries and sometimes assisted by denunciations from non-Jewish local inhabitants, went on for weeks and sometimes months after the ghetto liquidations. In short, the still preponderant image of the Holocaust as a mechanized and impersonal process needs correcting, as more information about the hands-on and brutal slaughters in the east, where most Jewish victims lived and died, continues to come to light.

The temporal aspect of the unfolding genocide is also an important theme. For example, the first Jewish communities to be annihilated at the Chełmno extermination camp, such as Koło and Izbica Kujawska, in December 1941 and January 1942, respectively, had very few survivors, as the Jews did not expect that they were being sent to their deaths. By contrast, Jews in those ghettos located close to Treblinka, such as Stoczek Węgrowski, were well informed about events at the extermination camp, both from local Jews who worked there and clandestinely passed back messages and from Jews who had jumped from the trains that passed close by throughout the summer. These warnings enabled many Jews to evade the initial roundup by hiding in bunkers when the Germans liquidated the Stoczek ghetto in late September 1942.

The German authorities were aware of the need to act swiftly once the destruction process was under way. In the Volhynia and Podolia Region the civil authorities blamed acts of resistance on the liquidation of some larger ghettos before those in the surrounding villages, allowing the Jews there to become forewarned. In the Białystok Region (Distrikt Białystok), the Germans liquidated almost all of the ghettos simultaneously in early November 1942, using five transit camps to concentrate the Jews prior to their subsequent deportation, which was necessarily spread over several weeks due to the limited capacity of the killing centers. In the Zichenau Region, the remaining Jews were consolidated into just a few ghettos prior to their deportation to the Auschwitz concentration camp in November and December 1942.

Despite the more coordinated nature of the destruction process, in which many of the ghetto inmates were transferred

to specific killing centers, concentration camps, or labor camps, in general it is not possible to speak of a ghetto system. The establishment of ghettos was conditioned by a wide variety of local and regional factors. Only once the Final Solution was already in progress were ghettos harnessed more closely to this end.

Nevertheless, a constant to almost all ghettos was the exploitation of part of the population for forced labor. Perhaps more so than historians previously considered, forced labor was a key aspect of how ghettos functioned. From an early stage, young and physically able Jews were selected out from ghettos and transferred to forced labor camps, leaving behind a population predominantly of the elderly, women, and children. Partly for this reason, the survival rates for most ghettos were alarmingly low. Of those who did survive, many were among those transferred into the camp system, which gave them at least the opportunity to survive longer into the war, as Christopher Browning's recent study of the Starachowice labor camp demonstrates.⁵ The recently opened ITS archives contain unfortunately relatively little information regarding ghettos. However, for those who were deported to Auschwitz, for example, from ghettos in the Zichenau Region or also on a few transports from the transit camps in the Białystok Region, ITS records confirm their arrival and also provide some information about their subsequent fate.

This volume of the *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos* has truly been a collaborative work in many different respects. Not only have more than 100 individuals been involved in its preparation, but many essays were written by two or more people, and in some cases, more than one translator was involved in the preparation of an entry. This reflects above all the multilingual nature of the source material used. Often drafts were received in Russian or Polish from historians working with documents from archives in Eastern Europe; then additions were made to the entries from archival sources, yizkor books, or other publications located at USHMM. A number of volunteers played an important role translating and summarizing many oral and visual histories, documents, and publications in languages such as Polish, Hebrew, Russian, Yiddish, and Lithuanian, which were then incorporated into the essays.

It is important to stress that the main aim of the *Encyclopedia* has been to document carefully as many of the ghetto sites as possible. To achieve this, strict word limits were applied to the entries, generally in accordance with the number of Jews confined within the ghetto. However, as considerable published literature exists for most of the larger ghettos, such as Łódź or Warsaw, these entries have been kept relatively short, to provide only essential data concerning these sites. The relevant source sections provide references to key publications, which deal with these main ghettos in much greater detail.

Given the nature of many of the sources, which for some ghettos consist primarily of postwar testimonies and investigative materials, there are inevitably some contradictions and inaccuracies concerning dates and figures. Where possible,

attempts have been made to document the sources used, especially concerning the establishment or existence of a ghetto or regarding its liquidation and the fate of the Jewish inmates. However, as many of the secondary sources themselves contain no references, it has not been possible to verify all information. Primary sources have been used by most authors where available, but the scattered nature and wide scope of Holocaust sources meant that often only a sample of all known material could be examined. A further complication is that the vast majority of the sources were not in English, requiring careful translation from languages such as Polish, Russian, German, Yiddish, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Latvian, French, and Ukrainian. In light of this, and given the enormous scope of the project, inevitably a few errors and contradictions will have crept into the manuscript, despite all our best efforts to reflect the events as accurately as possible. The Museum is in the authors' debt for the material they have gathered and contributed; responsibility for any remaining flaws rests with us.

Even more so than for the sites of concentration camps and most other types of camps, the physical sites of most ghettos are not marked and are becoming increasingly difficult to identify. As ghettos existed within urban landscapes, which naturally change their appearance over time, little, if anything, remains of the physical structures that formed the ghettos. The Warsaw ghetto was literally razed to the ground. Cases such as Riga, Terezín, or Mir, where the physical structures still exist, are quite rare. At almost all ghetto sites there are no museums, memorials, or even any sign at all of what occurred there. The danger exists that as the last survivors pass away, so too will any knowledge of the places where they suffered. One aim of this volume was to collect detailed information about the locations of the ghettos to assist in the preservation of that memory.

Where possible, entries include descriptions of the ghetto locations, the type of buildings they contained, and sometimes also their subsequent fate. Unfortunately, even this basic information is unavailable for many of the sites. Nonetheless, we hope that their inclusion here will encourage more scholars and researchers to scour local archives to dig up further details beyond the possible scope of this work.

MARTIN DEAN
July, 2011

NOTES

1. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Spravochnik o mestakh prinuditel'nogo sodержaniia grazhdanskogo naseleniia na okkupirovannoi territorii BSSR 1941–1944 gg.* (Minsk: Gosudarstvennyi komitet po arkhivam i deloproizvodstvu Respubliki Belarus', 2001); *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archive der Ukraine, 2000); Martin Weinmann, with Anne

Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, eds., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (prepared originally by ITS in 1949–1951; reprinted, with new introductory matter, in Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990).

2. On the work of YIU, see Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets* (New York: Palgrave in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008).

3. Dan Michman, “The Jewish Ghettos under the Nazis and Their Allies: The Reasons behind Their Emergence,” in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. xxxix.

4. The contemporary ghetto questionnaires can be found in USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (AŻIH, 211 [JSS]). Polish official postwar questionnaires concerning camps and ghettos can be found in USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG). Information about a number of ghettos on occupied Soviet territory can be found in the reports of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK); see USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF, 7021). Other postwar investigations into war crimes can be found, for example, at BA-L and IPN.

5. Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010).

READER'S GUIDE

The purpose of this section is to give the reader some tips on how to use this volume and to offer some information on the more technical aspects of the work, such as the use of foreign terms, naming conventions, the source sections, geographical headers, and the indexes.

The *Encyclopedia's* primary purpose is to provide as much basic information as possible on each individual ghetto. To achieve this end and to provide for some consistency among the entries, we asked our many contributors to try to answer the following questions, as best they could, in the limited amount of space available:

- When was the ghetto established, under what authority, and for what purpose? Was there a physical barrier, and at what stage was this constructed?
- Were there any special restrictions applied to the Jewish population or notable aspects about living conditions in that particular ghetto?
- Did ghetto inmates perform forced or paid labor, and what type of labor did they perform?
- What were the methods, motives, and circumstances of killing ghetto inmates? Give details of any large-scale killing Aktions, personnel involved, circumstances, location, and any evidence of resistance.
- What were the demographics of the ghetto population? Give details of any incoming groups and of transfers out to killing sites, labor camps, or other ghettos.
- Who were the local civilian authorities and police commanders in the town? What was their attitude towards people in the ghetto?
- What was the attitude of the local population towards the Jews? Can you offer specific examples of their participation in German persecution or providing help for the Jews?
- Is there information concerning the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the ghetto? What were its functions and who was in charge? How did the ghetto population view the Judenrat and its relationship with the Germans?
- Was there a unit of Jewish Police inside the ghetto? Who were its leaders, and how did it treat the other ghetto inmates?
- What cultural activities were organized by the inmates of this ghetto? Was there some particular aspect of the way ghetto inmates coped with their conditions that are worth mentioning? Did the Jews continue religious observance openly or in secret?
- Were there any key events in the history of the ghetto, such as resistance and/or escapes, organized or otherwise? What was the attitude of the Jewish leadership and the Jewish Police towards resistance activities?
- Was the ghetto guarded? If so, what was the composition of those units?
- When and under what circumstances was the ghetto liquidated or evacuated?
- Did postwar trials of persons involved in guarding or liquidating the ghetto take place? If so, what were the results from those proceedings?
- How many Jews survived from the ghetto?

The *Encyclopedia's* secondary purpose is to encourage additional research on the sites in question, and therefore we also asked each author to include, first, citations to key documents, when available, and second, a list of published and archival sources, both primary and secondary, at the end of each entry. For reasons of space, abbreviations were used for the archives, but since just a few archives are cited in many of the entries, those who are interested will soon become familiar with the relevant abbreviations for these key archives. The comprehensive List of Abbreviations with the archives' full names in their native language and in English is included at the back of the book.

Apart from the 1,142 separate entries dealing with the ghettos located in specific cities, towns, and villages covering more than 1,150 ghetto sites in total (some places had more than one ghetto site, which are covered in a single entry, e.g. Šiauliai), Volume II also includes 19 regional essays that examine the patterns of ghettoization in regions that contain more than one ghetto entry. The regional entries summarize the key events in each region and provide some of the overall historical context that may be missing from the specific entries, which focus on the events in just one place.

The overarching architecture of the volume is geographical, being divided into 21 separate regions that German occupation authorities established and that contained ghettos. These 21 regions have been aggregated into eight separate units of administrative authority, reflecting the geographical structures imposed by the German occupiers. One should note that all of the ghettos in this volume were located on German-occupied territory in Eastern Europe, as no ghettos were established within the pre-1938 German borders (the *Alt-Reich*) or in Western Europe.

Finding a particular essay should be fairly easy. If you are looking for a specific ghetto and you know the German-administered region in which it was located (e.g., Lublin Region in the General Government), just look in the appropriate

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section of the table of contents; the ghettos appear alphabetically within each of the 21 regions. If you are not sure in which German-administered region a ghetto was located, check the Places Index in the end matter; it includes references to alternate names and spellings for the ghetto locations.

For the ghetto entry titles, we have used the names that were in use in those places in 1938, with just a few exceptions, such as Warsaw (instead of Warszawa). A few key alternative names are given after the title in parenthesis, but generally alternate names are covered in the geographical headers, just below the entry title, or otherwise in the body of the entry. In a small number of instances, one essay covers two or more ghetto sites together, which were located in the same city, town, or village. Essentially each place or Jewish community is treated as one entry, covering the various ghettos that were set up in the population center or nearby for that community.

As many of the ghetto sites have changed both their names and their administrative subordination, including the country in which they were located, at least once during the twentieth century, we have included detailed geographical headers at the start of each entry. These give, first, the name of the ghetto site, its region, and the country of location before the German occupation. Next, similar information is listed for the period of German occupation. Finally, we provide the same information according to the most recent renaming or administrative restructuring (e.g., post-1998 for Poland or post-1991 for Ukraine), to allow the reader more easily to find the place today. Where the place name, status, or administrative subordination has not changed from one time period to the next, this information has not been repeated; for example, where a place name was not changed under German occupation, the 1941–1944 section might start simply with the Rayon or the Kreis (e.g., Pre-1939: Kielce, city and center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Kielce, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland).

Within the geographical headers and also within the entries, we have employed the terms for administrative units and their subdivisions used locally at the time: for example, *województwo* and *powiat* (for Poland pre-1939 and post-1998); *oblast'* and *raion* (for the Soviet Union); *Gebiet* and *Rayon* (for Reich Commissariat Ukraine, 1941–1944); *Distrikt* and *Kreis* (for the General Government, 1939–1945); or *apskritis* and *rajonas* (for the Republic of Lithuania). These were employed rather than English terms such as *region*, *county*, or *district*, because they convey the concepts of size and subordination far more accurately, concepts that are crucial to understanding the different administrative structures before, during, and after World War II. The different German spellings for areas, such as Kreise or Gebiete (e.g., Kreis Opatów), have also been used throughout the entries to help differentiate these entities from the towns (e.g., Opatów), which are usually referred to using their 1938 spellings.

Most of the foreign geographical terms, as well as titles, organizations, and also foreign words commonly used in English, have not been italicized because of their frequent use

within the volume. The various terms used for “ghetto” in the sources are examined in the Editor’s Introduction, as no comprehensive attempt to examine the ghetto phenomenon has been attempted previously. As in Volume I, no glossary has been included, but a few key terms require some explanation. Among the less familiar terms, for example, a *wójt* is a civil administrator, a *starosta* is a village elder, a *soltys* is a village head, and a *kehillah* is a Jewish community. A number of terms concerning Jewish holidays and religious practices have been used, not always with an explanation; explanations for most of these can be found on the Internet or in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* or similar reference works and dictionaries.

Regrettably, for reasons of space, it has not been possible to include a description of the Jewish communities in each ghetto location before World War II beyond giving available population figures. While this would have enhanced understanding of the events during the ghetto period, similar information is already published in a number of places, such as in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Yad Vashem’s *Pinkas ha-kehilot* series, or *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*. Most entries include references to relevant yizkor books and other sources that also contain information on the pre-war period.

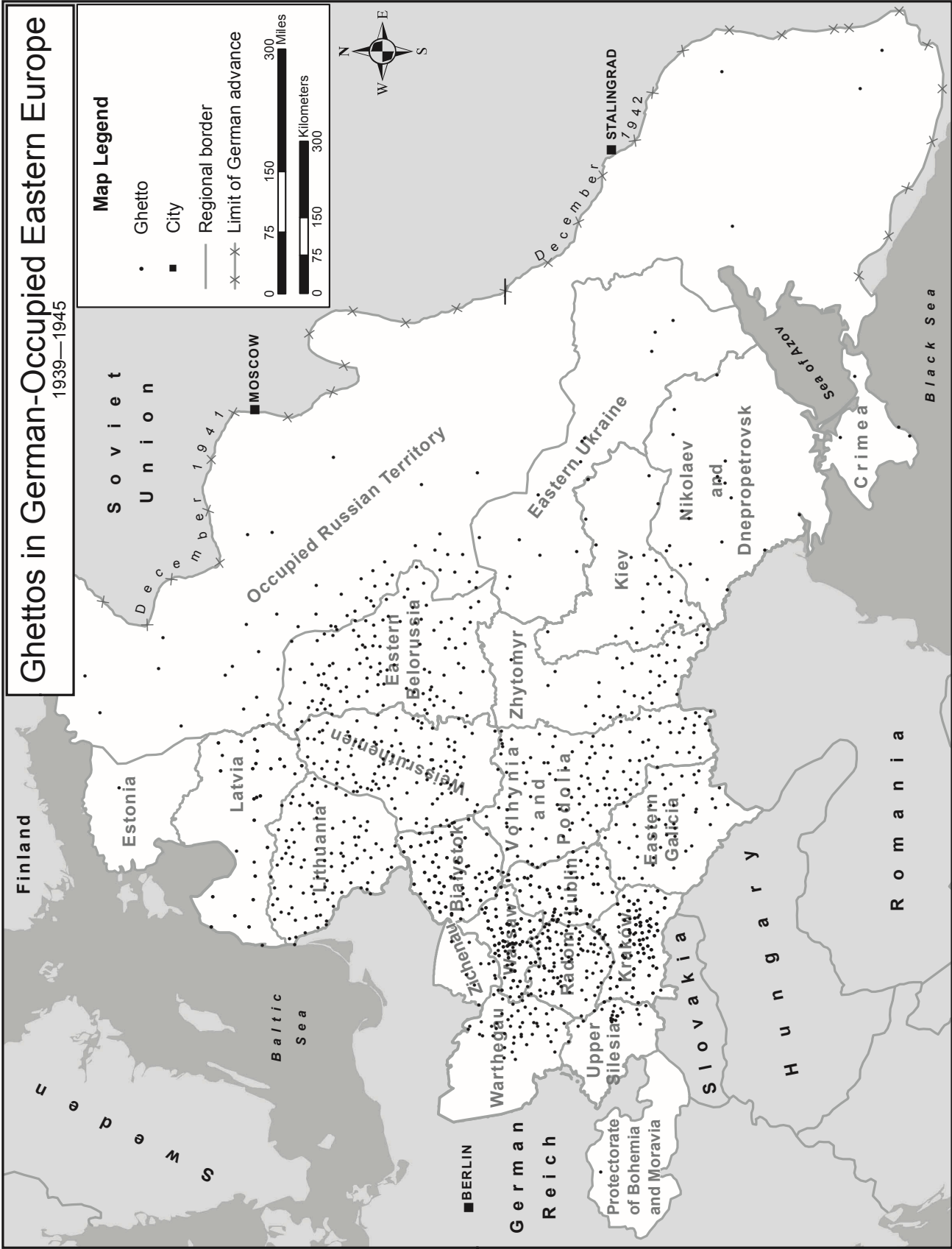
While terms in German, Polish, Lithuanian, and other foreign languages using Latin characters have been rendered as in the original, including diacritics, text from Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and other languages using the Hebrew, Cyrillic, and other alphabets has been transliterated using standardized systems. This applies especially to the titles of books in the source sections and also to the archival abbreviations. Some attempt has been made to standardize the spellings of people’s names, occasionally giving alternate spellings that have been encountered among the different sources consulted. However, since much of the information has been translated and transliterated, including from Hebrew sources (where the vowels are not clear), some degree of inconsistency between standard Polish, Russian, German, Hebrew, English, and other spellings is inevitable. Street names have generally been rendered as found in the sources.

The *Encyclopedia* also includes maps covering the locations of all the ghettos in the 19 regions that had more than one ghetto. These are located after the regional entry but before the first ghetto entry for each region. In most cases these maps include the subdivisions of the regions into Kreise, Gebiete, and sometimes Rayons, so that a clear visual impression of the distribution of ghettos in each region can be gained.

The end matter includes three separate indexes: Names Index, Places Index, and Organizations and Enterprises Index. The page numbers for the ghetto entries are marked in bold in the Places Index to distinguish them from references to those places in other entries. Certain very common terms, such as Jewish Council (Judenrat), have not been indexed, as they appear on almost every page.

The *Encyclopedia* has been written primarily as a reference work on the individual ghettos. However, its geographical organization according to German administrative struc-

tures and the inclusion of contextualizing regional entries give it a coherent structure that helps to explain the development of ghettoization and its key role in the Holocaust far more effectively than a simple alphabetical approach would achieve. It serves especially as an important memorial for the victims of the many small and forgotten ghetto sites, literally putting them on the map for scholars of the Holocaust through careful documentation.



SECTION I

INCORPORATED EASTERN TERRITORIES

In the fall of 1939, shortly after the German defeat of Poland, Adolf Hitler ordered the annexation to the Reich of large swaths of western and northern Poland. These new territories were either added to the existing regions of Provinz Ostpreussen and Provinz Schlesien or became part of two new regions, Reichsgau Wartheland and Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen.

No ghettos were established within the Alt-Reich (pre-1938 German territories); ghettos were only established within the Third Reich in those eastern territories annexed from Poland (eingegliederten Ostgebieten). Of these incorporated territories, no ghettos were established in Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen, but a number of ghettos were established in the three regions known as Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Reichsgau Wartheland, and Provinz Oberschlesien.

Regierungsbezirk Zichenau was composed of the area to the north of Warsaw, also known as Northern

Mazovia (part of the Warsaw województwo), which was attached to Provinz Ostpreussen in late 1939. The new district was named for the city of Zichenau (Ciechanów in Polish).

To the west of Warsaw, the Germans took parts of the Polish Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Łódź, Płock, and Wielkopolskie województwa to establish a new region, known from January 1, 1940, as Reichsgau Wartheland, which also included the major city of Łódź.

To the south, Provinz Schlesien was expanded to include parts of the Kielce, Kraków, and Śląskie województwa. In 1941, Provinz Schlesien was divided in two to form Niederschlesien, its western half, and Oberschlesien, its eastern half. Ghettos were only established on the eastern fringes of Oberschlesien, usually referred to in German documentation as Ost-Oberschlesien (Eastern Upper Silesia).



ZICHENAU REGION



Jews from Ciechanów are marched into the fortress, 1941–1942.
USHMM WS #50341, COURTESY OF IPN

ZICHENAU REGION (REGIERUNGSBEZIRK ZICHENAU)

Pre-1939: part of the Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: northern part of województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The region designated by the Germans as Regierungsbezirk Zichenau comprised the northern part of the Warsaw województwo (as of the summer of 1939) and is most commonly known as Northern Mazovia. Jews are recorded as having settled in some parts of this region by at least the thirteenth century, and several larger towns had a significant Jewish presence by the mid-sixteenth century. Other places witnessed Jewish settlement only later; in Czerwińsk nad Wisłą Jews were barred until the late eighteenth century, as the Catholic Church owned the land. The Jewish population of the region increased considerably during the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century; Jews comprised a considerable share of the urban population (between 30 and 50 percent or more) in several of Northern Mazovia's larger towns on the eve of World War II. Much of the Jewish population in the region worked as artisans or tradesmen. In the interwar period, the Jews suffered economically due to the worldwide economic slump and commercial boycotts by the Poles.

German military forces occupied the Ciechanów region of Poland in September 1939. During the first days of the war, as German bombs fell on the towns of the region, many Jews fled to Warsaw and other places, away from the advancing German front. The first days and weeks of the German occupation saw the humiliation and murder of Jews and the destruction and plunder of their property. In Nowe Miasto, the Germans killed 8 Jews on September 14 and several more on September 23. Men of the SS-Panzer Division "Kempf" shot 50 Jews in Krasnosielc, and 2 Jews were killed by the Wehrmacht in Różan. German Security Police (Sicherheitspolizei und SD) set fire to the synagogue in Sierpc at the end of September, and the synagogue in Mława was burned in November. Units of Einsatzgruppe V operated in the region, but other police units, the Wehrmacht, ethnic Germans (*Völkische*), and some Poles also participated in anti-Jewish attacks and looting. The plunder of property and arrests of Jews in some places caused young Jews to flee to those parts of eastern Poland that were occupied by the Soviets after September 17, 1939.¹

From the start, it was the German intention to cleanse the region of Jews, as it would be annexed directly to the Reich. In the fall of 1939, the Germans undertook some deliberate efforts to drive Jews into the Soviet zone, but much latitude was left to specific local commanders regarding implementation. On September 28, 1939, 40 Jewish youths were arrested in Sierpc, loaded on trucks, and driven to the new German-Soviet border. Mass expulsions of Jews into the Soviet zone took place from Pułtusk, Przasnysz, and some other towns with large Jewish populations.² In Ciechanów, a Wehrmacht

officer advised the Jews to leave town; he offered transport to the Soviet border, warning them that the impending civil administration would introduce further anti-Jewish laws. In Mława, an attempt to transport all the Jews into Soviet territory was abandoned abruptly after the Jews had been assembled.

On October 26, 1939, the Germans established the Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, which was annexed to Provinz Ostpreussen in the Third Reich, ruled by Gauleiter Erich Koch. The Regierungsbezirk consisted of nine Landkreise: Mackheim, Mielau, Ostenburg, Plönnen, Praschnitz, Schröttersburg, Sichelberg, Scharfenwiese, and Zichenau. Initially, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau had around 850,000 inhabitants, of which some 80,000 were Jews, while probably a similar number might be classified as ethnic Germans.³ The governor (Regierungspräsident) was Hermann Bethke. In 1940, Paul Dargel succeeded him. SS-Sturmbannführer Hartmut Pulmer, who had been in charge of an Einsatzgruppe during the Polish campaign, was subsequently appointed as head of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo.

In October 1939, the German authorities expelled a number of Jews from the town of Ciechanów to the Lublin region.⁴ This was only one of several further expulsions and deportations carried out in the last three months of 1939. In November, for example, the Germans conducted a mass expulsion of Jews from Sierpc to Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki and Warsaw. In December 1939, at least 3,000 Jews from the towns of Serock and Nasielsk were deported to Biała Podlaska, Międzyrzec, and Łuków in Distrikt Lublin.⁵ At the same time, hundreds of Jewish refugees poured into towns such as Mława and Płońsk from Sierpc, Rypin, Dobrzyń nad Drwęcą, and other places. Some Jews who had fled to Warsaw during the fighting, or even thereafter, gradually returned, as they realized conditions might be better in their own home environment. These large population movements, followed on occasion by some people returning illegally, make it very difficult to track the demographic changes in the region.⁶

Historians have identified three main phases to the anti-Jewish policy in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau. The initial period of occupation and brutal repression lasted from September to December 1939, aiming primarily to drive out large numbers of Jews, preferably across the border into the Soviet-occupied zone. The period from January 1940 to the end of 1941 was characterized by further deportations and expulsions of Jews into the Generalgouvernement and was accompanied by the gradual concentration of remaining Jews into a limited number of ghettos. Then from the end of 1941 the application of the terror apparatus against the ghettoized Jews

was intensified to suppress any possible resistance in preparation for the final liquidation of the ghettos, which was completed in the last months of 1942.⁷

Forced labor for Jews was imposed from the first days of the occupation. In most places the Jewish Council (Judenrat) became involved in the assignment of men to forced labor to prevent Jews from simply being seized from the streets. In Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, a number of sources indicate that Jews were paid for forced labor; indeed, Emanuel Ringelblum described conditions there as somewhat better than in Warsaw on this account. He may have been impressed by the fact that some refugees in the Warsaw ghetto received food packages from relatives in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau.⁸ In Płońsk, Jewish workers received only half the minimum wage; however, the Judenrat supplemented this by taxing wealthier Jews. In some places, however, survivors indicate that working Jews remained unpaid.

A number of Jewish communities in the region received material assistance from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) during the course of 1940. For example, the Judenrat in Drobin opened a soup kitchen with the help of AJDC funds on February 22, 1940. However, due to restrictions on the AJDC sending funds from Warsaw into the Reich, this support had dried up by the end of 1940.⁹

The German authorities established a total of 12 ghettos in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau. The first ghettos were established in Sierpc and Maków Mazowiecki in the spring of 1940. Initially, these two were open ghettos (unfenced). In the course of 1940, additional ghettos were established in Płock, Płońsk, and Mława. The ghetto in Płock remained open throughout its existence, as did that in Ciechanów, established in December 1940. However, the majority of ghettos in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau were enclosed, at least for the latter part of their existence. Wooden fences surrounded the ghettos in Strzegowo, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, and Czerwińsk; and that in Drobin was surrounded by barbed wire. By the fall of 1941, the Maków Mazowiecki ghetto was enclosed with a wooden fence, topped with barbed wire.

In 1941, there were further waves of ghetto formation: in March 1941, ghettos were established in Drobin and Wyszogród; and in June 1941, in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. Then in November 1941, the last three ghettos were established in Strzegowo, Nowe Miasto, and Czerwińsk. By this time the Jews from almost all the other large towns had been expelled, deported, or moved into one of the nearer ghettos. For example, those Jews still in Zakroczym were sent to the Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki ghetto, and the few remaining in Bielsk were expelled at the end of 1941; the Jews from Biezuń and some of those from the liquidated ghetto in Sierpc were moved to the Strzegowo ghetto by early January 1942.¹⁰

The successive concentration of Jews in ghettos was accompanied, however, by further sporadic waves of deportations into the Generalgouvernement. In early December 1940, the German Police conducted a mass deportation from Mława. They selected 3,000 Jews (more than half of the total), who were transported first on trucks to the transit camp at



Jews from Ciechanów ghetto are assembled in the fortress, 1941–1942. USHMM WS #50343, COURTESY OF IPN

Działdowo; and from there, they were deported into Distrikt Lublin by freight train. There they were split up among several towns, including Międzyrzec, Lubartów, and Łuków.¹¹ Several hundred of these deportees later managed to return to Mława in 1941, where they were given falsified identification documents by the Judenrat.¹² In response, the German Police conducted a search for Jews residing illegally in the Mława ghetto in the spring of 1941.

In February and March 1941, some 6,000 Jews were deported from the Płock ghetto, again via Działdowo, to a number of ghettos in Distrikt Radom, including Chmielnik, Stopnica, Bodzentyn, Wierzbnik, and Częstochowa. At this time 600 Jews from Drobin (mainly the sick and elderly) were also deported via Działdowo to the Piotrków Trybunalski ghetto and a similar number from Wyszogród to Nowa Słupia, also in Distrikt Radom. These mass deportations into the Generalgouvernement were halted in March 1941 because of German military preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union.¹³

On July 4, 1941, the Gestapo resettled up to 2,000 Jews from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki to the labor and concentration camp in Pomiechówek, where some 4,000 Jews from the region were collected together, including more than 1,000 from the Płońsk ghetto. Conditions in the Pomiechówek camp were appalling; many people died there from beatings, hunger, and typhus. Sick people were shot on the spot, and those who were healthy were subsequently marched southward into the Generalgouvernement, when the camp was emptied of its Jewish population. There were many further losses before the remnant reached the Warsaw ghetto.¹⁴

Living conditions in the ghettos of the region were generally better than in the Pomiechówek or Działdowo camps, but there was a gradual deterioration as the ghettos became more overcrowded. Food also became harder to obtain, as the Jews bartered away their last possessions. The rations in the Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki ghetto consisted of only 330 grams (11.6

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ounces) of poor bread per day and 120 grams (4.2 ounces) of horseflesh per month, which was not always supplied. These rations were sold at fixed prices, but smuggled goods demanded much higher prices. The Judenrat in the Mława ghetto tried to ease conditions by organizing smuggling rings, using Jews who worked outside the ghetto to bring food back in. In 1942, however, the Germans began to crack down on smuggling, forcing black market prices even higher. Despite the threat of capital punishment, Jews from many ghettos continued to sneak out to buy food. Overcrowding was severe in most ghettos, with up to 15 people sharing a room. Several ghettos were wracked by severe outbreaks of typhus, in some places claiming hundreds of lives. Medical care was limited, and the outbreaks may have led to an intensification of the Jews' isolation from the rest of the population.

In the last months of 1941, the Germans consolidated the Jewish population of the region further, as they also began to enforce the death penalty for Jews caught outside the ghettos without permission. Assisted by massive bribes, the Jewish Council in Strzegowo managed to persuade the Germans to establish a "Jewish quarter" there, which saved the community from the inevitable stresses of transfer to the Warsaw ghetto.¹⁵ In November 1941, the Germans permitted the Judenrat in Mława to expand the ghetto area a little, to absorb the arrival of about 1,000 Jews from Szreńsk, Radzynów, and Zieluń. At this time, the Wyszogród ghetto was liquidated, with about 1,000 Jews being sent to the ghetto in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki and another 600 to the Czerwińsk ghetto. Approximately 1,000 Jews were moved from Ciechanów to the Nowe Miasto ghetto on December 11, 1941, although the open ghetto in Ciechanów was not liquidated until November 1942.

By mid-January 1942, it is estimated that about 40,000 Jews remained in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, concentrated mainly in the nine remaining ghettos of Ciechanów (7,000), Czerwińsk (700), Maków Mazowiecki (5,500), Mława (6,000), Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki (6,000), Nowe Miasto (2,100), Płońsk (10,000), Sierpc (500), and Strzegowo (about 2,000).¹⁶

Little information is available on the German administration of the ghettos, although occasional mention is made of particular Germans who were seen by the Jews as having been in charge.¹⁷ The ghettos were guarded internally by a Jewish police force and externally by the German Order Police (Ordnungspolizei), which in some places also contained local ethnic Germans. Isaiah Trunk has commented on the fluctuation in the leadership on several of the Jewish Councils in the region,¹⁸ and there were attempts to bribe German officials to ameliorate conditions, which might produce some temporary relief. Some Jewish Councils were accused of corruption and favoritism, and in one or two ghettos, the Jewish Police earned themselves a bad reputation by their brutality towards other Jews.¹⁹

One of the more notorious German officials was the chief of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo, SS-Sturmabführer Hartmut Pulmer, who organized a number of mass hangings in the region of Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki and Czerwińsk in 1940.²⁰ The terror intensified during the winter of 1941–1942

as the Gestapo initiated a crackdown in several ghettos. The number of public hangings rose markedly in 1942, as the Germans clearly sought to intimidate the Jews with harsh punishments for only minor infractions. Jews were executed for leaving the ghetto without permission, for smuggling, and for acts of resistance; and in Mława, 50 Jews were shot in June 1942 for misbehaving during a previous hanging. The Gestapo often forced the Jews to hang other Jews in front of the assembled ghetto population, making these events unforgettable for Jewish survivors who were present.

Acts of resistance in the ghettos of the Zichenau region included contacts with other ghettos and with Polish, mainly Communist, resistance organizations. Before their network was broken up, the underground resistance in the Ciechanów ghetto succeeded in moving some Jewish families wanted by the authorities to other ghettos.²¹ A few Jews who escaped from the ghettos, including some from Czerwińsk, subsequently joined the People's Guard (Gwardia Ludowa, GL), a Communist partisan group that operated around Płock and Płońsk.

A number of able-bodied Jews were sent to work camps within the Zichenau region. These included labor camps at Nosarzewo and Bielsk. As the final liquidation of the ghettos commenced in the fall of 1942, the Jews in nearby labor camps were returned to the ghettos. For example, at the end of October, Jews working outside the Mława ghetto were returned prior to deportations from there in November, and additional Jews were also brought into Mława from the ghettos in Strzegowo and Ciechanów. During the liquidation of the Maków Mazowiecki ghetto in November 1942, at least 50 Jews, mostly the elderly and children, were killed on the spot, and several Polish women, who were driving carts for the Jews, were also killed at this time. According to the records of the Auschwitz concentration camp, analyzed by Danuta Czech, more than 12,000 Jews from Regierungsbezirk Zichenau were deported to Auschwitz in at least eight separate transports between November 14 and December 17, 1942. The transports left from Płońsk, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, Ciechanów, and Mława and probably included around 30,000 Jews altogether, indicating that the available records are incomplete.²²

It is unknown how many Jews from the ghettos of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau survived the German occupation, but since at least 5,000 of those sent to Auschwitz were initially selected for work, it appears that several hundred of these managed to make it through the various labor and concentration camps they experienced until the end of the war. Since the Germans systematically hunted down those Jews who evaded the deportations, some of whom were turned in by Poles, only a few survived in hiding or on the Aryan side. The files of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo include 22 cases of Poles accused of helping Jews, for which the death penalty could have been applied. However, only a few Poles from the region have been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem for the aid they provided.²³

Very few of the Germans responsible for the murder and persecution of Jews in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau were tried

for these crimes after the war. A court in Giessen sentenced three members of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo to jail terms of a few years in 1974, but some of these verdicts were overturned on appeal. The Polish courts dealt mainly with low-level perpetrators, including some ethnic Germans and even one member of the Jewish Police.²⁴

SOURCES Useful secondary sources concerning the ghettos in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau include the following: Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984); Jan Grabowski, “Polityka antyżydowska na terenie rejencji ciechanowskiej,” in Aleksandra Namysło, ed., *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy* (Warsaw: IPN Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), pp. 59–68; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979); Jan Grabowski, “The Holocaust in Northern Mazovia (Poland) in the Light of the Archive of the Ciechanów Gestapo,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 1:3 (Winter 2004): 460–476; and Janusz Szczepański, *Spółeczność żydowska Mazowsza w XIX–XX wieku* (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztor, 2005).

Relevant collections can be found in the following archives: APW; AŻIH (Ring I, 301, and 210); BA-L; IPN; USHMM (RG-15.037M, case files of the Geheime Staatspolizei-Polizeistelle Zichenau; RG-15.039M, case files from the Gestapo in Zichenau; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M; and RG-15.084M); VHF; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Alexander B. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), pp. 105–106; Jochen Böhrer, ed., “Grösste Härte . . .” *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht in Polen September/Okttober 1939* (Warsaw: German Historical Institute, 2005), p. 119. In Górowo, Jews were released from a synagogue as it was about to be burned down, due to the intervention of a German officer. On Różan, see Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, pp. 427–429.

2. Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 1031, 1039. See also Szczepański, *Spółeczność*, p. 412, who estimates that some 7,500 Jews fled or were expelled from Pułtusk. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland*, p. 108, cites a German source reporting that “large columns of Jews are being pushed across the demarcation line.”

3. Grabowski, “The Holocaust in Northern Mazovia,” p. 460, estimates that some 10 percent of the population were ethnic Germans.

4. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, p. 389.

5. Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 876; and David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), p. 63.

6. Grabowski, “Polityka antyżydowska,” pp. 60–61, indicates, however, that 20 Jews attempting to return home to Nowy Dwór from the Generalgouvernement were hanged in January 1940.

7. Ibid., pp. 61–62; Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, pp. 43–44, gives a similar chronology if he classifies the forced expulsions to the Warsaw ghetto from the summer of 1941 slightly differently.

8. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, p. 389.

9. On support provided by the AJDC in Poland during the occupation, see Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939–1945* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1981).

10. *Sefer Ha-Zikaron Li-Kedoshe Byež’un* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa’at ‘ale Byež’un be-Yisrael, 1956), p. 54; and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, pp. 147–148, 216–218. Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, pp. 45–46, indicates that in the summer of 1940 Jews continued to reside in the following places: Biežuń, Bodzanów, Chorzele, Radzanów, Szreńsk, Zakroczym, and Zieluń. Research conducted so far has not revealed evidence of ghettos in these places, which had all been cleared of Jews by early 1942.

11. APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin (GDL) 891, Heinicke (Department for Population and Welfare, Lublin) to Labor Department Lublin, December 10, 1940; AŻIH, Ring I/674; and Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 136. See also Götz Aly, “Endlösung”: *Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1995), p. 183, who dates the deportation in November 1940 based on transport plans.

12. Jacob Shatzky, ed., *Pinkas Mlave* (New York, 1950), p. 403, indicates that around 200 managed to return from Międzyrzec.

13. Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy* (London: William Collins, 1986), pp. 142–143. Aly, “Endlösung,” p. 256, indicates that these deportations formed part of the “Third Short-range Plan (3. Nahplan).” Resistance by the civil authorities in the Generalgouvernement also contributed to stopping these deportations. See also Grabowski, “Polityka antyżydowska,” pp. 61–62.

14. BA-L, ZStL II 117 AR 1119/68 (investigation of A. Boldin and others), vol. 1, pp. 1–2, Interim Report, Tel Aviv, July 11, 1968; Szczepański, *Spółeczność*, p. 424, 443–444.

15. Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, p. 68–70.

16. Frank Golczewski, “Polen,” in Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991), p. 451. Golczewski’s figures are derived mainly from Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*. These figures presumably include a number of Jews temporarily assigned to various forced labor camps within the Regierungsbezirk. The Drobin ghetto was probably liquidated on January 6, 1942.

17. Ghetto Commandant Foch in Płońsk, for example, is remembered as having been particularly brutal.

18. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 318–319, 324.

19. Shlomo Tzemakh et al., eds., *Sefer Plonsk V’Hasviva* (Tel Aviv: Lidor, 1962), pp. 437, 451; AŻIH, 313/57, Henoah Klajnman 1948, and SOPł 246–49 (trial of Henryk Klajnman).

8 INCORPORATED EASTERN TERRITORIES

20. Grabowski, “The Holocaust in Northern Mazovia,” p. 462; Pulmer was tried in 1976 but never sentenced due to his “poor health.”

21. A. Volf Yasni, ed., *Yizker-bukh fun der Tshekhanover Yidisheh kehile/Sefer-yizkor li-kehillat Ts’ehānov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Ts’ehānov be-Yisrael un di Landsmanshaftn in Huts-la-Arets, 1962), pp. 323–325.

22. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), pp. 268–294. There is some speculation that Jews may have been sent to the Treblinka extermi-

nation camp from this region; but this remains unproven at present.

23. Grabowski, “The Holocaust in Northern Mazovia,” p. 461; e.g., Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust—Poland*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 722–723, 876.

24. Verdict of LG-Gies, 7 Ks 1/74 of November 15, 1976; see the files of SOPl and SOMł, especially SOPl 246-49 (Henryk Klajman), who served in the Jewish Police.



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CIECHANÓW

Pre-1939: Ciechanów, town and powiat center, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zichenau, Kreis center and capital, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Ciechanów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Ciechanów is located 100 kilometers (62 miles) north-northwest of Warsaw. The first mention of a Jewish presence in the town dates from 1507. There were approximately 5,000 Jews living in Ciechanów in 1939.

By the time German troops entered Ciechanów on September 3, 1939, the Jewish population had decreased to less than 2,000. A period of persecution followed, with German soldiers attacking and sometimes killing Jews, desecrating or destroying religious items, pillaging Jewish homes and businesses, forcing Jews to perform menial labor, and holding Jews for ransom. Harassment aside, however, Noah Zabłudovits (Noach Zabłudowicz), a survivor, recalls the first three months of occupation as fairly peaceful, with “everything open and free.”¹

On October 26, 1939, military rule of Ciechanów ended, and the town was annexed to the German Reich. Renamed Zichenau, it became the capital of the newly created Regierungsbezirk Zichenau. A number of Jews were expelled to the Lublin area in October 1939. The ultimate goal of the new administration was to deport all Jews and Poles from the Zichenau Regierungsbezirk to the Generalgouvernement and resettle Zichenau with ethnic Germans. In the meantime, the local population was to be used as either forced or low-wage labor.

An ethnic German, Mathys, was appointed as Ciechanów's Landrat (district administrator). Two names are mentioned as the town's mayor: Rot and Falk. Ethnic Germans were resettled to Ciechanów, thereby forcing Jews and Poles out of work

and eventually confiscating their businesses, farms, and houses. Anti-Jewish laws introduced by the new authorities included: prohibition of ritual slaughter, shopping in non-Jewish stores, using the sidewalks, use of public places, and performing certain occupations (e.g., driver). Jews were also ordered to wear a yellow Star of David sewn onto the front and back of their clothing. Schools and synagogues were closed. A sundown curfew was imposed.²

The German authorities set up the Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the autumn of 1939. A shoemaker, Ben-Zion Ehrlich, was nominated as its chairman; he performed this duty until the liquidation of the ghetto. Binyamin Kirshenbaum was the Judenrat's treasurer. One of the Judenrat's first tasks was to deliver a list of the names of all Ciechanów's Jews and their property (much of this information was also provided by local ethnic Germans). Very little is known regarding the work of the Judenrat besides its careful fulfillment of German orders and that it consisted of wealthy Jews. According to one survivor, Meyer Hack, the Judenrat was fair and not bribable with respect to conscription for forced labor. Another source indicates that it was only with bribes that one could get a separate apartment in the soon-to-be overcrowded Ciechanów.³

In October 1939, the civil authorities assigned Jews and Poles to demolish those parts of the town with mostly wooden buildings and rebuild these sections in the style of Prussian architecture. The Judenrat's employment agency (Arbeitsamt) was charged with delivering work brigades. Jews as young as 14 years old reported each morning outside the town hall, awaiting the mayor and their work assignment. The daily routine included a chorus greeting: “Good morning, Mr. Mayor”; “Good morning, swine,” was his reply.

The houses designated to be demolished were mostly occupied by Jews. On average, the occupants were given one hour to evacuate their homes. As the demolitions progressed, the homeless moved into cellars, attics, and farm buildings.⁴

Jews tasked with forced labor worked from 6:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. and were paid 9 Reichsmark (RM) per day; half of their salary was deducted in tax. Yet these wages were high enough to allow workers to save some money. Only half the day on Sundays was free of labor, as the German guards were given time off. Other survivors recalled that they also had Saturday afternoons off or that some worked on the Sabbath only when forced.⁵

In the spring of 1940, over 100 elderly and crippled Poles and Jews were taken to the Ościłów Forest, where they were all shot and buried in a mass grave. In the course of 1940, a number of Ciechanów Jews was expelled to Warsaw, while another 1,500 or so Jews from other places were resettled to Ciechanów.

An open ghetto was established at the end of 1940 in the center of Ciechanów. Jews were forced to live in a run-down area that was formerly Jewish and was now crammed with people whose houses had already been demolished or confiscated. Although the ghetto was unfenced, its inhabitants were ordered to stay within its limits. On German orders, the Judenrat established a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungs-



Jews are packed onto a number of trucks that are parked in front of the courthouse and city hall in Marek Square in Ciechanów, 1941–1942. USHMM WS #50337, COURTESY OF IPN



Group portrait of members of the Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir Zionist youth movement in Ciechanów, among them future Auschwitz resister Roża Robota (third row, fourth from left), ca. 1937.

USHMM WS #18655, COURTESY OF ELIYAHU MALLENBAUM

dienst) to guard the ghetto's gate from the inside. Written permission was required to leave.

Polish doctors were forbidden to attend the sick, and diseases spread quickly. Only after the Judenrat bribed the town's mayor did he agree to set up a small hospital on Zagumienna Street. Another small hospital was set up in a garage. A Jewish doctor named Baran was brought in.⁶

Although Ciechanów's Jews tried their best to get along in the overcrowded ghetto, there was considerable friction and strife, including cases of suicide. A women's group was organized to serve soup to the needy and sick; the extent of this help is unknown. Kosher slaughtering was performed in secret, as well as prayers on the Sabbath.

As the food rations were very meager, the ghetto's Jews took to smuggling. Those who were caught were initially punished by fines or transfer to a labor camp. Punishment was at first administered by the Landrat, then later by the Sondergericht (special court). From 1942 onward, the punishment for smuggling and other minor offenses was death or transfer to a concentration camp.

In the spring of 1941, Ciechanów's authorities discontinued the expulsion of Jews to the Generalgouvernement and started concentrating them in a number of ghettos, including the ghetto of Ciechanów. With the arrival of about 500 newcomers, the Ciechanów ghetto housed Jews from Dobrzyń, Raciąż, Sierpc, Drobin, Żuromin, and some towns in Danzig-Westpreussen, including Rypin. Jews from the surrounding villages also were sent to Ciechanów.

The transfer of Jews within Regierungsbezirk Zichenau continued. On December 11, 1941, approximately 1,000 to 1,200 Jews were evacuated from Ciechanów to the nearby Nowe Miasto ghetto. Many Jews were murdered in the course of this deportation, including Jewish policeman Abe Blum for helping the elderly to board the train. In Nowe Miasto, the newcomers were almost always deprived of any assistance or shelter, and some risked returning to Ciechanów. As a result, periodic identification checks were conducted in Ciechanów,

and "illegals" were usually sent to the Pomiechówek camp. An estimated 7,000 Jews lived in the Ciechanów ghetto at this time.⁷

Terror and periodic public hangings intensified in 1942. The Germans forced the Jews to hang their own. One of the Gestapo officers, Rosenmann, was known for entering the ghetto at night and raping women; he also was allegedly responsible for falsely accusing five Jews of sabotage; they were hanged in 1942. At night, members of the Hitler Youth also broke into Jewish homes, where they intimidated, beat, and tortured the inhabitants. They also reportedly raped women and forced the men to watch; and they even forced siblings to have sexual intercourse with each other.⁸

An underground movement was organized in the ghetto and included the following members: Moishe Kolka; Godl Zilber; Noah Eisenberg; Yosef Eisenberg; Motl Bergson; Yisroel Likhtenstein; Dovid Shmidt; and three brothers, Pinkhas, Noach, and Khanan Zabłudowicz. Through Noach Zabłudowicz the organization maintained contact with other ghettos in the vicinity. Zabłudowicz was employed as an "ethnic German" driver by the German Bernard Kessler, who was aware of his Jewish identity. Zabłudowicz was able to transport families wanted by the authorities to other ghettos.

Ciechanów's non-Jewish population was too small to provide anonymity to Jews wanted by the German authorities; therefore, flight to another ghetto was the most common means of escape, as long as there were still other ghettos existing nearby.

The liquidation of the Ciechanów ghetto took place on either November 5 or 6, 1942. The operation was led by Commander Meinert.⁹ Ciechanów's Jews were first chased to the market square, where they were ordered to give up their valuables, for which the SS had boxes ready. Three Jews were shot to show the gravity of the demand. A female SS officer randomly searched females, while male SS officers checked the men. All were then led into the courtyard of the medieval castle located outside of the town for a selection.

A group of 1,000 elderly and sick residents was sent to the Mława ghetto (33 kilometers [20.5 miles] northeast of Ciechanów) and from there to the Auschwitz concentration camp in mid-November 1942. A transport of 2,000 stronger Jews was sent to Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Upon their arrival on November 7, 1942, 1,306 people were gassed, while the remainder were selected for work. In the course of the deportation from Ciechanów, a number of elderly Jews were murdered along with 68 patients from the hospital on Zagumienna Street.

In Auschwitz, a member of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir from Ciechanów, Róża Robota, took part in organizing the prisoner's revolt by distributing explosives. She was hanged with three other women on January 6, 1945.

SOURCES Publications on the Ciechanów ghetto include the following: Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984); Janusz Szczepański, *Spółeczność żydowska Mazowska w XIX–XX*

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wieku (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztor, 2005); A. Volf Yasni, ed., *Yizker-bukh fun der Tshekhanozer Yidisher kebile/Sefer-yizkor li-kebilat Ts'ehanov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Ts'ehanov be-Yisrael un di Landsman-shaftn in Huts-la-Arets, 1962); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 384–390; and Samuel Althaus, *Where Is God?: Auschwitz-Birkenau to Dachau 1942 to 1945* (United States: S. Althaus, 2000), pp. 42–64.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Ciechanów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AAN; APW (Geheime Staatspolizei—Staatspolizeistelle Zichenau/Schrötersburg in Schrötersburg, zespół nr. 1025, 22 j. a.; Gendermerie Kreis Zichenau, zespół nr. 499, 2, j. a.); AŻIH (Ring I/1034; and 301/646); IPN (GK 1795/88x; Geheime Staatspolizei: Polizeistelle Zichenau; and Staatliche Kriminal Polizei Zichenau); USHMM (RG-15.079, Ring I/1034; RG-15.039M; RG-15.037M; RG-50.030*0166, oral history with Lonia Mosak; RG-15.084M, # 646); VHF (e.g., # 6063, 15269, 25241, and 26035); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 26035, testimony of Noah Zabłudovits, 1997.
2. Althaus, *Where Is God?*, pp. 45–46; USHMM, RG-50.030*0166; VHF, # 25241, testimony of Yisrael Fodelovich, 1996.
3. VHF, # 15269, testimony of Meyer Hack, 1996; and # 25241.
4. Ibid., #15269.
5. Ibid., # 26035; # 15269; # 25241.
6. USHMM, RG-50.030*0166.
7. Ibid.
8. Althaus, *Where Is God?*, p. 47.
9. AŻIH, 301/646, testimony of Motek Popiół, 1945.

CZERWIŃSK NAD WISŁĄ

Pre-1939: Czerwińsk nad Wisłą, village, Płock powiat, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Czerwinsk, Kreis Plönnen, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Czerwińsk Nad Wisłą, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Czerwińsk is located on the right bank of the Vistula River, 61 kilometers (38 miles) west-northwest of Warsaw. An estimated 80 Jewish families lived there in 1939. When the Germans invaded Poland, many Jews fled the village, believing they would be safer in larger towns. The Germans occupied Czerwińsk on September 9 or 10, 1939. As Czerwińsk remained relatively undamaged, most Jewish residents soon returned to their homes. In the course of the September Campaign, Czerwińsk attracted many Jewish refugees, especially from Gąbin, Hów, Leoncin, Rypin, and Warsaw. In October 1939, Czerwińsk was annexed to the Reich as part of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau.

Initially, the Jews of Czerwińsk escaped harassment; however, a curfew was soon imposed. Jews in Czerwińsk were also

forced to wear distinguishing patches bearing the emblem of the Star of David. The Germans confiscated most possessions from both Poles and Jews, especially their estates and businesses. All young Jews were conscripted to perform forced labor, mainly in agriculture, for which they were initially paid.¹ Later, the town's Jews worked fixing roads, clearing snow from the streets, and performing various menial jobs in the village. The German authorities also abducted some of the Jews in Czerwińsk, sending them to labor camps in the vicinity. Roundups were conducted at night.

The Germans set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) to help administer labor conscriptions and maintain order in the Jewish community. Aharon Neiberger (Aran Najberger) chaired the Judenrat. Yehezkel Braverman was the commander of the Jewish Police. In addition to these authorities, there was a German Gendarmerie post located in Czerwińsk.²

In 1940, the chief of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo, SS-Sturmabführer Hartmut Pulmer, organized a number of mass hangings in the region of Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki and Czerwińsk.

Either at the end of October or beginning of November 1941, a ghetto surrounded by a wooden fence was constructed in Czerwińsk. The ghetto was located in the predominantly Jewish part of the village and limited to one street leading to the local Catholic cemetery. It had gated exits at each end of the street. The Poles who lived there had to abandon their property and relocate.³

On November 29, 1941, the Germans transferred 600 Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Wyszogród almost 10 kilometers (about 6 miles) away to the ghetto in Czerwińsk. Some of these people were moved into houses deserted by the Poles in Czerwińsk. With their arrival, the Czerwińsk ghetto became extremely overcrowded.⁴

The Germans did not allow any businesses to remain open in the Czerwińsk ghetto. Poles were afraid to help their Jewish neighbors, as large notices were posted throughout the village ordering the death penalty for anyone found providing assistance to Jews. The Judenrat did, however, open a soup kitchen to help the poor and refugees. It also was responsible for providing labor brigades in accordance with German demands. Jewish laborers would leave the ghetto in the morning to work in the fields and come back in the evening. The German authorities rarely entered the ghetto, leaving it up to the Jewish Police to maintain order there. In the spring of 1942, the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo organized a second round of mass hangings, including one conducted inside the Czerwińsk ghetto. The Germans employed these methods to try to break the spirit of the local Jews.

In the first part of 1942, an underground cell of the Communist Polish Workers' Party (Polska Partia Robotnicza, PPR) was organized in the Czerwińsk ghetto. A former party member, Lewicki (Levitsky), was its secretary. The cell maintained contact with the underground of the Płońsk ghetto and PPR in the Płońsk region. Some Czerwińsk Jews joined the People's Guard (Gwardia Ludowa, GL), a Communist partisan group

commanded by Franciszek Lewandowski that operated around Płock and Płońsk. Among these partisans was Marian Berghlan, alias Wańka Woroncow, who fell during fighting with the German Gendarmerie in the village of Janikowo on September 15, 1943.

In the summer of 1942, two truckloads of women, children, and sick people were brought into the Czerwińsk ghetto from Ciechanów. By this time, the ghetto's population had reached 2,000. The unsanitary conditions in the ghetto led to an outbreak of typhus. A small hospital was opened and supervised by Doctor Arthur Bauer, who visited once a week from Płońsk. The rest of the time, a single nurse cared for the sick. At its peak, the epidemic resulted in the death of dozens of Jews each week.

The Czerwińsk ghetto was liquidated on October 28, 1942. About 2,600 of its inhabitants were brought on wagons to the ghetto in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. The deportations of Nowy Dwór's ghetto inhabitants to the Auschwitz concentration camp began three weeks later on November 20, 1942. The third and final transport departed from Nowy Dwór on December 12, 1942.⁵

Hartmut Pulmer was tried in 1976 but never sentenced due to his "poor health."

SOURCES There is no single publication on the history of the Jewish community in Czerwińsk nad Wisłą. A short chapter is dedicated to its fate in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989). Some information can also be found in: Janusz Szczepański, *Spółeczność żydowska Mazowsza w XIX–XX wieku* (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora, 2005).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archive: VHF (# 42808 and 30107).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 42808, testimony of Max Lesser, 1998.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., # 30107, testimony of Abraham Szmiga, 1997.
5. VHF, # 42808; # 30107.

DROBIN

Pre-1939: Drobin, town, Płock powiat, Warszaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Reichenfeld, Kreis Schröttersburg, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Drobin, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Drobin is located 33 kilometers (20.5 miles) northeast of Płock. The town's first Jewish inhabitants only appeared in Drobin at the end of the seventeenth century, but by 1808, almost all the residents were Jews (1,607 out of a total of 1,717). By 1921, there were 1,096 Jews in Drobin out of a total population of 2,439.



Portrait of the fourth-grade class at the public elementary school in Drobin, attended by both Polish and Jewish children, 1932.

USHMM WS #38516, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION, GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

The Germans occupied Drobin on September 5, 1939, and immediately began committing acts of thievery and vandalism, as well as harassing and attacking Jews. In October, Drobin was renamed Reichenfeld and annexed to the Reich as part of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau.¹ That same month, many anti-Jewish laws were implemented. Jews were ordered to wear an armband bearing the Star of David. They were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks. Although the Germans allowed some Jewish businesses to continue operating, Jews were otherwise banned from self-employment. The Germans took any valuable item they wanted from Jewish homes. In addition, they imposed a financial contribution of 10,000 złoty on the community; although Drobin's Jews tried their best, they were able to collect only 4,500 złoty, which the Germans accepted only after persistent pleading.² At the beginning of 1940, Drobin's synagogue was razed.

Jews were also requisitioned for forced labor. At first, the Germans would round up whomever they found in the street. Some were employed in two hospitals established for Polish POWs in the synagogue and Bet Midrash. Some swept the streets. A number worked in agriculture in the vicinity of Drobin, mainly clearing fields of stones and breaking them up into gravel. The old Jewish cemetery was leveled, and all the tombstones were used to create paths in a park that the Germans designed in Drobin, while others were used to pave roads. Polish engineers supervised the construction of the park, which also used Jewish labor. Bones from the Jewish cemetery were visible all over the town for some time. Jewish craftsmen were employed under Polish supervision in two enterprises for tailors and shoemakers whose workshops had been seized. From 1940 on, Jewish women and children were forced to work along with the men. In the spring of 1940, those Jews employed paving the roads were paid 1.20 Reichsmark (RM) per day.³

In the fall of 1939, the Germans established a Judenrat (Jewish Council) to oversee the implementation of German

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laws. Its primary task was to organize forced labor detachments and distribute to the workers their small wages, from which it deducted 10 pfennigs for operating costs. The German authorities initially appointed Elimelech Buki as the chairman. The other members of the Judenrat included: Josef Segel, Moshe Aron, and Israel and Isaac Braunschweig.⁴ By February 1940, Chaim Przewózman (Pschewusmann) replaced Buki as the chairman. The Judenrat was also charged with organizing social aid, which involved assisting about 100 refugees who had settled in Drobin since the war's onset. Most of them came from the nearby towns of Mława, Sierpc, Raciąż, Rypin, and Lipno.

With the assistance of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen on February 22, 1940. By March, it was distributing 250 meals a day: less than half the demand. From May on, due to financial constraints, the Judenrat charged everyone 5 pfennigs per meal. The economic situation of the Jews worsened day by day. It was at this time that the Germans expelled all of Drobin's refugees, sending most of them to Strzegowo and Płock. A number of them returned to Drobin or went into hiding. In August 1940, 500 poor were registered in Drobin, yet the kitchen was unable to increase the number of meals.⁵

As conditions continued to deteriorate in Drobin, a number of Jews were transferred to the ghetto in Mława. A group of Jews was rounded up one night in July 1940 and was sent to a newly created labor camp for Jews.

The first large deportation from Drobin took place in early March 1941. At that time, Drobin had approximately 1,300 Jewish inhabitants. The Judenrat prepared a list of 600 Jews (mainly the sick and elderly) to be deported by truck to the transfer camp in Działdowo. A week later, on March 14, they were loaded onto trains and transferred to the ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski, where the Germans had already crammed in around 20,000 Jews. Most of the Jews from Drobin were housed together in the synagogue at 20 Jerozolimska Street. A typhus epidemic that broke out in the first months after their arrival killed hundreds of them. With the deportation of the bulk of the Jews from the Piotrków ghetto in mid-October 1942, most of the remaining Jews from Drobin were sent by train to the Treblinka death camp.

The ghetto for 700 Jews that remained in Drobin was set up immediately after the departure of the group of 600 Jews (although one account places it earlier, in 1940). The Jews had to vacate their houses on the market square and move to the poorest section of the town, down by the river, near the new Jewish cemetery. Jews could take some of their belongings with them. After their resettlement in the ghetto, on average about four families were forced to share one room. The ghetto was initially open and was not strictly guarded. Later on, however, it was surrounded by barbed wire. There was only one gate by which inhabitants could enter and leave the ghetto.⁶

The Germans gave the Jews a free hand to establish their own police force (Ordnungsdienst). Once the Judenrat had ap-

pointed its members, they were in charge of maintaining order within the ghetto. Its members wore high boots, distinct uniforms with a band at waist level, and special hats. The treatment of individuals depended on the status of the family from which they came. Some members of the force abused their power. They were especially brutal during the Pelzaktion—when the Germans ordered the surrender of all fur items in the fall of 1941. Jews known to be concealing any fur garments were severely beaten. German police controlled the gate and the external perimeter of the ghetto.⁷

Those Jews who were still permitted to run their businesses were allowed to leave the ghetto and employ other Jews. Many smuggled food into the ghetto. Nevertheless, due to overcrowding, bad sanitation, and severe hunger that made people's stomachs swell, cases of typhus and other diseases developed. To make matters worse, there was no hospital in the Drobin ghetto.⁸

According to one testimony, sometime after the ghetto was set up, a number of young men were rounded up and were sent to the Nosarzewo labor camp near Mława.⁹

The Germans liquidated the ghetto in Drobin in November 1941 (or, by some accounts, in 1942). Its 700 inhabitants were deported to the fenced ghetto in Nowe Miasto near Płońsk. The laborers who had been sent to the Nosarzewo camp a few months earlier were also transferred there. However, in their place another group of young men was soon rounded up and sent to Nosarzewo. The conditions in Nowe Miasto were much worse than in Drobin. The Judenrat tried to accommodate the newcomers, but many ended up sleeping in the streets. There also was an outbreak of typhus. The Germans never entered the ghetto, as they were afraid of becoming infected. The Jews from Drobin worked in the vicinity of Nowe Miasto, mainly in farming and construction. After about seven to eight months, they were transferred to yet another ghetto in Płońsk.¹⁰

The Germans announced that they would only be in Płońsk for a short time before everyone would be sent to work in Germany or Switzerland. The Jews from Drobin stayed in Płońsk for periods varying from only a few days up to three months, depending on the date of their deportation to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Most of them were sent on the second transport on November 30, 1942. They were sent on a regular train, with seats and windows. Only about 50 or 60 Jews from Drobin survived the war.¹¹

SOURCES There is no single publication describing in detail the fate of the Jews of Drobin. A description of the destruction of the community can be found in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 180–182. Additional brief sections on Drobin can be found in the following publications: Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984), p. 55; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press,

2001), p. 332; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy bitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979), p. 162.

Documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/321); UM-DOHA (Simon Kalmas interview, available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/51471>); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154, AJDC); VHF (# 2504, 4299, 9954, 13743, 18648, and 51154); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. UM-DOHA, Simon Kalmas interview, 1982.
2. Ibid.; VHF, # 18648-3, testimony of Morris Pfeffer, 1996, and # 2504, testimony of Esther Neimark, 1995.
3. Simon Kalmas interview, 1982; VHF, # 51154, testimony of Cwi Jedwab, 2000; # 2504; # 18648-3.
4. Simon Kalmas interview, 1982; VHF, # 51154; # 18648-3.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/321.
6. VHF, # 13743-2, testimony of Harry Schwartz, 1996.
7. Ibid., # 18648-3.
8. Ibid.; # 51154; Simon Kalmas interview, 1982.
9. VHF, # 51154.
10. Ibid., # 4299-2, testimony of Abraham Feffer, 1995; #13743-2; # 9954-3, testimony of Samuel Sitko, 1995.
11. Ibid., #51154; #9954-3; #18648-3.

MAKÓW MAZOWIECKI

Pre-1939: Maków Mazowiecki, town and powiat center, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Mackheim, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Maków Mazowiecki, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Maków Mazowiecki is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) north of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, approximately 5,000 Jews resided in Maków Mazowiecki (about 55 percent of the total population).¹

Units of the German 3rd Army entered Maków a few days after the invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, followed immediately by units of Einsatzkommando 2/V, and a reign of terror began.² Much of the Jewish population attempted to flee the Germans by heading for the larger cities, especially Warsaw, or into the Soviet-occupied zone.

In October 1939, Maków Mazowiecki was incorporated into the Reich as part of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau. For much of the occupation, the Landrat in Kreis Mackheim was Herbert Seiler, and the mayor (Bürgermeister) was Franz Kasischke.³

The first systematic measures against the Jews came in December, when Jews were ordered to wear the Star of David. All private businesses and schools were closed or taken over, and Jewish communities in the area were ordered to pay the German authorities “contributions” amounting to many thousands of złoty.

At the end of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. Its tasks included transmitting German orders to the

Jewish community, ensuring their implementation, and tending to the needs of impoverished Jews, especially the many refugees from other towns. The council was obligated to provide the Germans with a list of the Jewish inhabitants, together with an inventory of their property. At first, A. Ryzyk and A. Adler were appointed as heads of the Jewish Council; they were soon replaced by Abraham Garfinkel and Ehrlich.

The ghetto in Maków Mazowiecki was established in several stages, starting in the spring of 1940. First, the Jews living in the non-Jewish parts of town were moved into a Jewish “residential area” (open ghetto). Around this time, several hundred Jews apparently arrived in Maków from the surrounding towns and villages, including Różan, Krasnosielc, Chorzele, Rypin, Mława, and Pułtusk, as part of the initial German attempts to concentrate Jews in a few larger towns. Those Jews who only moved within Maków were able to bring most of their belongings, but the refugees from outside towns and villages arrived with only the few possessions they could carry in their arms.⁴

According to a certificate issued by the German mayor of Maków on April 22, 1940, the Jewish community at that time numbered 3,527 people, of whom 517 were refugees; in total, 1,950 Jews were in need of financial assistance.⁵

On December 8, 1940, conditions in the ghetto worsened with the arrival of Jews deported from Chorzele, Mława, and Przasnysz. In December 1940, a report to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) indicated there were 3,800 Jews in Maków, of which some 2,000 were refugees. The total number of Jews fluctuated considerably during the existence of the ghetto, as the periodic influx of more refugees was counterbalanced in part by roundups of Jews for forced labor camps. Close to 12,000 Jews are estimated to have passed through the ghetto during its existence.⁶ Due to its small area, the ghetto was terribly overcrowded. Typically, three families lived in a single room. Some people resided in the synagogue; others, in shops, attics, and barns. The ghetto had no hospital or infirmary to treat the sick and injured.

Available accounts differ, but probably at the end of 1940, and certainly by the fall of 1941, the German authorities enclosed the Jewish residential area.⁷ The Maków ghetto was located near the Zalew River and included the streets of Franciszkańska, Zielony Rynek, Kanałowa, Brzozowa, Dunaj, and Bużniczna. Jewish refugees were employed to erect a wooden fence 4 meters (13.1 feet) high around the ghetto, which was topped with barbed wire. There were three gates around the ghetto for exit and entry.

There were only three wells inside the ghetto, and this led to long lines and a severe shortage of water. For one hour per day, Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto under guard to obtain water from the river. But sometimes the Germans beat the Jews severely as they returned to the ghetto, and on one occasion, a woman was shot for venturing too far into the river. Units of the Order Police (Schutzpolizei and Gendarmerie) guarded the perimeter of the ghetto. Several witnesses

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name a German administrator, Wolfgang Steinmetz, as the ghetto commandant,⁸ but officials of the Gestapo organized the most severe repressive measures. Notoriously brutal officials of the Order Police included Max Plötzke.⁹

With the establishment of the ghetto, the Germans also ordered the creation of a Jewish police force of about 20 men. The ghetto police was subordinated to the Jewish Council and was headed by David Orlik. The council had to provide the German authorities with a specific quota of laborers and assist with roundups for deportation to the labor camps, which soon became widely feared due to the terrible conditions there.

The council had a generally favorable reputation in the ghetto, since it organized aid for ghetto residents. These measures included running a Talmud school for children and a social welfare system that took care of more than 1,200 people, including many refugees. The Judenrat also set up a soup kitchen for the needy, especially children. Each month the support committee of the council distributed approximately 3,000 kilograms (6,614 pounds) of bread.¹⁰ The poor living and housing conditions and the chronic malnutrition caused epidemics of disease and a high death rate. By 1942, Jews caught leaving the ghetto faced the death penalty. However, some Jews continued to leave the ghetto, especially at night when the guard was lax, in order to barter their few remaining personal items for food with the local peasants.¹¹

The German authorities attempted to exploit the residents for work as much as possible. The Labor Department in Maków organized the employment of the Jews, sending them to work in various places in the town and to seven labor camps in the vicinity. Approximately 150 to 300 Jews worked in the Gąsaw, Czerwonec, Nowa Wieś, and Karniew labor camps. An additional 200 Jews worked at the Różan Castle; 300 ghetto residents went to the Ciechanów labor camp; and some 200 to 400 Jews and Poles worked in another camp established in the town itself, located in the former *mikveh*.¹²

Up until the liquidation of the ghetto in November 1942, German security forces conducted a number of executions in Maków, including at least three public hangings. On July 7, 1942, the Germans hanged 20 Jews following an incident in which 3 escaped Jews attacked a patrol of the Gendarmerie. One of the Jews was wounded and fled back into the ghetto. When it was discovered that the Jewish doctor, Abe Kejtsohn, had treated the escapee without informing the authorities, the Germans arrested him and hanged him a week later.¹³

At the beginning of November 1942, in preparation for the liquidation of the ghetto, the Germans ordered that all the Jews in neighboring work camps be brought back into the Maków ghetto. The Germans started to liquidate the ghetto early in the morning of November 18.¹⁴ During the liquidation Aktion, at least 50 Jews, mostly the elderly and children, were killed on the spot, along with several Polish women who were driving carts for the Jews. All the remaining Jews, about 5,500 people, were herded under severe beatings to Mława, where they were held for a few days. Here, the elderly, chil-

dren, and others unable to work were selected out and sent either to Treblinka or, more probably, Auschwitz (sources differ).¹⁵ The Germans then deported the Jews held in Mława, including some who arrived on November 24 from Strzegowo, in several separate train transports to Auschwitz. The largest transport of Jews from Mława (including many Jews from Maków)—consisting of approximately 2,500 men, women, and children—arrived in Auschwitz on December 6, 1942. Of this transport, 2,094 were gassed immediately, and 406 men were admitted to the camp as laborers.¹⁶ It is unknown how many Jews from Maków survived the German occupation, but several of the men sent to Auschwitz managed to make it through the selections and privations there and in other camps until the end of the war.

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jews of Maków Mazowiecki and the surrounding area during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Yitshak Brat, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Makov-Mazovitsk* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Makov-Mazovitsk be-Yisrael uve-Artsot-ha-Berit, 1969); Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 264–268; and Janusz Szczepański, *Dzieje Społeczności Żydowskiej w Powiatów Pułtusk i Maków Mazowiecki* (Warsaw: Pułtuskie Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne, Towarzystwo Miłośników Makowa Mazowieckiego, 1993). Reference has also been made to the unpublished work by Joann Korniluk, “Maków Mazowiecki: An Oral History; Survivors of World War II in Poland” (Fairfax, VA, August 2004).

Documentation in relation to the ghetto in Maków Mazowiecki can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 210/482; and 301/6526); BA-L (B 162/7876); IPN (e.g., SWW 750-52); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC, 210/482]); VHF (e.g., # 05384, 15815, and 28862); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, B 162/7876, p. 309, statement of Abraham Garfinkel, August 17, 1971.
2. Wolfgang Schumann and Ludwig Nestler, eds., *Dokumentation. Nacht über Europa: Die faschistische Okkupationspolitik in Polen (1939–1945)* (Cologne, 1989), p. 355.
3. BA-L, B 162/7876, p. 511, Einstellungsverfügung (closing report) in the case against Wolfgang Steinmetz, January 12, 1982.
4. VHF, # 15815, testimony of Sam Itzkowitz; BA-L, B 162/7876, pp. 309–312, statement of Abraham Garfinkel, August 17, 1971.
5. Bürgermeister in Maków, Bescheinigung, April 22, 1940, reproduced in Brat, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 286.
6. BA-L, B 162/7876, p. 277, testimony of Waclaw Wolski, October 20, 1970.
7. See VHF, # 15815; BA-L, B 162/7876, p. 346, statement of Zwi Meir.
8. BA-L, B 162/7876, pp. 309, 313.
9. Ibid., p. 311.

10. VHF, # 15815.
11. Ibid.
12. Szczepański, *Dzieje*, p. 153; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, pp. 428–429.
13. Grynberg, *Żydzi*, p. 57; BA-L, 162/7876, p. 277, testimony of Waclaw Wolski, and pp. 512–515 (Einstellungsverfügung, Wolfgang Steinmetz); and VHF, # 15815.
14. Mair Hersh Ziechanover, “Klep, peynikungen—umkum,” in Brat, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 244–245.
15. Survivor testimony (BA-L, 162/7876, p. 312; and VHF, # 15815) points to Treblinka, but Auschwitz is more likely; see Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), pp. 283–284.
16. Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, p. 280.

MŁAWA

Pre-1939: Mława, town and powiat center, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Mielau, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Mława, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mława is located 107 kilometers (66 miles) north-northwest of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, there were approximately 6,500 Jews living there. On September 3, 1939, German forces occupied the town. In October, the Germans annexed Mława, renamed Mielau, as part of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau in Provinz Ostpreussen. From May 1940, the Landrat in Mielau was Paul Funk.¹

In November 1939, the Germans ordered Rabbi Segalowicz to organize a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Mława, and by 1940 the Germans had appointed Lejzor Perelmutter as its head. He built up good relations with the German officials and used these to try to help the Jews in Kreis Mielau. A Jewish police force of 10 to 12 policemen was also appointed, headed initially by Menachem Davidsohn. Perelmutter put an end to the kidnapping of Jews by restructuring the forced labor arrangements. Workers were now paid 1.50 Reichsmark (RM) per day by the Judenrat for their work; the money was raised from wealthier Jews who paid to be exempted. Jews were only allowed to buy food from shops run by the Judenrat. However, because the Germans restricted the food supply, the Judenrat began to sell black market food, paid for by taxing Jews. In 1940, living conditions were still bearable in part because of the black market trade with Łódź and Warsaw.

In November 1939, hundreds of refugees began to arrive from Sierpc, Rypin, Dobrzyń nad Drwęcą, and other places; more arrived in 1940. In the summer of 1940, the Judenrat in Mława wrote to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw for clothing, medicine, and money. However, due to German bureaucratic obstruction and the AJDC's limited means, very little aid arrived.²

At the start of December 1940, rumors began to spread of an upcoming expulsion. The Judenrat bribed the Germans with 55,000 RM, but on December 6, German Police selected 3,000 Jews and sent them to the transit camp at Działdowo



The ruins of the city square in Mława, with a possible roundup taking place at left. The original German caption reads: “The city square of Mława.” USHMM WS #49704, COURTESY OF TOM SALMON

and from there into Distrikt Lublin.³ Several hundred managed to return in 1941, when the Judenrat gave them falsified identification documents, and they blended back into the Jewish community.

After those deportations, only 2,450 Jews remained; Funk ordered them to move into a ghetto within 24 hours. The ghetto area comprised the Jewish back streets and Mikveh Square, bordered by Warsaw and Płock Streets. In early 1941 the Jews had to build a wall around the ghetto area.⁴

Due to the desperate overcrowding, a typhus epidemic broke out. The Judenrat organized a sanitation committee to maintain cleanliness in the ghetto and establish a 40-bed hospital. All of the Jews were vaccinated against typhus, which helped to keep down the mortality rate. Clandestine trade with local peasants and other ghettos forestalled starvation.⁵

The Judenrat was given largely a free hand to organize life within the ghetto, but only on the strict condition that nobody came in or out without permission. The Jewish Police guarded the ghetto gate from the inside and ran a prison cell to punish those breaking the regulations. There was also a court within the ghetto to settle disputes among Jews. Schooling was officially banned, but Jewish children received some education in small private groups. A secret radio kept in a cellar brought in some news from the outside world.

In the spring of 1941, the Germans conducted a search for Jews residing illegally in the ghetto. The Judenrat secretly evacuated most of the “illegals” in time, bringing them back in once the search was over. Perelmutter personally risked his life by delivering false documents to those being searched. More than 100 illegals were arrested, but Perelmutter managed to get them released and issued them new, legal documents.

Between 200 and 500 Jews were assigned to forced labor each day, cleaning up debris, constructing roads, building barracks, demolishing houses, loading trains with coal, and working in Polish and German houses and on private farms.

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Several hundred Jews were deported to various labor camps in the summer of 1941.

In November 1941, the Germans permitted the Judenrat to expand the ghetto area a little, to cope with the arrival of around 1,000 Jews from Szreńsk, Radzynów, and Zieluń. With these refugees, as well as those who had managed to return from the earlier deportation Aktion, the population was now approximately 5,000 people. As there was not sufficient room in the Mława ghetto, the Germans also permitted the establishment of a ghetto in Strzegowo at this time, after the Jewish community there offered bribes.⁶

Conditions in the ghetto grew worse due to severe overcrowding. Some residents had to live in pigsties, barns, granaries, basements, and attics. The Judenrat worked to make the ghetto tolerable by organizing smuggling rings, using Jews who worked outside the ghetto to bring food back in with them. The Jewish Police helped by turning a blind eye at the ghetto entrances. However, the Germans started to crack down on smuggling in December 1941, when they arrested the head of the Jewish Police, Davidsohn.⁷

On January 23, 1942, the Germans arrested 25 Jews for smuggling. They were sent to concentration camps where all perished, including Iccak Alter, a member of the Judenrat. Perelmutter was also arrested on this day and subsequently murdered in the town's municipal court building. On April 19, following the previous day's hanging of 4 smugglers, the Gestapo arrested most of the Jewish Police and several members of the Judenrat. A new Judenrat was formed, which tried unsuccessfully to bargain with the Germans for the release of those under arrest, including Davidsohn.

On June 4, 1942, the ghetto residents were forced to gather in the town square, where 13 handcuffed Jewish men awaited with nooses around their necks. The condemned were mostly members of the Jewish Police arrested for failing to prevent smuggling. The Germans demanded silence and chose several Jews from the crowd to remove the boxes from beneath the victims' feet. When the crowd began to wail and scream in horror, the Germans fired into the crowd, killing and wounding several people. Then, on June 17, the Germans executed 50 more young Jews by shooting, allegedly as a punishment for the Jews' "misbehavior" during the execution on June 4.⁸ After that, most inhabitants became too scared to continue smuggling, and hunger increased dramatically.

In the summer of 1942, the new head of the Judenrat, Paltiel Cegło, was imprisoned in Ciechanów. Another head was appointed, Mendel Czarko, and a new Jewish police force was established. Gutman, a key player in the black market, was appointed as its head.

The Jews that worked outside the ghetto were transferred back into it at the end of October 1942. The Judenrat was ordered to prepare a list of 2,000 elderly, sick, and single Jews. At this time, reinforced German police units began to patrol the ghetto boundaries.

On November 2, there was an influx of ill and elderly Jews from the ghetto in Strzegowo. On November 6, 1,000 more

Jews arrived from Ciechanów. Then on November 10, Mława's elderly and sick Jews were deported; the Jews in Mława believed that they were sent to the Treblinka death camp, but German documentation indicates that they were sent to Auschwitz, where most were gassed on arrival. On November 13 and 17, a selection was performed in the town's flour mill. Those marked for deportation were robbed and then forced to run the gauntlet of the Gendarmes; those who ran too slowly were shot. After this, two more transports left Mława for Auschwitz, containing Jews both from Mława and Ciechanów.

After this third deportation on November 17, only a few hundred Jews remained in the ghetto. However, the population swelled the very next day with the arrival of approximately 5,000 Jews from Maków Mazowiecki. On November 24, 1,000 Jews from Strzegowo arrived. These new residents, along with the remaining Mława Jews, a total of between 6,000 and 7,000 people, were all deported to Auschwitz in three or more transports between November 20 and December 10, 1942.

At least 50 Jews from the Mława ghetto somehow managed to survive their ordeals in the camps, and more than 150 of those who fled into the Soviet Union also survived.

In 1971, Franz Paulikat, a Gendarmerie official who was notorious for his brutality among the inmates of the Mława ghetto, was tried at Arnsberg in Germany and sentenced to life imprisonment.⁹

SOURCES Publications on the Mława ghetto include the following: J. Shatzky, ed., *Pinkas Młave* (New York, 1950), pp. 401–418; Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984), pp. 57–58; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 4, Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 280–287; David Shtokfish, *Di Yidishe Młave: Gesbikhte, oyfshtayg, umkum* (Tel Aviv: Yots'e Mlavah be-Yisrael uvi-tefutsot, 1984); Ryszard Juskiewicz, *Losy Żydów mławskich w okresie II-ej wojny światowej* (Mława: Tow. Przyjaciół Ziemi Mławskiej, 1994); David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003); Jan Grabowski, "The Holocaust in Northern Mazovia (Poland) in the Light of the Archive of the Ciechanów Gestapo," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 18:3 (Winter 2004); and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 35 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), Lfd. Nr. 755, pp. 373–384. The yizkor books for Szreńsk and Strzegowo also contain some information on the Mława ghetto. See *Kehilat Szreńsk ve-ha-seviva: Sefer zikaron* (Jerusalem, 1960), p. 370; and Feigl Bisberg-Youkelson and Rubin Youkelson, eds., *The Life and Death of a Polish Shtetl* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), pp. 75–77, 88.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Mława during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APL (GDL 891); AŻIH (e.g., Ring I/599 and 865; 210/494); CAHJP (HM/7596); FVA (# 145, 295, and 1533); IPN (GZ); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M, reel 13; RG-50.120, # 143; and Acc.1999.A.0154); VHF (e.g., # 12430 and 27157); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/ 403, 468, 539, 914, 1239, 2509; O-3/2190, 2907, 3361; and TR-10/714).

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1. *JuNS-V*, vol. 35, Lfd. Nr. 755, p. 376.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC records), 210/494.
3. APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin (GDL) 891, Heinicke (Department for Population and Welfare, Lublin) to Labor Department Lublin, December 10, 1940; AŻIH, Ring I/674.
4. A small sketch map of the ghetto area can be found in Juszkiewicz, *Losy Żydów mławskich*, p. 88.
5. VHF, # 12430, testimony of Leo Beals; USHMM, RG-50.120, # 143, testimony of Elimelech Shklar.
6. *Kehilat Szrensk veħa-seviva*, p. 370; and Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, pp. 68–70.
7. IPN, archives of the Ciechanów-Płock Gestapo (GZ), 148/265/I, interrogation of Davidsohn, December 10, 1941.
8. *JuNS-V*, vol. 35, Lfd. Nr. 755, p. 377.
9. *Ibid.*, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 3/70, pp. 373–384.

NOWE MIASTO

Pre-1939: Nowe Miasto, village, Płoński powiat, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Neustadt, Kreis Plönnen, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Nowe Miasto, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Nowe Miasto is located about 16 kilometers (10 miles) northeast of Płońsk. By 1921, the number of Jews in Nowe Miasto stood at 39.6 percent (i.e., 780 out of a total population of 1,969).

The Germans captured the village on September 5, 1939. On September 14, most likely members of Einsatzkommando 2/V (part of Einsatzgruppe V) killed eight Jews; two of them were shot in their own houses, the remainder near the forest in the “Piaski.”¹ On September 23 (Yom Kippur), the town’s Jews were gathered in the market square, where they were tormented for hours. One source reports that Wehrmacht soldiers murdered seven unidentified Jews on that day.² The Germans tended to pick for torture those Jews who were orthodox in appearance, beating them and shearing off their beards. One Jewish man was reported to have been tied to an automobile and dragged to his death. Soldiers drove a motorcycle and made some of the town’s Jewish inhabitants run after it. Finally, Jews were forced to dance and to dress and undress, just to shame them.³

Due to these severe persecutions at the beginning of the occupation, only 750 of the 1,500 pre-war Jewish residents remained in Nowe Miasto. Some Jews fled east to the Soviet-occupied sector of Poland after the Red Army invaded the country on September 17, 1939. Soon afterwards the Germans imposed a curfew in Nowe Miasto. The Jews also were forced to walk in the streets and not on the sidewalks. In October of that year, the village’s name was changed to Neustadt.⁴

The date of the establishment of the Jewish Council (Judenrat) is not known; however, Szlama Frydman was its chairman, and Chaim Wiatrak served as one of its members.⁵

The German authorities demanded various numbers of Jews for forced labor on a daily basis. The conscription and provision of these laborers was the responsibility of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). Each house had to supply a predetermined number of people. As one of the survivors notes, none of the jobs assigned to the Jews were especially productive. These laborers primarily dug ditches and paved roads. The only people exempted were a group of tailors assigned to sew Wehrmacht uniforms. The Judenrat also was charged by the Germans to deliver gold, furs, and other clothing items collected from the Jews.⁶

In February 1940, a self-help committee was organized in Nowe Miasto to assist the town’s 50 poorest Jewish families (222 people). The 5-member committee included: Szlama Frydman, Chaim Wiatrak, Gudak Mendel, Jankiel Szyfman, and Anczel Dąbrower. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) provided the community with some money, groceries, and clothing.⁷

Sometime in 1940, the Germans deported a number of Jews from Regierungsbezirk Zichenau to the Generalgouvernement. A number of Jews from Nowe Miasto were sent to various destinations, including Warsaw and Radzymin. On July 5, 1941, about 300 Jews from Nowe Miasto were sent to the Pomiechówek labor camp near Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, where 90 percent of them died.

In the second half of 1941, the Jews of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau were concentrated in a few ghettos in the region, including one established in Nowe Miasto. The fenced ghetto in Nowe Miasto was set up on November 1, 1941. It included the northern and eastern sections of the Market Square, Kościelna, and Senatorska Streets. The Poles had to vacate the designated area, and the Jews moved into their houses. Following the creation of the ghetto, about 1,200 Jews from Ciechanów, 750 from Drobin, and an unknown number from Tomaszów Mazowiecki were resettled there. The latter group of Jews returned to Tomaszów after a few weeks. This influx of deportees increased the number of ghetto inhabitants to 2,700.⁸

As the number of Jews in the ghetto more than tripled, living conditions rapidly deteriorated. Some inhabitants had to build special platforms in order to be able to sleep at night. One survivor estimates that the ghetto was designed to house only 500 to 600 people. A typhus epidemic and hunger killed an estimated 280 Jews; another 30 were murdered. One of the victims was a Jewish man hanged for leaving the ghetto alongside the Nowe Miasto–Szuman road. Despite the threat of capital punishment, the town’s Jews sneaked out of the ghetto to buy food through holes excavated in the ground. The local Jews were more fortunate, as they knew the area and the local farmers. Those Jews who still had some reserves could afford to buy food on the black market.⁹

The ghetto inhabitants were not paid for the forced labor they performed. Most of it was performed within the town limits. They mainly dug holes for construction or cleaned and painted houses. Agricultural labor was not too arduous and was preferred by many, as it also provided an opportunity

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to obtain something to eat from the surrounding fields.¹⁰ According to one testimony, a number of Jews was sent to the Nosarzewo labor camp in the summer of 1942.¹¹

As the news of the liquidation of other ghettos reached Nowe Miasto, the town's Jews attempted to organize an uprising. Contact was made with the local partisan group of the Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army). Weapons and identity cards (*Kennkarten*) were accumulated. However, no uprising took place because the Polish members of the Home Army opposed it, as they thought it would be impossible to hide such a large number of Jews.

The liquidation of the ghetto took place on November 18, 1942. The German authorities ordered local Polish farmers to assist in the deportation Aktion; the farmers arrived at night with their wagons. Then Nowe Miasto's Jews were chased out of their houses to the market square. They were only permitted to take with them one small bag. According to one testimony, about 2,000 Jews had to jump straight into the wagons, as soon as they had passed through the square. Those who could walk did so. Everyone was escorted to the train station under close guard by the Gendarmerie. At the station, chaos broke out as the Gestapo took over and started pushing the Jews into the freight cars. All the Jews were taken to the Płońsk ghetto.¹²

The Germans deported all the Jews from the Płońsk ghetto to the Auschwitz concentration camp in the course of four transports organized between October 28 and December 16, 1942. The Jews of Nowe Miasto were included in the second transport on November 30, 1942.¹³

After the end of the war, in early 1946, there were 31 Jews living in Nowe Miasto.

SOURCES There is no single publication on the history of the Jewish community in Nowe Miasto. Relevant information can be found in Janusz Szczepański, *Spółeczność żydowska Mazowsza w XIX–XX wieku* (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora, 2005); and Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/514); IPN (ASG, sygn. 44, k. 519); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154, AJDC; and RG-15.019M, reel 13); VHF (e.g., # 2504, 4114, 4299, 9954, and 18300); and YVA.

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 13; Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: województwo ciechanowskie* (Warsaw, 1984), pp. 58–59.

2. *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 59.

3. VHF, # 18300, testimony of Bella Ressler, 1996.

4. Ibid. See also USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

6. VHF, # 18300.

7. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

8. VHF, # 18300.

9. Ibid., # 4114, testimony of George Vine, 1995; # 9954, testimony of Samuel Sitko, 1995; # 2504, testimony of Esther Neimark, 1995; # 18300; *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 59.

10. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC); VHF, # 4114; # 4299, testimony of Abraham Feffer, 1995; # 9954.

11. VHF, # 9954.

12. Ibid., # 4114; # 18300.

13. Ibid., # 18300.

NOWY DWÓR MAZOWIECKI

Pre-1939: Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, town, Warsaw powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Neudorf, Kreis Plönnen, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Nowy Dwór is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, some 10,000 Jews lived in the town. Following the German aerial bombardment that destroyed three quarters of the town and killed dozens of Jews, most Jews fled to Warsaw, leaving only about 1,500 behind. As living conditions in Warsaw deteriorated, with hundreds of Nowy Dwór refugees also falling victim to German bombs there, many Jews returned.¹

The German army occupied Nowy Dwór at the end of September 1939. One of the first German orders forbade Jews from reopening their stores. Jews were seized on the street for forced labor, which included performing humiliating tasks such as cleaning toilets with their bare hands, as well as clearing rubble and, in the winter, snow from the streets. On October 26, 1939, Nowy Dwór was incorporated into the Reich. In December 1939, the Germans conducted a census, registering 2,800 Jews. At this time, the Germans also burned Jewish books in the marketplace.² At the end of December, the leaders of the Jewish community, Nachum Neufeld and Baruch Tick, were informed by the German authorities that the Jews would have to leave town within four days. At the same time, Jewish property, including furniture and even clothing, was confiscated; 20 Jews were arrested at this time, of which 6 died in concentration camps.

In January 1940, owing to brutal treatment and the imposition of a “contribution” of 50,000 złoty on the Jewish community by the Germans, many Jews again fled the town, some reaching the Soviet-occupied regions to the east. Only a few, mostly poor Jews remained. At this time, the Germans introduced identity cards for the Jews.

During the course of 1940, a number of Jews decided to return to Nowy Dwór from Warsaw, owing to hunger and disease in the larger city. The Gestapo, which had its headquarters in the house of Myer Muntlak near the Polish cemetery, arrested some of these returnees for leaving their registered place of residence. These Jews were cruelly tortured, and 41 of those who had returned from Warsaw were sent away and never heard of again. The Germans continued to exploit Jews daily for forced labor, making them

perform physically demanding work and beating them frequently.³

In June 1941, the German authorities ordered the creation of a ghetto in Nowy Dwór, giving the Jews until June 17 to move. The ghetto was located in the “Piaski” quarter, from the house of Moshe Bermann up to the synagogue, which lay outside the ghetto. A wooden fence surrounded the ghetto. There were two gates, and German guards watched the external perimeter. Once the ghetto was created, only a few “lucky” Jews continued to go to work outside where they might obtain some food. On the inside, there was terrible overcrowding, and initially no food supplies were provided.⁴

A few days after the establishment of the ghetto, the Germans ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The first head of the council was Rotstein, an honorable man who, for this reason, did not stay in office long. He was succeeded by Israel Tischler, who was acquainted with Wendt, the ethnic German mayor of the town. A Jewish police force also was formed, headed by Jakob Baranek. His deputy, Shlomo Soszynski, became particularly notorious in the ghetto. Subsequently a ghetto prison was established and run by the Jewish Police.⁵ Another key post was head of the supply office, held by Israel Skrobanek, which he ruthlessly exploited to make money at the expense of the starving Jews. The rations in the ghetto consisted of only 330 grams (11.6 ounces) of poor bread per day and 120 grams (4.2 ounces) of horseflesh per month, which was not always supplied. These rations were at fixed prices, but smuggled goods could be obtained for much higher prices.

The Jewish Police took over internal guard duty at the gates; Chaim Jacek, who was in charge there, obediently carried out German orders. When the German army attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, this initially brought joy to the ghetto, as people expected they would soon be liberated, but these hopes were quickly dashed, as German forces rapidly advanced deep into Russia. At this time, there were about 3,000 Jews living in the ghetto. Soon after the ghetto’s establishment, a typhus epidemic broke out due to overcrowding and terrible hygienic conditions there. Almost half of the ghetto became infected, and many people died. In response, the Germans forced all the Jews to take a bath in the river, but many fell sick as a result of this “treatment.”⁶

On July 4, 1941, the Gestapo resettled up to 2,000 Jews from Nowy Dwór to the camp in Pomiechówek, where some 4,000 Jews were collected together. The German authorities informed the Jewish Council that only 750 Jews could remain in the ghetto, that is, those who were employed by the Wehrmacht. Living conditions in the Pomiechówek camp were terrible, and many people died there from beatings, hunger, and typhus. Sick people were shot on the spot, and those who were healthy were marched towards Legionowo. Only a few managed to reach the Warsaw ghetto alive.⁷

Some 800 or so Jews remained behind in Nowy Dwór; they were working in various businesses in the town and also in the nearby fortress of Modlin. Periodically, the Germans murdered some of the surviving Jews in the Nowy Dwór ghetto.

At the end of November 1941, the Germans ordered that all the Jews from the surrounding area, including about 1,000 Jews from Wyszogród, be transferred into the ghetto in Nowy Dwór. To accommodate these newcomers, the ghetto area was expanded to the railway lines.⁸ Each day, the Jewish Police rounded up 350 Jews to work in Modlin, where they rolled up barbed wire ready for transportation to the Eastern Front. The work was very demanding, and the pay consisted only of a piece of bread.

One day in the spring of 1942, when only 300 people turned up for the work assignment, a group of soldiers entered the ghetto and rounded up 50 more. These men were tortured, and then more than 30 of them were shot for “being late.” Jews in the ghetto, especially the families of those who were murdered, blamed the Judenrat for failing to protect them.⁹ During the summer of 1942, the Jewish Council was forced to hang 18 Jews who had been caught illegally outside the ghetto, trying to cross the border with the Generalgouvernement or smuggling food.¹⁰

On October 28, 1942, all 2,600 Jews from Czerwińsk were brought to the Nowy Dwór ghetto, producing terrible overcrowding with five or six families to a room, until the start of the ghetto’s liquidation on November 20. First, those unfit for work or unable to pay a bribe were deported. The ghetto was then completely cleared in two additional transports to Auschwitz of 1,000 people on December 9 and finally 1,500 on December 12. The 12 members of the Jewish Council, with their families, were placed in a separate wagon and allowed to go to the Warsaw ghetto. At Auschwitz, those unfit for work were gassed on arrival. Of the 1,500 Jews on the final transport, only 580 were selected as fit for work; the rest were gassed in the crematoria on December 13–14.¹¹ Some Jews from Nowy Dwór participated in the Warsaw Uprising in 1943. It is estimated that only about 30 Jews from the ghetto in Nowy Dwór survived until the liberation.¹² The few that returned to the town found only desolation and a ruined cemetery.

SOURCES Published accounts of the ghetto in Nowy Dwór can be found in Aryeh Shamri and Dov Berish First, eds., *Pinkas Nowy Dwor* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots’e Novi-Devor be-Yisrael, 1965); and in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 298–303.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I, 1172); BA-L (ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68); IPN (Gestapo Zichenau—see also USHMM, RG-15.039M); and YVA (e.g., B-48/681; M-1/E/2189 and 1879).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68 (investigation of A. Boldin and others), vol. 1, pp. 1–2, Interim Report, Tel Aviv, July 11, 1968.

2. AŻIH, Ring I, 1172; Shamri and First, *Pinkas Nowy Dwor*, p. xv.

3. A. Goldbrach and W. Szlamowicz, “The Pain and Destruction of the Jewish Population,” in Shamri and First, *Pinkas Nowy Dwor*, pp. 320–325.

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4. Senda Blank, "The Jews of Nowy Dwor under Nazi Rule," in Shamri and First, *Pinkas Nowy Dwor*, pp. 326–336; Leib Kochalski, "The Members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police," in *idem*, pp. 337–339.

5. Kochalski, "The Members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police," pp. 337–339. On the prison inside the ghetto, see also YVA, testimony B-48/681.

6. Blank, "The Jews of Nowy Dwor under Nazi Rule."

7. BA-L, ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68 (investigation of A. Boldin and others), vol. 1, pp. 1–2, Interim Report, Tel Aviv, July 11, 1968.

8. BA-L, ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68, vol. 1, p. 87.

9. Kochalski, "The Members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police," pp. 337–339.

10. Mordechai Landsmann, "The Destruction of the Jews in Nowy Dwor," in Shamri and First, *Pinkas Nowy Dwor*, pp. 340–342. On hangings in Nowy Dwór, see also IPN, Gestapo Zichenau, file of Szmerek Goldberg, April 24, 1942.

11. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), pp. 268–294.

12. BA-L, ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68 (investigation of A. Boldin and others), vol. 1, pp. 1–2, 91–93; Shamri and First, *Pinkas Nowy Dwor*, pp. 340–342.

PŁOCK

Pre-1939: Płock, town and powiat center; Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Schröttersburg, Kreis center; Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Płock, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Płock is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) west-northwest of Warsaw on the Vistula River. On the eve of World War II, around 10,000 Jews resided in Płock.

Units of the German army occupied Płock on September 8, 1939. In October, the German occupiers renamed the town Schröttersburg and officially incorporated it into the Reich within Provinz Ostpreussen.

On October 30, 1939, the mayor of Płock banned Jews from engaging in any form of business activity and ordered all Jewish businesses to be seized. This was deemed to be a punishment for their alleged involvement in black market activities.¹ The ever-worsening economic situation caused many Jews to flee to the Soviet-occupied part of Poland or to Warsaw. At the end of November 1939, the Jews of Płock were required to wear yellow triangles (later replaced by large circles) on the front and back of their coats.

The Judenrat, with Dr. Bromberger as chairman and Samek Szatan as vice-chairman, and the Jewish police force were formed in mid-December 1939. A Labor Office was also established at this time. The Judenrat was responsible for supplying the Germans daily with several hundred forced laborers between the ages of 16 and 60, including 150 women. The Judenrat complied in the hope that this would stop the Germans from rounding up Jews off the streets. However, random arrests for forced labor continued. The working conditions for the Jewish laborers were appalling. For example, those who



The Jews of Płock, who have been rounded up for a deportation, stand in a long column that stretches as far as the eye can see along a major street in the town, ca. February 1941.
USHMM WS #33477, COURTESY OF GFH

worked for the Gendarmerie and the SS were abused and tortured, one group having swastikas carved into their backs. However, these work tasks at least provided an opportunity to obtain some food.²

From mid-November 1939, hundreds of Jewish refugees began to arrive in Płock following their expulsion from Dobrzyń nad Drwęcą, Rypin, Sierpc, and other towns. These people arrived with few possessions, and their arrival further overstretched the meager resources of the Jewish community in Płock.³

In the summer of 1940, the Judenrat was forced to compile lists of those with tuberculosis and mental or chronic illness. Then, in September 1940, shortly before the establishment of the ghetto, the Gestapo seized 42 Jews from the Old Age Home and sent them to the Działdowo transit camp, where most were killed.

The Germans established the Płock ghetto in September 1940. It was located on Synagogałna Street, Szeroka Street, and part of Bielska Street. The resettlement took some time to complete, as the Jews moved out immediately, but many of the Poles ordered to leave the Jewish quarter took their time, causing Jews to sleep on the streets in the interim. In total, the ghetto held about 10,600 Jews, including around 3,000 refugees. The ghetto was extremely overcrowded, with up to 10 Jews sharing one room. The ghetto was unfenced and not guarded, but Jews could not leave without a special pass. Due to the inhuman conditions and the shortage of medical supplies, diseases soon spread.⁴

Acts of resistance included the smuggling of food into the ghetto, sometimes assisted by local Poles, and continuing educational and cultural activities. There was also an unofficial "aid committee" that provided destitute Jews with food and money. Other examples included the hiding of religious books and Torah scrolls. Those caught by the Nazis attempting to

worship in secret were forced to parade through the streets wearing tefillin and prayer shawls, while the Germans beat them as they passed by.⁵

The Judenrat tried to alleviate conditions in the ghetto. It established a sanitation committee, to improve sanitary conditions, and a public kitchen, to feed the needy. It also set up workers' cooperatives for trades, such as tailors, shoemakers, and barbers, which relieved unemployment.⁶ The Judenrat also temporarily housed children whose parents, 39 men and 120 women, were arrested and imprisoned in January 1941. The Gestapo kept these people in prison until the liquidation of the ghetto, then shot the men and deported the women with the rest of the ghetto residents.

In January 1941, the area of the ghetto was reduced, as the Germans opened a bordello in some of the houses. The Jews were even forced to provide furniture for this establishment. Its opening increased the tension, as drunken Germans sometimes stumbled into the ghetto by mistake, which in turn led to German "reprisals" and the arrest of innocent Jews.

Shortly after the January arrests, the Judenrat was required to present a list to the Germans with the names of active Zionists. In an attempt to spare people, the Judenrat included the names of those who had escaped from the ghetto and of some people who were deceased. However, the ruse was soon discovered, and shortly before the first large deportation Aktion on February 21, 1941, the Gestapo arrested about 25 men and shot them in the countryside outside Łódź.

The first deportation Aktion in the ghetto started on February 20, 1941, when a group of SS men arrived. The Jewish Police were ordered to report to the local Gestapo headquarters, where they were beaten and whipped. At 4:00 A.M., the SS forced their way into the clinic and ordered the patients, mostly elderly and sick Jews, to vacate the building in five minutes. The SS beat them brutally when they did not obey instantly, killing many on the spot. At the same time, the Germans roused the ghetto residents from their sleep, ordering them to assemble on Szeroka Street at dawn. The Germans went from house to house, driving out the Jews with blows from rifle butts, truncheons, and metal bars. The Judenrat was taken hostage to ensure that all the Jews assembled.

At the assembly point, any possessions were seized, and the Jews were forced to stand in rows until noon. During this period, the Germans mercilessly beat them, killing some, while children and the elderly were trampled in the confusion. When it was time to board the trucks, the SS beat them again, and some were shot. The crowding on the trucks was horrible, and some people suffocated. Each truck was guarded by an armed SS man. Approximately 4,000 Jews were taken away to the Działdowo camp during this first deportation, and many corpses were left on Szeroka Street. The remaining ghetto residents, including the members of the Judenrat, were told to return to their houses.

On February 28, 1941, the Judenrat was arrested, and the next day the final liquidation of the ghetto took place. The brutality of the first deportation was repeated, with the residents being forced to wait on Szeroka Street for almost a full



Łódź Jews are loaded onto the back of a truck during a deportation Aktion, ca. February 1941.

USHMM WS #79083, COURTESY OF ŻIH

day without food in the bitter cold. Local Poles tried to alleviate their suffering by sneaking some food to them. As the Jews passed through various towns en route to Działdowo, some Poles threw loaves of bread onto the trucks. However, many Jews did not survive this journey.

Descriptions by Łódź survivors stress in particular their awful experiences in the Działdowo transit camp. When they arrived, the Germans were waiting for them at the gate with whips and whipped them as they ran the gauntlet into the camp. The prisoners slept on straw in barracks that had at one point been partitioned into horse stalls. The Germans would take out men, especially religious ones, and make them perform difficult frog-jumping gymnastics, beating them brutally at any sign of tiredness. Some older people did not survive. There was little to eat, and some Jews refused the food because it was not kosher. Prisoners were taken out for questioning, where they were beaten and deprived of all money and valuables. Most of the Jews were kept in Działdowo for just over a week before being deported to the Generalgouvernement.⁷

From the Działdowo camp, at least six transports carrying around 6,000 Jews left for a number of ghettos in Distrikt Radom. Among the destinations were the ghettos in Chmielnik, Stopnica, Bodzentyn, Wierzbnik, Żarki, and Drzewica. The Jews arrived in these ghettos completely exhausted and dressed only in rags. A few Łódź Jews managed to survive these ghettos and subsequent stints in forced labor camps, including that in Skarżysko Kamienna.

A number of Łódź Jews were active members of resistance movements. Simcha Guterman fell during the Warsaw Uprising in August 1944. Tova Biatus was an active member of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir in the underground movement near Chmielnik; he died in a clash with the Germans. Łódź Jews also were instrumental in the Treblinka and Sobibór uprisings.

SOURCES Published sources on the Łódź ghetto include the following: Sol Greenspan, *Yidn in Plotsk* (New York: A&H, 1960); Yoysef Horn, ed., *Plotsk: Bletlekh geshikhhte fun Idishn*

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lebn in der alter heym (Buenos Aires: Plotsker landsleyt fareyn in Argentine, 1945); Eliyahu Aizenberg, ed., *Plotsk: Toldot kebilab 'atikat-yamin be-Polin* (Tel Aviv: ha-Menorah, 1967); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 358–372; Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w re-jencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984), pp. 61–63; Nicole Lapiere, ed., *Das gerettete Buch von Simcha Guterman* (Munich: Hauser, 1993); and Jan Przedpelski, *Żydzi płocki: Dzieje i martyrologia, 1939–1945* (Płock: Fraza, 1993).

Information on the Płock ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., Ring I/532-41, 797, 883-886, 889, and 903; 210/556; 301/1502 and 5730); BA-L; IPN (SWW 750); LG-Gie (7 Ks 1/74); USHMM (RG-15.079M, reel 40); VHF (e.g., # 397, 5306, and 20367); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Bekanntmachung, Der Oberbürgermeister, Płock, October 30, 1939, reproduced in Przedpelski, *Żydzi płocki*, pp. 84–85.

2. VHF, # 20367, testimony of Frank Dobia; and # 5306, testimony of Arthur Grossman.

3. Ibid., # 397, testimony of Helen Anisman.

4. Ibid., # 20367; # 5306.

5. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, pp. 358–372; and Joseph Kermish, “The Jews of Plotzk under the Nazi Regime,” in Aizenberg, *Plotsk*, pp. 70–74.

6. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 40, Ring I/886.

7. Personal correspondence from survivor Frank Dobia to Shannon Phillips in 2008.

PŁOŃSK

Pre-1939: Płońsk, town and powiat center, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Plönnen, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Płońsk, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Płońsk is located 65 kilometers (40 miles) northwest of Warsaw. In 1939, there were 8,200 Jews living in Płońsk.

The Germans occupied Płońsk on September 5, 1939. Although there was no fighting in the town, about 2,000 Jewish residents fled east to Soviet-occupied territories or to other locations in Poland, particularly Warsaw. There is also a report of a number of elderly Jews from Płońsk being expelled into Soviet-occupied Poland.

Refugees and expellees replaced Płońsk’s former residents in the course of September and October 1939, increasing the number of Jews again to almost 8,000. The newcomers included Jews from Dobrzyń nad Drwęcą, Dobrzyń nad Wisłą, Rypin, Lipno, and Sierpc.¹ In 1941, a new wave of “illegal” refugees arrived (primarily from the Warsaw ghetto).

In October 1939, Płońsk was renamed Plönnen and annexed to the Reich as part of the Regierungsbezirk Zichenau.

The annexation was followed by a massive expulsion of Jews to the Generalgouvernement in 1939–1940; a second relocation took place in February–March 1940.

Persecutions began soon after the Germans arrived. At the start of 1940, Jewish men—including the elderly—were assembled early in the morning outside the local school and forced to perform physical exercises. They were then marched off to do compulsory labor improving roads. The daily exercises continued for several weeks and were accompanied by beatings. A local Jewish man, Henoeh Klajnman (Henryk Klajman), was a drill commander.² At times, the Germans assembled all Jews in the market square to check their residence papers. Those unable to present them were severely beaten by SS troops and their auxiliaries. The Germans used such occasions to search the town’s Jews for valuables, and they shot those who had concealed them.

Following the arrival of many newcomers in Płońsk, the Self-Help Committee for Relief of the Poor was established. Its organizer and president, Abraham Lewi, was able to obtain subsidies from various Jewish aid organizations, including the AJDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee),



A Jewish woman pleads with an SS man during a deportation Aktion in Płońsk, n.d.

USHMM WS #18632, COURTESY OF YIVO

CENTOS (Central Organization for Orphan Care), and TOZ (Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland). Representatives from particular towns distributed donated goods and cash among the expellees. The committee's success earned it a good reputation.³ In addition to welfare services, a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was established on German instructions and charged with maintaining order in the Jewish quarter. It initially consisted of six members, with a refugee known as Lewin as its commander.

In July 1940, the Germans liquidated the committee and created a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to oversee the implementation of German decrees. The committee's chairman, haberdasher A. Jakub (Yakov) Ramek, was nominated as the Judenrat's president. Ramek continued to help Płońsk's Jews, mainly by bribing the Germans as often as possible. He soon earned the title "King of the Jews." Portraits of him were hung on the walls of Jewish offices and hospitals in Płońsk. One survivor described Ramek as honest—although easily influenced by others and ultimately looking out primarily for himself. The other members of the Judenrat included Szloma Bogaty, Jakub Grebman, A. Mundlak, Jakub Kubeł, and the secretary J. Sieradzki (Schiradsky). The Judenrat opened a charity shelter (orphanage) for approximately 40 children between the ages of 2 to 10 that was supervised by a female teacher called Grynberg. The Judenrat also set up a soup kitchen in 1941.⁴

The Judenrat's primary goal was to secure paid employment for the Jews in Płońsk, particularly the deportees and refugees. Tailor and communist Szlomo Fuks was the head of the Employment Office subordinated to the Judenrat. Over 700 men and women were employed by July 1940; however, they were paid only half the minimum wage, while the local government retained the other half. To compensate for these laborers' losses, the Judenrat taxed 500 relatively well-off families. By the end of September 1940, 800 Jews had paying jobs. Jewish labor was assigned to different cleanup projects around the town, as well as working in agriculture, road construction, and cutting peat. The Judenrat provided breakfast for the peat workers.⁵

Its successes aside, Płońsk's Judenrat was also corrupt. Responsible for preparing a daily list of workers for labor assignments, its members took bribes for exemptions and assigned their friends to easy jobs. Comparatively wealthy Jews paid others to perform their labor tasks. Moreover, Płońsk's Judenrat often feasted well at the expense of others. A number of Jewish men who were not exempted were sent to the Nosarzewo labor camp, and some women were sent to Sierpc. Few of these people survived.

By December 1940, the Judenrat estimated that there were 8,000 Jews living in Płońsk.⁶

Available sources differ regarding the date on which the Płońsk ghetto was created. Some sources state that the Germans established the ghetto in September 1940, while others date it to May 1941. Two survivors report that the Germans initially ordered its creation in 1940 but that this was not implemented until May 1941.

The Płońsk ghetto included the following streets: Kozia, Krzywa, Pułtуска, Warszawska, and Wyszogrodzka (comprising about 1 square kilometer, or 247 acres). It was initially open but was later surrounded by a wooden fence and barbed wire. Jews caught smuggling in food were murdered.⁷ Ghetto Commandant Foch frequently visited it accompanied by two assistants, and he always killed at least one Jew during these visits.

The number of Jewish Police was increased to 40 once the ghetto was established. Chanan Ramek, brother of the Judenrat chairman, was Lewin's deputy. Jewish Police guarded the ghetto gate and two jails. Two gallows used for public hangings were set up in the square behind the town synagogue. The council frequently intervened to commute death sentences, as it was able to influence the Gestapo. He also succeeded in eliminating several Jewish collaborators. The Jewish Police brutally abused their power, even killing fellow Jews.⁸

The ghetto was extremely overcrowded, with three or four families often packed into a single room. After a time, newcomers were housed in barns and stables. Catastrophic sanitary and housing conditions resulted in an outbreak of typhus. At its height, approximately 60 Jews were dying daily. Doctor Fenigshtein, who attended the ghetto hospital, died of typhus himself. Chairman Ramek convinced the Germans to bring a German doctor (Dr. Ber) from Warsaw to treat the sick. The epidemic was brought under control only in April 1942.

Another wave of deportations from the region to the Generalgouvernement took place in July and August 1941. At the same time, the Jews of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau were concentrated into a number of ghettos, one of which was in Płońsk. On July 13, 1941, approximately 1,200 nonresident Jews were deported to the Pomiechówek concentration camp, following a check of their identity cards. To assist the deportees, the Judenrat chairman organized the delivery of food to the prisoners in Pomiechówek, who suffered brutal maltreatment there. However, when Ramek discovered that the commander of the Jewish Police in Pomiechówek, Mejlach Hopenblum, was stealing packages addressed to the Płońskers, he had Hopenblum transferred to Płońsk. The Płońsk Jews "popped out his eyes" and "spat in his face" before killing him. Probably due to intervention of the Jewish Councils in Płońsk, Nowy Dwór, and Zakroczym, the Germans agreed to send those Jews still alive in Pomiechówek to the Generalgouvernement.⁹

According to the testimony of two survivors, there was talk of resistance in the ghetto, but without leadership, meaningful contacts on the outside, or trust in the Poles, the efforts were futile. However, other sources mention the Association of Friends of the USSR, a Jewish underground organization in the ghetto that was affiliated with local Polish Communists. The organization was created in the ghetto in 1941 and consisted of over 100 members organized in cells of 5 people. Its leaders included Fuchs, Izraelewicz (alias "Argentyńczyk"), and "Fiszek."

The first bilateral conference of Poles and Jews took place on December 31, 1941, in Młyńsk, 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) outside Płońsk. On June 22, 1942, a conference was organized on the ghetto grounds by Izraelewicz, (Shlomo) Fuchs (the

head of the Employment Office), Feszek Jagoda, “Paul” Przygoda, and others who were elected to the Party Committee. The contact was maintained through the Serawajski Photo Shop, which connected the ghetto with the Aryan side. A few Jews escaped and joined the Communist partisans of the Gwardia Ludowa (People’s Guard, GL) before the ghetto’s liquidation. All fell in battle or were murdered by the Gestapo after capture.¹⁰

The Germans liquidated the Płońsk ghetto between October 28 and December 16, 1942, in a series of transports that deported up to 12,000 Jews. Initially, Chairman Ramek still believed that Jewish youths would be sent to work. The Judenrat agreed to take part in organizing the transports to try to minimize the brutality that would occur if the Germans carried them out on their own. The Judenrat enlisted 2,000 old and sick Jews for the first transport at the end of October and informed them that they were leaving for work. The Jewish Police assembled the selected Jews in the new prayer house. The transport was actually destined for the Auschwitz concentration camp.

On November 18, 1942, the Germans brought to Płońsk approximately 2,000 Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Nowe Miasto. Another large transport of 1,000 Jews left Płońsk on November 30, 1942, arriving at Auschwitz on December 3, 1942. The last transport (probably the fourth) of 2,000 Jews left on December 16, 1942, and included the Judenrat members as well as 340 children from the shelter. The Judenrat’s secretary, Sieradzki, took his life during the ghetto’s liquidation. The Germans had offered to move Ramek to another still existing ghetto, but he refused. All houses in the vacated ghetto were demolished.

After the war, survivors from the Płońsk ghetto assisted in the arrest of former ghetto commandant Foch by American forces in Marburg, Germany. “He was severely beaten, admitting his role in the ghetto, and begging for mercy.



Members of Einsatzkommando 3/V round up a group of Jewish men in Płońsk, 1939.

USHMM WS #18772, COURTESY OF IPN

However, he would not divulge where he had hidden the vast amount of valuables that he had plundered from the Jews.”¹¹

The Żydowski Sąd Społeczny (Jewish Social Court) of the CKŻP (Central Committee of Polish Jews) in Warsaw tried one of the Jewish Police from the ghetto, Henocho Klajnman, who returned to Płońsk after the war. The court found him guilty of brutality before joining the Jewish Police (during organized public drills and while supervising forced labor brigades) and as an official of the Jewish Police (denouncing Jews in hiding to the Germans). The court excluded Klajnman from the Jewish community in June 1948, which was the most severe punishment available to it.¹²

The Jewish Social Court passed Klajnman’s case to the Polish Regional Court in Płock, which found him guilty of brutally murdering Jews in the Płońsk ghetto, as well as in the Auschwitz and Stutthof concentration camps, where he was a Kapo. Klajnman, who never admitted his crimes, was sentenced to death in 1949; the penalty was later commuted to life imprisonment.¹³

SOURCES Much information on the life and destruction of the Płońsk Jews can be found in Janusz Szczepański, *Spółeczność żydowska Mazowsza w XIX–XX wieku* (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora, 2005); Michał Grynbeg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984); and the yizkor book edited by Shlomo Tzemakh et al., *Sefer Plonsk V’Hasviva* (Tel Aviv: Lidor, 1962).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/556, 301/23, 301/273, 301/4508, 301/6744, 302/99, 302/134, 301/2079, 313/49, and 313/57); IPN (SOPł 246-49); USHMM (Acc.1996.A.0223 [CKŻP (AŻIH Sady Społeczne)] and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF; and YVA (O-3/1605).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC); see also AŻIH, 301/6744, testimony of Elja Najman, 1952.

2. AŻIH, 313/57, testimony of Henocho Klajnman, 1948, known also as Chaim, or Henryk Klajnman. In IPN, SOPł 246-49, as Henryk Klajnman, or Chaim, or Henocho, or “Chamek-Ganew,” or “Chamek-Kapo.”

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC)—A.J. (Yakov) Ramek was appointed the chairman of the committee in June 1940; Szczepański, *Spółeczność*, p. 422.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. AŻIH, 301/4508, testimony of Jan Ptasiński, n.d.

8. Ibid., 313/57; IPN, SOPł 246-49 (Henryk Klajnman).

9. AŻIH, 301/23, testimony of Nachman Józef Kazimierski, 1944.

10. Ibid., 301/4508.

11. David Kalmanovski, in Tzemakh et al., *Sefer Plonsk*, p. 445; see also Itzhak Pshegoda, *Sefer Plonsk*, pp. 462–464.

12. AŻIH, 313/57.

13. IPN, SOPł 246-49.

SIERPC

Pre-1939: Sierpc (Yiddish: Sberpts), town and powiat center, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sichelberg, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Sierpc, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sierpc is located 117 kilometers (73 miles) northwest of Warsaw. In 1939, the Jewish population of Sierpc was 3,077 (out of a total population of 10,951).

By the second day of the German invasion (September 2, 1939), refugees from neighboring towns and villages were pouring into Sierpc. The bombing of the town, on September 4, left widespread destruction, including damage to the local hospital. The young people of Sierpc, including Jewish youths, were ordered to head eastward towards Drobin and Warsaw ahead of the advancing German army, which occupied the town on September 8. The town officials also fled, and a committee of local leaders, Jewish and Polish, took charge. Due to a shortage of cash following a run on the banks, the committee issued scrip to allow people to continue trading. The oppression of the Jews began with the start of the occupation, as German soldiers joined by local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and Poles engaged in a spree of looting. A 4:00 P.M. curfew was imposed on the Jews. Jewish men were grabbed on the streets or from their homes for forced labor—young and old, strong and weak, healthy and sick—more to humiliate them than to have them do anything useful. On the day of Yom Kippur, the army pulled the worshipers from the synagogue and forced them to sweep the streets. The soldiers dragged them through town and cut off their beards.

On September 28, 1939, 40 youths between the ages of 16 and 20 were arrested, loaded on trucks, and driven to an unknown destination. It was later learned that they were taken to an area near the new German-Soviet border, where they managed to slip across the lines. Most of them survived the war. At 10:00 P.M. on the evening of September 29, the Gestapo set fire to the synagogue. The Jews were ordered to hurry from their houses to put out the flames but were then prevented from doing so. A young boy who entered the building to save the Torah scrolls was shot. The Germans promptly accused him of starting the fire and, on this pretext, fined the community 50,000 złoty.

An eight-point decree was published, imposing strict rules on the community. The Jews were ordered to: (1) stay off the sidewalks; (2) doff their hats to any German; (3) wear a yellow patch marked “Jude”; (4) provide an inventory of all their valuables; (5) not use electricity in their homes; (6) pay the 50,000 złoty fine; (7) make a personal “contribution” of 200 to 1,000 złoty per family; and (8) provide 80 men each day for forced labor. Prominent members of the community were arrested, interrogated, beaten, and held hostage until the “contributions” were paid. Members of the Volksdeutsche auxiliary police were sent door to door to rob people of their clothes, valuables, and furniture, which were needed for German officials. News of the spoliation of Jews in the nearby towns of

Lipno and Drobin deepened the desperation of the Jews in Sierpc.

At dawn on November 8, 1939, SS troops and Volksdeutsche police awakened the Jews of Sierpc and ordered them out of their homes. About 3,000 Jews, mostly elderly, women, and children, were assembled in the old marketplace. They were lined up in rows of 5 and marched off to the train station, with the parade band of the local fire brigade playing music and leading the procession. Some Jews were still in their pajamas, having had no time to dress. Penniless and exposed to the cold, they were “jammed like sardines” into the rail cars for a journey to the unknown. Late in the day, the train stopped at a small station about 7 kilometers (over 4.4 miles) from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, northwest of Warsaw. They were put off the train and told to start walking. Late that night, they arrived in Nowy Dwór. Local Jews took in a few, but most spent the night on the cold streets. The police marched about 1,800 Sierpc refugees from Nowy Dwór to Warsaw, where their fate was linked to that of the Warsaw ghetto.¹

Sierpc belonged to the Regierungsbezirk (administrative district) of Zichenau, which was created on October 26, 1939, incorporated into Provinz Ostpreussen and annexed to the Third Reich. The Jews expelled from Sierpc were forced into territory outside this district, that is, within the boundaries of the Generalgouvernement.

About 400 Jews remained in Sierpc, individuals and families considered to have essential skills. Despite dire warnings, a few refugees sneaked back into the town and received permission to stay, increasing the number to 500. The returnees found their houses locked and sealed, apparently reserved for use by future occupants. In March or April 1940, the Jews remaining in Sierpc were confined to a separate ghetto under the eye of the German Police. The ghetto, which was located on Browarna, Górna, and Kiliński Streets, remained open and unfenced, but the Jews were largely isolated and forbidden to leave the ghetto. Only 200 people received special permission to leave to go to their places of employment outside the ghetto. A Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Mendel Lyss and Yaakov Pokatsch, was appointed to oversee the work assignments and make sure that no other Jews came into town. There were no Jewish Police. The old Bet Midrash was converted into a prison where both Jews and Poles were held by the German authorities. Jews maintained some contact with the Polish population, providing services in exchange for food. The Jews of Sierpc did not suffer from hunger and even sent food packages to their starving relatives in the Warsaw ghetto.²

The ghetto lasted until January 6, 1942, when the Jews were awakened at 5:00 A.M., assembled in the marketplace, robbed of most of their meager possessions, loaded onto trucks, and taken to Strzegowo, a ghetto in Kreis Mielau. A number of Jews were killed during the course of the deportation Aktion. Afterwards, the Germans looted the gravestones and destroyed the Jewish cemetery. The fate of the Jews of Sierpc was the same as that of the Jews in the ghettos to which they were sent. Most died of starvation or disease; others were murdered in death camps, such as Treblinka (via the Warsaw ghetto) and Auschwitz.

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by E. Talmi (Włoka), *Kebilat Sierpc: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Sierpc in Israel and Abroad, 1959), contains a number of personal accounts about the Jewish community of the town, mainly in Yiddish but also some in Hebrew. In addition, there are two earlier yizkor books published in Yiddish: A. Meirantz and H. Nemlich, eds., *Khurbn Sierpc: 1939–45; zikbroynes fun di ibergeblibene landslayt vos gefinen zikh in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland* (Munich: Committee of the Former Residents of Sierpc in the American Zone in Germany, 1947); and *Zamlbukh fun Sberptser shayres bakburbn, 1939–1945* (U.S. Zone, Munich, Germany: Sierpcer Jewish Committee, 1948). There is also a personal memoir by survivor David Sochaczewski: *My Life Story: A Personal Account of the Holocaust* (self-published, 1990).

A brief history of the ghetto in Sierpc can be found in Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej, 1939–1942* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Nauk., 1984), pp. 65–68. There also is an article on the history of the Jewish community in Sierpc and its destruction in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 437–441. The ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979), p. 452.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Sierpc can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I, 902, 1038); IPN (Gestapo Ziechenau; Ankieta Sadow Grodzkich, sygn. 62, k. 235); ITS (Q 53/K 15); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 19); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Sochaczewski, *My Life Story*, pp. 47–53.
2. AŻIH, Ring I, 902, 1038.

STRZEGOWO

Pre-1939: Strzegowo, village, Mława powiat, Warszaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Striegenau, Kreis Mielau, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Strzegowo, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Strzegowo is located 90 kilometers (56 miles) northwest of Warsaw. The 1921 census recorded 591 Jews living in the village.

On Sunday, September 3, 1939, the village sustained heavy damage from a German bombing raid. Many houses were destroyed, and some of the inhabitants (Poles and Jews alike) sought refuge in the nearby town of Płońsk. The Wehrmacht entered Strzegowo on September 4, 1939. During the first weeks of occupation, the Germans implemented a policy of brutal repression against the local Jews. The Jews were removed from positions of authority, and the new administration seized their real estate and material goods. The Germans took particular pleasure in forcing older, orthodox Jews to work under humiliating conditions and during the Sabbath. In late 1939, local ethnic Germans orchestrated and perpetrated pogroms, during which they abducted several people and shot them in the nearby forests.¹ In January 1940, a group

of prominent community members (Baruch Rebek, Yekhiel Nathan Burstein, David Tik, Israel Rosen, Moshe Michel Sapersztejn, Ben-Zion Bogen, and Rabbi Jacob Solomon Symytitsky) met with the German military authorities in an attempt to remove some of the most draconian restrictions.² During the summer of 1940, representatives of the Jewish community established contact with the Jewish communities in Mława and Łódź.

In the fall of 1941, the German authorities decided to liquidate the smaller Jewish communities and to concentrate their inhabitants in a few larger ghettos. The Strzegowo Jews were slated for removal to the desperately overcrowded and starving Warsaw ghetto. Faced with this threat, the representatives of the community tried to convince the local German military and civilian authorities to establish a ghetto in Strzegowo. With the aid of massive bribes, the Germans agreed to establish a “Jewish quarter” in Strzegowo. The German medical authorities, also bribed by the representatives of the community, confirmed an outbreak of typhus, which served to derail the planned resettlement of Strzegowo’s Jews. The ghetto, which was isolated from the rest of the village by a wooden fence, was finally created on November 1, 1941. The selection of Strzegowo was unusual because the village was 24 kilometers (15 miles) from the nearest railway line. A key prerequisite for the location of a ghetto was often close proximity to a railroad station. On January 6, 1942, the Jews from Biežuń, Raciąż, Sierpc, and other smaller nearby hamlets were resettled to Strzegowo, increasing the population of the ghetto to about 2,000 to 2,100 people.

The local Judenrat included people involved in the previous negotiations with the Germans (Ben-Zion Bogen, Baruch Rebek, Judel Stawicki, Moshe Michel Sapersztejn, and Judel Szapiro), as well as several representatives of those Jews recently resettled to Strzegowo from other places. Following a German request, the Judenrat created a Jewish police force recruited mostly from among the Jews from Sierpc.

The living conditions in the ghetto deteriorated very rapidly. The entire Jewish population had to seek shelter in a very small area, with 10 to 17 people to every available room. The drastic food shortage was only offset to a small extent by illegal exchanges with the surrounding Polish population. There was only one 20-man-strong detail that received wages of 1 Reichsmark (RM) each per day. The remaining Jewish workers were forced to perform unpaid labor outside the ghetto. Since leaving the ghetto offered a chance to purchase food, the places in work columns were highly coveted and rotated on a daily basis.

Despite the appalling living conditions and daily threats, Strzegowo was, for some time, perceived as a safe haven for the members of the more threatened Jewish communities. During the spring of 1942, the ghetto received at least 200 refugees from recently liquidated ghettos in western and northern Poland.³ Ewa Stuczynska, living on false papers in Strzegowo, brought in at least one secret transport of Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Gąbin. She was later betrayed and arrested while leading a second transport of Jewish refugees. Some of the arrested Jews (Selig and Hinda Rudnik; Moses,

Chaja, and Natek Wand; and Frajda Zolna) were sentenced to death and shot in Strzegowo. Ewa Stuczynska, who convinced the Gestapo of her alleged Russian ethnic origin, survived the war in the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁴

In the spring of 1942, the Nazis intensified their terror against the Jews. The local policemen, recruited from among the ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), perpetrated numerous crimes, torturing and shooting people in the streets. Berendt, Policat, and Heft were among the most feared policemen.

Rebek, the head of the Judenrat, fled the Strzegowo ghetto in the spring of 1942. Intercepted and arrested in Płońsk on July 14, 1942, he was held in prison awaiting transfer to Auschwitz. Shortly after his arrest, Rebek managed to flee the ghetto prison and left Płońsk. The Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo (officers Hartmann and Apitz) took an interest in Rebek's escape and berated the local police for their sloppy work. To force the fugitive to surrender to the authorities, the Strzegowo police arrested Rebek's family. The former head of the Judenrat outlived most other Strzegowo Jews, but not by much. On December 12, 1942, Patzke, the chief of the Gendarmerie in Strzegowo, received "a confidential report" concerning Jews hiding in the area. The report denounced a Polish farmer, Franz Sprada, from Gizyn, Kreis Mielau, for having offered sanctuary to Jews. During a police search, two Jews were found and shot dead "while trying to escape." The victims were later identified as Rebek and his 13-year-old son Majer.⁵

In the meantime, the situation in the ghetto had worsened daily. On August 6, 1942, the Nazis arrested, tried, and sentenced to death by hanging a group of 20 Jews selected randomly. On September 2, after four weeks of incarceration, the victims were brought to a public square and hanged in the presence of their families and German spectators. The bodies of the victims were exhumed after the war, in January 1948. The end of the Strzegowo Jewish community came not long after this large public execution. The ghetto was liquidated in November 1942. The first transport to Mława and from there to the Treblinka extermination camp left on November 2, 1942. On November 24, 1942, the remaining Jews were brought on horse carts to Mława before being sent to Auschwitz by rail. According to witnesses, most of the people from this transport were killed immediately in the gas chambers.⁶

SS-Sturmbannführer Hartmut Pulmer, the notorious chief of the Płock-Ciechanów Gestapo (Strzegowo came under his authority), was tried in 1976 but never sentenced owing to his "poor health." In 1976, the court in Giessen (Germany) sentenced four other Gestapo officials from the same Gestapo office to prison terms ranging from four to six years. Hans Doerhage was sentenced to four years and three months; Hermann Schaper, six years; Franz Hartmann, four years and three months; and Erich Bartels, six years. Several other officials (Friedrich Schulz, Rudolf Renner, Ernest Baumann, Otto Roehr, Ernest Schardt) were excluded from trial or acquitted in the absence "of conclusive evidence of their guilt." Little is known about Heitmann, Schrimm, Apitz, Friedrich, Schrampf, Dallüge, Rossman, or Grimm, to name but a few of those who signed the Gestapo interrogation forms and

were responsible for killings in the Strzegowo ghetto. Policat, the notorious Strzegowo policeman, was sentenced to life in prison by the court in Arnsberg in 1971.

SOURCES The yizkor book for Strzegowo, edited by Feigl Bisberg-Youkelson and Rubin Youkelson, *The Life and Death of a Polish Shtetl* (Stshegove yizker-bukh) (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), contains several relevant testimonies for the history of the ghetto; there is also a brief article in Abraham Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 442–445.

AŻIH also holds testimonies relating to Strzegowo and the surrounding area. In IPN there are some captured records of the Gestapo office in Zichenau. The German trial records can be found in the relevant local archives (e.g., LG-Gies, 7 Ks 1/74).

Jan Grabowski

NOTES

1. Testimony of Fishl Meirantz, in Bisberg-Youkelson and Youkelson, *The Life and Death of a Polish Shtetl*, p. 82.
2. Ben-Zion Bogen, in *ibid.*, pp. 73–74.
3. AŻIH, 301/310, testimony of Feliks Kisielewski, and 301/303–4, testimonies of Łucja Stuczynska.
4. IPN, collection Gestapo-Zichenau (see also USHMM, RG-15.039M), file 6123.
5. *Ibid.*, files 5399, 10314.
6. AŻIH, Relacje, Collection 301/303–4, testimonies of Łucja Stuczynska; and Ben-Zion Bogen, in Bisberg-Youkelson and Youkelson, *The Life and Death of a Polish Shtetl*, p. 80.

WYSZOGRÓD

Pre-1939: Wyszogród (Yiddish: Vishogrod), town, Płock powiat, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Hohenburg, Kreis Schröttersburg, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Provinz Ostpreussen, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: Wyszogród, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Wyszogród is located on the right bank of the Vistula River, 61 kilometers (38 miles) west–northwest of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II in 1939, there were about 2,700 Jews living in Wyszogród.

The Germans had occupied the town by September 9, 1939, following days of heavy bombardment, which had caused most of the town's inhabitants to flee. Starting the next day, those Jews who had remained in Wyszogród were forced to work at rubble clearance and construction. This exhausting work caused many Jews to flee to Soviet-occupied eastern Poland. Most of the town's residents returned to Wyszogród from Warsaw after the fall of the capital on September 28.

In October 1939, Wyszogród was renamed Hohenburg and annexed to the Reich as part of Regierungsbezirk Zichenau in Provinz Ostpreussen.¹ An ethnic German was appointed mayor.

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was set up soon after the Germans established themselves in Wyszogród. Its responsibilities included the organization of forced labor, the

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communication of new laws to the community, and the provision of social relief. The following were appointed as its members: Josef Diamant (head), Meir Garfinkel, Avraham Israelovitch, Hanoch Cohen, Joseph Lichtenstein, and Meir Shochet. Along with the Judenrat, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was assigned the task of keeping order within the community.²

At the beginning of November 1939, a detachment of the Gestapo arrived to loot and seize from Jewish houses, businesses, and shops anything of value or interest. During the search for jewelry and money, women were forced to undress. At this time, the community had to assign from 40 to 50 men daily to forced labor. Those who were assigned but did not want to work could pay another person to take their place.³ In December, Jews were made to remove their synagogue's furnishings and surrender them to the Germans for firewood. In the first half of 1940, the synagogue, Bet Midrash, and some 50 Jewish houses were razed.

Deprived of its income from business activity, the Jewish community quickly became impoverished. In May 1940, the mayor of Wyszogród reported to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw that out of 2,427 Jews in the town, 2,300 were in need of social support. The AJDC transferred some cash, clothing, and medicine. There is little information regarding the number of refugees and deportees that came to Wyszogród; however, there is one report of some deportees arriving from nearby Sierpc.⁴

In August 1940, the Judenrat was requested to submit a list of men to be sent to the recently opened labor camp in Bielsk, where about 120 Jews each from Wyszogród, Bodzanów, and Drobin were to work for a period of eight weeks. At first only 40 to 50 male Jews from Wyszogród were sent to Bielsk, but soon 20 more were required to replace those who fell sick. After the Judenrat encountered increasing difficulties preparing successive lists, some of the Judenrat members, including its head Josef Diamant, were deported to the camp as a punishment, along with more of Wyszogród's Jews. Yitzhak Bohla subsequently led the reconstituted Judenrat. By the summer of 1941, the only Jews left in the camp were from Wyszogród.

On March 6, 1941, the Jews in Wyszogród were suddenly ordered to report to the market square within 10 minutes. Accompanied by beatings, all were chased out of their houses. The SS selected about 700 Jews, loaded them on trucks, and drove them to the transit camp in Działdowo. One week later on March 12, the group was deported by train to Kielce and from there onward to Nowa Słupia in Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement, about 196 kilometers (122 miles) south of Wyszogród.⁵ Deportees from Płock and Vienna had already overcrowded Nowa Słupia. Most of Wyszogród's Jews were placed en masse in the synagogue. Some were housed with local Jewish families in the town. Famine and typhus claimed many victims. In September or October 1942, along with the other Jews in Nowa Słupia, the Jews of Wyszogród were sent first to Bodzentyn and then to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Immediately following the deportation Aktion from Wyszogród on March 6, 1941, the Germans established an open ghetto in the Jewish neighborhood, which was reduced in size. The ghetto included the following streets: Kościelna, Płocka, Krótka, Ogrodowa, and Stary Rynek. Over 1,800 Jews were forced to live within its confines, with about 10 people in each room.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the Jews were removed from the ghetto and held captive for one day and the following night. During this time, the local non-Jewish inhabitants were permitted to plunder any remaining valuable items from the ghetto. Shortly after this, a doctor came from Płock to supervise the mass delousing of the inhabitants of the ghetto. That summer, about 70 Jews worked to strengthen the Vistula's banks; others worked in road construction and agriculture.

About 400 of those who were deported from Wyszogród to Nowa Słupia attempted to return to their hometown soon after their resettlement. Many of these people were returned again to the Generalgouvernement once discovered and sent on to the Warsaw ghetto by way of the Vistula River. Others were taken outside the town, forced to dig graves, and then shot.⁶

On August 9–10, 1941, 120 Jews capable of work were rounded up and sent to the labor camp in Bielsk. At this time, the Germans also enclosed the ghetto in Wyszogród by surrounding it with barbed wire and announced that henceforth any Jew caught outside the ghetto would be shot. Jews continued to pray together in *minyans* inside the ghetto and improvised celebrations of the High Holidays despite the loss of the synagogue, sensing that this might be the last time they would celebrate together as a community.

On November 27, 1941, the remaining Jews were brought back to Wyszogród from Bielsk. The Germans liquidated the Wyszogród ghetto on November 29, 1941. On that day, 600 Jews were sent almost 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) east to Czerwińsk (Czerwińsk nad Wisłą) and 1,200 to the ghetto in Nowy Dwór (Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki), about 63 kilometers (39 miles) east. The latter was chosen by the Germans as a site of concentration for the region's Jews before their deportation to death camps. Several hundred Jews from Wyszogród died there of typhus. On October 28, 1942, about 2,600 Jews from Czerwińsk were transferred to Nowy Dwór. Deportations of the inhabitants of the Nowy Dwór ghetto to the Auschwitz concentration camp began three weeks later on November 20, 1942. The third and final transport departed from Nowy Dwór on December 12, 1942.⁷

An estimated 250 Jews from Wyszogród survived the war.

SOURCES Much information on the life and destruction of Wyszogród's Jews can be found in the yizkor book edited by Hayim Rabin, *Vishogrod: Sefer zikaron li-kedoshe Vishogrod shenispu be-sho'at ha-Natsim bi-sbenat 1939–1945* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Vishogrod be-Yisrael, 1971); and in a chapter of *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 4, Warsaw and Its Region*, edited by Abraham Wein (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (210/736, 301/3313); BA-L (ZStL/II 117 AR 1119/68, vol. 1); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/736; and RG-15.019M); VHF (e.g., # 11851, 18668, 35049, 35353, and 49891); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 49891–3, testimony of Mark Wilson, 1997; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, p. 197; VHF, # 35049–

40, testimony of Wolf Schladow, 1997; and # 18668–3, testimony of Louis Baum, 1996.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/736.

3. AŽIH, 301/3313, testimony of Ide-Hersz Puterman, 1948.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/736.

5. VHF, # 11851–2, testimony of Marion Lewin, 1996.

6. Ibid.

7. AŽIH, 301/3313; and BA-L, ZStL, II 117 AR 1119/68, vol. 1, p. 87.



WARTHEGAU REGION



A postcard from Łódź with signs that read, "Residential district of Jews, entry forbidden" (right) and "Closed for pedestrians," (center) ca. 1940–1941.

USHMM WS #07065, COURTESY OF ANTONI MARIANOWICZ

WARTHEGAU REGION (REICHSGAU WARTHELAND)

Pre-1939: parts of the Łódź, Poznań, and Warsaw województwa; 1939–1945: Regierungsbezirke Posen, Hohensalza, and Litzmannstadt (1939–1941, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch), Reichsgau Wartheland, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: parts of kujawsko-pomierskie, łódzkie, wielkopolskie, and mazowieckie województwa

On October 26, 1939, almost two months after the German invasion of Poland, the German authorities established Reichsgau Posen, renaming it Reichsgau Wartheland in January 1940. Amalgamating the Regierungsbezirke of Posen (Poznań), Hohensalza (Inowrocław), and, from November 9, 1939, Kalisch (from 1941, Litzmannstadt [Łódź]), this Gau joined Ost-Oberschlesien, Danzig-Westpreussen, and Regierungsbezirk Zichenau as a newly incorporated Reich territory annexed from Poland. The Reichsstatthalter (governor) and Gauleiter of Wartheland, Arthur Greiser, was formerly the deputy Gauleiter of the Free City of Danzig. A dedicated Nazi, he spearheaded the effort to Germanize the Wartheland, pressing for the immediate removal of Jews and Poles soon after his appointment in the effort to make the Wartheland the “model Gau” (*Mustergau*) in the German East. In 1940, his efforts resulted in multiple approaches to Germanizing the Gau, namely, the admission of many thousands of “ethnic Germans” (*Völkisch-deutsche*) from Eastern Europe, the deportation of Poles and Jews to the Generalgouvernement, and the ghettoization and ultimately the annihilation of Jews. While the deportation of Poles and Jews proved largely unsuccessful, due to strenuous objections by Hans Frank in charge of the Generalgouvernement, Greiser’s anti-Jewish measures contributed to the radicalization of Nazi policy leading up to the “Final Solution.”



Portrait of Arthur Greiser, Gauleiter and governor of the Reichsgau Wartheland, taken when he was deputy Gauleiter of Danzig under Albert Forster, 1930s.

USHMM WS #20379, COURTESY OF NARA

Although the Wartheland is best remembered for the Łódź ghetto, there were in total some 57 ghettos established in the territory. Wartheland was a key laboratory for this aspect of the Nazi regime’s evolving and radicalizing anti-Jewish policy, because it was the site of some of the first ghettos established, and the ghettos’ history in part reflects national and local changes in antisemitic policies, most notably the opportunity (or lack thereof) for deportation to the Generalgouvernement or to Madagascar. Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt held the most ghettos (35, including Łódź), while the remaining 22 were in Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza. The German authorities did not establish any ghettos in Regierungsbezirk Posen.

By county (Kreis), running north to south, the German authorities established the following ghettos. In Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, there were four ghettos in Kreis Hermannsbad (Ciechocinek): Ciechocinek, Piotrków Kujawski, Radziejów, and Służewo; four in Kreis Konin: Grodziec, Konin, Rzgów, and Zagórów; three in Kreis Kutno: Krośnice, Kutno, and Żychlin; three in Kreis Leslau (Włocławek): Brześć Kujawski, Przedecz, and Włocławek; three in Kreis Walderode (Gostynin): Gąbin, Gostynin, and Sanniki; and five in Kreis Wartbrücken (Koło): Bugaj (and Nowiny Brdowskie), Dąbie, Izbica Kujawska, Koło, and Sompolno. In Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt, there were three ghettos in Kreis Kalisch (Kalisz): Chocz, Kalisz, Koźminek, and six in Kreis Lask: Betchatów, Łask, Lutomiersk, Pabianice, Widawa, and Zelów; five in Kreis Lentschütz (Łęczyca): Grabów, Łęczyca, Ozorków, Piątek, and Poddębice; four in Kreis Litzmannstadt: Brzeziny, Łódź, Stryków and Zgierz; five in Kreis Schieratz (Sieradz): Sieradz, Szadek, Warta, Zduńska Wola, and Złoczew; six in Kreis Turek: Dobra, Kowale Pańskie, Tuliszków, Turek, Uniejów, and Władysławów; and six in Kreis Welungen (Wieluń): Lututów, Osjaków, Pajęczno, Praszka, Wieluń, and Wieruszów. In Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, there were no ghettos in the northwestern counties of Altburgund, Dietfurt, Eichenbrück, Gnesen, and Mogilno. In Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt, ghettos were not established in the southwestern counties of Ostrowo and Kempen. The regional pattern thus reflected existing Jewish settlement patterns and the German authorities’ attempt to drive the remaining Jewish communities as close to the borders of the Generalgouvernement as possible. Six sites listed in some secondary sources as ghettos but whose existence have not been confirmed in the primary sources were Aleksandrów Łódzki, Kłodawa, Kobylnica, Osięciny, Sulmierzyce, and Zwierzchów.

As the example of Kłodawa demonstrates, although ghettos were used to concentrate Jews from surrounding villages, as well as refugees from further away, in a few towns Jews continued to live without formal concentration in a ghetto right up to the final liquidation Aktions in the first half of 1942. In Kreis Hermannsbach, the German authorities were anxious to deny the official existence of “ghettos” even in those towns, such as Radziejów, where Jews were resettled into “residential districts” (open ghettos) exclusively for Jews. In such cases, the evidence of Jewish survivors also has been used to assist in determining whether open ghettos, nevertheless, were established.

In 1939, the Wartheland’s Jewish population was 435,000, a number, historian Michael Alberti notes, that exceeded Germany’s total Jewish population in 1933. As a result of pre-war Jewish settlement, especially in the city of Łódź, the vast majority of the Jewish population lived in the eastern portion of the Gau, especially in the cities of Łódź and Kalisz. Anti-Jewish measures followed with the onset of occupation. Immediately following the German advance, Einsatzgruppen tasked with murdering Polish intelligentsia and resisters shot leading Jews in the region, often on the spurious claim of their fomenting resistance, and sometimes publicly exhibited the bodies in triumph. The Einsatzgruppen murdered at least 10,000 Poles and Jews in the Wartheland, but the specific number of Jewish victims is not known.

At the Gau level, the German authorities obligated all Jews to wear a yellow star in December 1939, but this aspect of persecution followed piecemeal local initiatives. The German authorities in Łódź forced Jews to wear white armbands as early as September 10, 1939—nine days after the invasion—while Leslau imposed the wearing of yellow triangles on October 25, and Kalisch similarly ordered the wearing of yellow armbands in November 1939.

An important difference between the implementation of the 1935 Nuremberg Racial Laws in the Wartheland as opposed to the Old Reich was that Jews born in mixed marriages, as well as Jews’ “Aryan” spouses, were treated as full Jews in the Wartheland and thus assigned to ghettos and Jewish forced labor camps. This reinterpretation followed Greiser’s initiative in October 1940.

From late 1939 through the spring of 1940, Greiser, with the support of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and Chief of the Security Police and SD (CSSD) Reinhard Heydrich, pressed for the removal of Jews and Poles from “his” Gau, which resulted in two “short-term plans” (*Nahpläne*). In the Wartheland, the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) for Posen, later Wartheland, SS-Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Koppe, oversaw the plans’ implementation, undertaken in tandem with the simultaneous resettlement of Volhynian and Baltic Volksdeutsche in the region. The first Nahplan, enacted in December 1939, evacuated among others Regierungsbezirk Posen’s small Jewish population—hence the absence of ghettos in the Wartheland’s westernmost Regierungsbezirk. Overall the first short-term plan involved 80,000 Poles and Jews. Before deportation, the resettled Jews were confined

in transit camps (*Durchgangslager*) under the supervision of the ethnic German Selbstschutz, who stripped them of their possessions. The much more ambitious second short-term plan called for the removal of 220,000 additional Poles and Jews, which had resulted by mid-March 1940 in the deportation of just over 2,000 Jews, mainly from Łódź. Apart from Generalgouverneur Frank’s objections, the need for rail transport to execute the invasion of France played a role in further delaying, and ultimately suspending, the second short-term plan, which fell well short (nearly two thirds) of its target of 300,000 deportees.

The forestalling of the second short-term plan stimulated the German authorities’ improvised ghettoization of Jewish communities in the Wartheland. The earliest ghetto appeared in October 1939 at Piotrków Kujawski, and plans were already afoot, in part on the initiative of Litzmannstadt Regierungspräsident Friedrich Uebelhoer, for the ghettoization of Łódź in the winter of 1940. In February 1940, the German authorities established ghettos in Koźminek, Łask, Pabianice, and Żłoczew, with a cluster of ghettos, most famously the enclosed ghetto at Łódź, the first major ghetto in occupied Poland, formed in April 1940. In the summer of 1940, 9 ghettos were established in the Wartheland and an additional 10 in the fall of 1940. A few ghettos, including Gostynin, were formed in 1941 and 1, Grabów, perhaps as late as early 1942. Owing to material shortages, among other reasons, many of these ghettos (at least 25) were so-called Jewish residential districts, or open ghettos. Notable in the Wartheland were 5 Kreis-level “village” ghettos (*Dorfghettos*). Located in Konin and Warthbrücken in Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, and in Turek in Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt, the Dorfghettos were Jewish communities removed from smaller towns to facilitate working on farms. This experiment in forced agricultural labor proved to be short-lived, as the inmates were among the Wartheland’s first mass-murder victims, respectively, in the Kazimierz Biskupi Forest and the Chełmno nad Nerem (Kulmhof) killing center. The fact that the Dorfghettos appeared in three separate Kreise in two Regierungsbezirke, however, shows that the German authorities repeated the experiment in more than one locality.

Information on the precise reasons for setting up specific ghettos is sparse, but beyond the overall intent to concentrate the Jews in preparation for their intended deportation, Alberti has identified several concerns that influenced the authorities. In Piątek, Żychlin, and Pabianice, fears about the spread of disease spurred the German authorities to establish ghettos. In some places, such as the county towns of Turek and Sieradz, the need to house German administrators—or possibly make space for ethnic German settlers—played a role. The ghetto in Koźminek was set up in early 1940, as the authorities in Łódź refused to take the Jews concentrated for deportation from Kreis Kalisch. Subsequently some open ghettos were enclosed, again due to the authorities’ medical concerns, to attempt to suppress black market activities, and for other security-related reasons.

Resettlement into the ghettos generally meant the abandonment of much property. For example, in Pabianice, the Jews could bring in with them only what they could carry themselves. The Jews of Konin, who were resettled without warning to three village ghettos in the Kreis, were collected by German Gendarmes who allowed the Jews to take with them only a small bundle.¹ In Łódź, the Jews were given several weeks to complete the transfer but could bring in only one suitcase and a bed; about 200 Jews were shot dead during the resettlement Aktion in the city.

Living conditions varied quite considerably in the ghettos and depended on the available space per person and access to food and gainful employment, which were influenced in turn by whether the ghettos were open or closed and the strictness of its enforcement. Conditions also deteriorated over time, as reserves were used up, charitable assistance from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) was cut off, and able-bodied Jews were sent away, leaving dependents without breadwinners. By 1942, draconian punishments were meted out for leaving the ghettos without permission or trading on the black market.

Among the worst living conditions were those in the Kutno ghetto, where more than 6,000 Jews were crammed into a dilapidated and unheated factory complex surrounded by a wall and barbed wire. Following an outbreak of typhus, from November 1940 it was more or less completely isolated from the town. When the Jews resisted in February 1941 to protest corruption in the Judenrat, German controls became even tighter.²

Some insights into living conditions for the Jews of the region during 1940 were provided by the records of the AJDC; however, this correspondence dried up by the end of that year, and as a result, only isolated reports mentioned the ghettos. In Szadek, for example, the head of the self-help committee appealed for assistance, as all contacts with the surrounding villages were cut off from the ghetto, drying up the sources from which the Jews had earned their income and obtained food. The Judenrat had opened a soup kitchen, but it needed financial aid to keep it running.³ Apart from the Łódź ghetto, where available documentation is massive, records on the activities of the Jewish Councils are sparse, although a detailed report on the structure and the activities of the Judenrat in Pabianice during 1940 has survived, again owing to the AJDC.⁴

Forced labor was imposed on the Jews from the first days of the occupation, and for the first 12 months, much of this remained unpaid. From October 1, 1940, the German authorities issued instructions for Jewish forced laborers to be paid a minimal amount, but onerous taxes were deducted from even these small sums, and sometimes remuneration was in the form of food, often administered via the Jewish Councils. Some German companies paid Jewish workers late or not at all, but Jews were still keen to go to work as they believed their jobs could provide exemption from deportation. Jewish Councils, which administered recruitment for forced labor, in some places permitted those with financial means to pay for substitutes, and this money was used to pay those who did work.

In Ozorków, for example, the Jews in the ghetto, including children as young as 10, were employed cleaning streets, working on fortifications, and producing uniforms for the Wehrmacht. Work outside the ghetto provided an opportunity to obtain a little extra food by bartering or scavenging, but most work details were closely guarded, allowing little or no contact with local non-Jews.⁵ Other common forced labor tasks included clearing snow from the streets in winter, demolition and construction work in the towns, irrigation projects, and some agricultural labor. In Żychlin, Amtskommissar Karl Hempel requisitioned 400 Jews for the construction of his villa. In the course of their work he tortured the Jews sadistically, murdering a number of them.⁶ Bartering and black market activities were common in almost all ghettos due to the extreme shortages of almost everything. German official correspondence noted that not only Poles but also some German soldiers were trading with Jews on the black market.⁷

In 1941 and 1942, the German authorities conducted extensive roundups of able-bodied Jews for transfer to at least 69 forced labor camps in the Wartheland (and others elsewhere), working on road construction and other tasks, mainly in the area around Poznań.⁸ The Jewish Councils and the Jewish Police were sometimes required to assist during these roundups, and as news spread of the terrible conditions in many of the camps, Jews went into hiding to avoid being deported. Families retained contact with some of the deportees initially, with extra food and clothing being sent from some ghettos, but by 1942, most of these links had been broken irrevocably. The survival rate was not high among those sent to the camps, and many of those who got through their first deployments were subsequently sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp and entered the concentration camp system. Nevertheless, of the few survivors from the ghettos of the region other than Łódź, these younger forced laborers comprise a high proportion.

In March 1941, more than 2,000 Jews were deported from the village ghettos of Kreis Konin to Józefów Biłgorajski and other towns in Distrikt Lublin.⁹ Larger deportations also took place at this time from Regierungsbezirk Zichenau into the Generalgouvernement. However, this wave of deportations was soon stopped, as Germany geared up for the invasion of the Soviet Union.

In an attempt to provide some supposed security from deportation to forced labor, the Jewish Councils in Łódź and other ghettos, such as Grabów, Zduńska Wola, and Pabianice, established workshops, mostly manufacturing uniforms and other equipment for the Wehrmacht. In the case of Ozorków, those working for the Wehrmacht gained a deferral from deportation for a few months, while in Łódź the strategy of survival through work enabled the productive part of the ghetto to keep going for another two years; however, Mordechai Rumkowski's hopes of saving their lives (at the expense of others), for most, proved illusory.

In spite of the harsh conditions, the Jews in many Wartheland ghettos tried to maintain some cultural life. In Kutno, Jews held meetings to discuss literature, sang songs, and or-

ganized a library.¹⁰ Underground schools were operated in a number of ghettos, including Sompolno, and Jews also made efforts to maintain religious observance and bury their dead. In Zduńska Wola, an agricultural kibbutz operated until the ghetto was liquidated. In Łódź, concerts and other cultural events enabled Jews to forget their isolation, hunger, and despair, at least for a time.

For the German authorities in the summer of 1941, the extraction of the able-bodied Jews from the ghettos to forced labor camps raised the question of what should happen with the remaining unproductive elderly Jews and children. In early October, 3,082 relatives of workers deported to Poznań from Kreis Leslau were accepted in the Łódź ghetto, but thereafter the authorities in Łódź made it clear that no more such transports would be accommodated.¹¹ Around this time, SS-Sonderkommando Lange organized the first genocidal mass killings of Jews in the Wartheland, commencing with the murder of the remaining 3,000 or so Jews from the village ghettos in Kreis Konin, most of which by then had been concentrated in Zagórow. Then in November 1941, hundreds of Jews from the ghettos in Koźminek and Kalisz were killed using a gas van operated by Sonderkommando Lange.

In December 1941, SS-Hauptsturmführer Herbert Lange initiated killing operations at the Chełmno extermination camp, murdering first the Jews of Koło and other places nearby. A striking point about these initial complete liquidation Aktions in the Wartheland was that there were almost no survivors, even from communities of 1,000 people or more, as the unsuspecting Jews did as they were told, not expecting they all would be killed. Details of the fate of these communities come mainly from two survivors among the grave-digger detail at Chełmno as well as from the reports of scouts sent out



Ten Jews are publicly hanged for black marketeering by the German police in the Zduńska Wola ghetto, February 28, 1942. In Reichsgau Wartheland, such mass hangings served as precursors to killing center deportations.

USHMM WS #18853, COURTESY OF IPN

by ghettos not yet affected, who were urgently seeking news of the vanished neighboring communities.¹² These reports were then passed on by courier and coded letter to Warsaw and Łódź so that the Jewish leadership could begin the difficult task of grasping the reality of genocide.¹³

Alongside the initiation of mass murder, the German authorities increased the level of terror in the remaining ghettos. A wave of public hangings was conducted in a number of ghettos, including in Zduńska Wola, Wieluń, Ozorków, and Bełchatów, in which the Jewish Police sometimes were obliged to conduct the executions.¹⁴ In Ozorków, the executions were followed immediately by a selection, with those unfit for work being dispatched to Chełmno. During the spring and summer of 1942, Jews became increasingly alarmed by the silence from those who had been deported and the intensifying rumors of killings on a massive scale.

As 1942 progressed, the ghetto liquidation Aktions became increasingly brutal, and more Jews sought to flee or hide. A common pattern for many such Aktions was for the Jews to be concentrated first in the local church building (an offense also to the Catholic Poles), where they were held for days with little food or water until a selection of those fit for labor was conducted, sometimes in the presence of Hans Biebow and other officials of the German Gettoverwaltung (Ghetto Administration) in Łódź. The *Łódź Ghetto Chronicle* records the arrivals of a number of groups of workers spared from the respective ghettos, but those not deemed fit, including children and the elderly, were deported to be killed, under horrendous conditions, at Chełmno.

By September 1942, all the ghettos in Wartheland, except for Łódź, had been liquidated. A few Jews were left behind, or sent from Łódź, to clear out remaining property from the empty ghettos. Any useful equipment, such as sewing machines, and any remaining net profits were transferred for the use of the German Gettoverwaltung in Łódź. In this way, the Łódź ghetto became the direct beneficiary of other ghetto



Mid-1930s portrait of Herbert Lange, commander of Sonderkommando Lange and first commandant of the Chełmno killing center.
COURTESY OF BAB/BDC



Hans Biebow, the Nazi administrator of the Łódź ghetto, sits at his desk, n.d.

USHMM WS #65731, COURTESY OF ROBERT ABRAMS

closings, coming into possession of the small surviving legacy of all the liquidated Jewish communities of the Wartheland. The Łódź ghetto was one of the very last ghettos to be liquidated; most of its remaining population was deported to Auschwitz in August 1944, with the final deportations to the camps from the remnant ghetto leaving in October.

SOURCES The most important secondary sources on ghettos in the Wartheland region are Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006); and Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chelmno/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung,”* trans. Rachel Grunberg Elbaz (Göttingen: Wallstein; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007). On the Einsatzgruppen deployments in Poland, including the Wartheland, the standard account is Alexander Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, Atrocity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003). Useful studies on the 1940 first and second short-term plans in the Wartheland are Phillip T. Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939–1941* (Lawrence: University Press of



Night-time view of the members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 guarding the perimeter of the Łódź ghetto, 1940–1941. One image from a photograph album that once belonged to a member of Police Battalion 101.

USHMM WS #47443, COURTESY OF MICHAEL O.

Kansas, 2007); and the older contribution by Götz Aly, *“Final Solution”: Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews*, trans. Belinda Cooper and Allison Brown (New York: Arnold, 1999).

Important collections of relevant published sources include: Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chelmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004); Sascha Feuchert et al., eds., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz/Litzmannstadt* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), vol. 2 (covering 1942), also available in an earlier abridged English-language version, Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); and Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993), originally in Polish as *Dwa etapy. Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów w oczach ofiar. Szkic historyczny i dokumenty* (Wrocław, 1986). Material from the trial of Arthur Greiser was published in Poland soon after his trial and execution: *Proces Artura Greisera przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1946).

Primary sources for the Wartheland region may be found in the following archives: APŁ; APP; AŻIH (e.g., 301, 210); BA-BL; BA-L; IPN (ASG); IPN-L; NARA; USHMM; VHF; and YVA. The manuscript of the *Łódź Ghetto Chronicle* is available in USHMM, RG-15.083M (APŁ, Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów w Getcie Łódzkim). Also useful are the 1940 and 1941 issues of the *Lodzcher*, later *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, which carried occasional, if tendentious, reports on the formation of ghettos in Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/841, Lb. 848, Mf. 0827, reel 39.
2. AŻIH, 301/304, 301/314.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/669 (Szadek), p. 2.
4. AŻIH, 210/537 (AJDC Pabianice), Arbeitsbericht des Ältestenrates der Juden in Pabianice, November 1, 1939, to November 1, 1940.
5. VHF, # 20279, 20619.
6. OKŚZpNPŁdz (IPN-L), Ds 151/67.
7. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 5, pp. 12, 34, Gendarmerie Radziejow, December 27, 1940, and February 27, 1941.
8. APP, Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2124, notes that 39 of the camps were in Regierungsbezirk Posen, as cited by Peter Klein, *Die “Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt” 1940–1944: Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009), p. 456.
9. M. Gelbart, ed., *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatah uve-hurbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Konin be-Yisrael, 1968), pp. 529–530, 545–546.
10. Sakowska, *Dwa etapy*, p. 142; AŻIH, 301/306, 301/304.
11. BA-BL, R 49/3074, p. 74, as cited by Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 383.

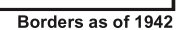
12. Accounts of “Szlamek” and Michał Podchlebnik published in Pawlicka-Nowak, *Chełmno Witnesses Speak*, pp. 100–120.

13. Manfred Struck, ed., *Chełmno/Kulmbhof: Ein vergessener Ort des Holocaust?* (Bonn/Berlin: gegen Vergessen–Für Demokratie e.V., 2001), pp. 91–95.

14. Leib Pudlovsky, “Unter der Nazi Okupatsie,” in *Belkbatov: Yizker-bukh: Gevidmet dem ondenk fun a farsbvundn*

Yidish sbtetl in Poyln (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-Farband fun PoylisheYidn in Argentine tsuzamen mit der Belkhatover Landslayt-Farayn in Argentine, Brazil un Tsofen-Amerike, 1951), pp. 434–445, includes a photograph of one of the hangings. *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 4 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 1225a, p. 316, implies there was a general order in the Wartheland for a certain number of Jews to be hanged in each community.

1940 - 1942



BEŁCHATÓW

Pre-1939: Bełchatów, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Belchatow, Kreis Lask, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Bełchatów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Bełchatów is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Łódź. By 1939, the Jewish population stood at about 5,500, comprising about half of the town's population.¹

The German army entered Bełchatów on September 5, 1939. Shortly after their arrival, the Germans humiliated the Jews on the High Holidays, desecrating holy objects, forcing Jews to eat nonkosher food, and cutting men's beards. Homes were taken from Jews and given to German officials and local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). Other restrictions prohibited Jews from using the sidewalks and from trading with non-Jews.²

Soon after the Germans took control, they established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Bełchatów. The members of the Judenrat changed over the years as they fell in and out of favor with the German authorities. The main tasks of the Judenrat included assigning Jews to forced labor, distributing food, and providing medical care. One Bełchatów survivor reflected on the role of the Judenrat and its ultimate impotence in the face of German rule: "[T]he head of the Judenrat, [Yitzhak] Bogdanski, was a very good and honest man who tried to help the poor, organized kitchens for the poor. . . . Unfortunately, he was arrested and sent to Radogoszcz with his family," following his failed attempt to escape from the ghetto in 1942.³

A report in a German newspaper (*Die Litzmannstädter Zeitung*) in June 1940 noted that, for technical reasons related to the topography of the town, it had not been possible to establish a ghetto for the 6,000 Jews in Bełchatów but that there was no doubt that a solution would be found.⁴ On March 1, 1941, the Germans established a Jewish residential area (open ghetto) in Bełchatów.⁵ Its boundaries were clearly marked,



Jews stand on Pabianicka Street in the Bełchatów ghetto during a resettlement Aktion, late 1941.

USHMM WS #50319, COURTESY OF IPN



Jewish forced laborers from Bełchatów walk along an unpaved road carrying shovels, 1941.

USHMM WS #50320, COURTESY OF IPN

but it was not physically enclosed. According to several Polish witnesses, the Jews were still permitted to move freely about the town but had to obey a curfew.⁶ A report by the Polish Underground noted in January 1942: "An enclosed ghetto has still not been established to this day. . . . Several streets have been designated, in which the Jews are permitted to reside."⁷

Until the summer of 1941, the Jews were able to get by despite the numerous restrictions. Many Jews continued to trade illegally, but punishment always loomed over their heads. Those unable to escape arrest were often tortured before being released. Smuggling enabled the Jewish community to survive, and families sold their possessions in order to have something to eat.⁸

When the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, a glimmer of hope appeared for the Jews of Bełchatów. At first, they believed the Soviets would soon defeat Hitler's army, but the rapid German advance into Russia soon dispelled this notion. Even as their hopes faded, the Bełchatów Jews could not imagine the fate awaiting them. Most believed that the Nazis would need them to help rebuild the country once the war was over and that they would, therefore, keep them alive.⁹

On August 19, 1941, Bełchatów Amtskommissar, Josef Trahner, instructed the Judenrat that all men between the ages of 18 and 45 years not employed in garment-manufacturing workshops must report to the Kluk Company together with the Jewish doctor on the following day.¹⁰ About 2,000 men assembled there and waited in a building all day until 250 of them were selected and sent to the Poznań region for forced labor. Some families were able to obtain the release of a son or a husband by paying bribes.¹¹

Henry Haft, a Holocaust survivor who moved to America and became a successful boxer, recalled that his elder brother answered the call that day. After his brother had been gone for several hours, Henry began to ask questions. A group of older men told him, "Haven't you heard? Not one Jew who went to register has come back." Henry managed to save his

brother from being sent to Poznań, but, in the process, he was caught and found himself in his brother's place.¹²

About three weeks later, a second group of around 500 men was sent to work in the Poznań region, but this time there was no call to "register." Instead, German forces raided Jewish homes to round them up. With 700 heads of households taken from their families, the economic situation of those left behind soon deteriorated.¹³

In the fall of 1941, the Jews from a number of neighboring towns and villages, including Szczerców, Grocholice, Kleszczów, Przyrownica, Bełchatówek, and Chabielice, were brought to Bełchatów with most of their belongings, considerably worsening overcrowding in the ghetto.¹⁴ There was inadequate medical care and poor sanitation, which resulted in a deadly outbreak of typhus in early 1942. This epidemic forced Trahner to allow another doctor into the ghetto.¹⁵

On March 18, 1942, on the orders of the Gestapo, the Gendarmerie, assisted by the Jewish Police, publicly hanged 10 Jews from various social backgrounds in Bełchatów.¹⁶ According to the report by Trahner, the execution set an example of the punishment in store for Jews who repeatedly violated the economic regulations.¹⁷

At 6:00 A.M. on August 11, 1942, a group of foreign police auxiliaries, German Gendarmerie, and German civilians began a four-day Aktion to render Bełchatów "free of Jews" (*judenrein*). A few Jews attempted to escape the night before in the direction of Piotrków, but most of the escapees were shot. The German forces surrounded the ghetto and drove the Jews to the center of town. Initially, a group of Jews was rounded up almost at random and sent off in trucks in the direction of the Chełmno death camp, where most of Bełchatów's Jews would be killed. Then, assisted by the Jewish Police, the Germans selected most of the elderly and sick and dispatched them in the same direction. On the same day, another 850 able-bodied men were selected and sent to the Łódź ghetto. The remaining population, possibly as many as 4,000 Jews, was driven to the synagogue courtyard. Many were forced into the synagogue where they were held for three days without food or water. They were packed in so tightly that children and elderly people died either from starvation or suffocation.

The Germans selected 200 Jewish men from the synagogue to collect and sort the valuables from the empty Jewish homes. For four days, these men were forced to clean up the Jewish quarter and send any useful manufacturing equipment to the Łódź ghetto. On the night of the third day, the Germans made them sleep in the now-empty synagogue. All the people from inside the synagogue had been deported to Chełmno. Then 79 of these remaining men were sent to the Łódź ghetto after the fourth day of work; the fate of the others is unknown. With their departure, the Jewish community of Bełchatów ceased to exist.¹⁸

SOURCES Published sources on the ghetto in Bełchatów and the destruction of its inhabitants include the following: *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh: Gevidmet dem ondenk fun a farsbvundn Yidish*

shetel in Poyln (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-Farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentine tsuzamen mit der Belkhatover Landslayt-Farayn in Argentine, Brazil un Tsafen-Amerike, 1951); Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 70–77; and Alan Scott Haft, *Harry Haft: Auschwitz Survivor, Challenger of Rocky Marciano* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006).

Documentation on the Jewish community of Bełchatów and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AAN (202/II-29); AŻIH (301/84, 1243, and 1413); BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. XI, pp. 94–113); IPN; USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 70–77. Estimates of the Jewish population of Bełchatów in 1939 vary from about 4,000 up to 10,000, but most sources remain in the range of 5,000 to 6,000.

2. AŻIH, 301/84, testimony of Chiel Maczak; 301/1243, testimony of Monick Kaufman.

3. Ibid., 301/1413, testimony of Monick Kaufman; see also M. Kaufman, "In the Years of the Holocaust," in *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh*, pp. 463–476 (an English translation is available via jewishgen.org); Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 70–77.

4. *Die Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, June 16, 1940.

5. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 93.

6. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2006), p. 200; BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. XI, pp. 94–113.

7. AAN, 202/II-29, p. 6, DR, Departament Spraw Wewnętrznych: Meldunek o sytuacji Żydów poza Warszawą, January 16, 1942.

8. AŻIH, 301/1413.

9. Ibid.

10. Amtskommissar Trahner an den Aeltestenrat der jüdischen Gemeinde Belchatow, August 19, 1941, reproduced in *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh*, p. 439.

11. AŻIH, 301/1413.

12. Haft, *Harry Haft*, pp. 24–33.

13. AŻIH, 301/1413.

14. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 70–77.

15. Haft, *Harry Haft*, pp. 24–33.

16. Leib Pudlovsky, "Unter der Nazi Okupatsie," in *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh*, pp. 434–435, includes a photograph of the hanging, erroneously dated March 19, 1943. *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 4 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 1225a, p. 316, implies there was a general order at this time in the Wartheland for a certain number of Jews to be hanged in each community according to its size.

17. Amtskommissar der Stadt Belchatow an die Standortkommandantur Lask, March 19, 1942, published in *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh*, pp. 436–437.

18. Pudlovsky, “Unter der Nazi Okupatsie,” p. 445; Zohken Lieberman, “Die Sheuderlekhe Teg,” in *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh*, pp. 456–462; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, pp. 70–77.

BRZEŚĆ KUJAWSKI

Pre-1939: Brześć Kujawski (Yiddish: Brisk de Koyavi), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Brest Kujawien, Landkreis Leslau (Włocławek), Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Brześć Kujawski, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Brześć Kujawski is located about 101 kilometers (63 miles) north-northwest of Łódź. On the outbreak of World War II, there were 633 Jews residing there. Jews comprised between 15 and 20 percent of the town’s population. At the beginning of 1941, the number of Jews in the town rose slightly, due to the arrival of about 40 refugees.¹

The German army occupied the town in early September 1939. Immediately afterwards Jews were compelled to perform forced labor, and the Germans began to confiscate their property. Among the early measures of persecution suffered by the Jews was the burning down of the synagogue. In the last weeks of 1939, the Germans sent dozens of Jewish men to the Wittenberg camp for forced labor. By 1940, the Germans had ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to assist them with organizing forced labor and raising “contributions” from the Jewish population.²

In October 1940, all Jewish enterprises in the town were expropriated, and the property was given to German trustees. Several sources, including the yizkor book for Włocławek, make specific reference to a “ghetto” in Brześć Kujawski, but almost no details are known.³ Danuta Dombrowska, on the other hand, maintains that no ghetto existed there.⁴ On September 28, 1941, 399 “inmates of the local ghetto” (109 men and 290 women) were deported to the ghetto in Łódź, joining a mass transport of Jews coming from other places in the Włocławek area. Between the end of September and early October 1941, these deportations included 3,082 people in



Jews wearing unusually large Jewish stars carry bundles during a resettlement or deportation Aktion in Brześć Kujawski, n.d.
USHMM WS #41039, COURTESY OF YIVO

total.⁵ On their arrival, it was noted that the Jews from Brześć Kujawski and other nearby towns wore different identity badges than those in Łódź—a yellow triangle in the middle of the back and a large Star of David (25 centimeters or about 10 inches across) on the chest.⁶ Most of these individuals died in the Łódź ghetto of disease and hunger. The few Jews remaining in Brześć Kujawski were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp in April or early May 1942, where the Germans killed them using poison gas. Their last personal belongings were sold to the local population. The proceeds—457.02 Reichsmark (RM)—were placed at the disposal of the Ghettoverwaltung (Ghetto Administration) in Łódź.⁷

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Brześć Kujawski during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: K.F. Thursh and M. Korzen, eds., *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron* (Israel: Association of Former Włocławek Jews in Israel and America, 1967), pp. 175–178; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 145–146; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 119.

Documents on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Brześć Kujawski can be found in the following archives: IPN (collection “Ob,” sygn. 177); ITS; and USHMM (RG-68.066M, selected records from AJDC, GIV/27-1B, includes a list of survivors from Brześć Kujawski). A list of additional sources can be found in *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 173.

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NOTES

1. Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron*, p. 780; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale/Keter, 2007), 4:230.

2. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 145–146.

3. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945*, p. 119; Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron*, p. 780; Roman Mogilanski, *The Ghetto Anthology: A Comprehensive Chronicle of the Extermination of Jewry in Nazi Death Camps and Ghettos in Poland* (Los Angeles: American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps, 1985), p. 104.

4. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 4:230.

5. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (1972; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 50; Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron*, p. 780.

6. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 78.

7. Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron*, p. 780; Lucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 204.

BRZEZINY

Pre-1939: Brzeziny (Yiddish: Brzezín), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Löwenstadt, Kreis Litzmannstadt, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Brzeziny, Łódź województwo, Poland

Brzeziny is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) east-northeast of Łódź. The Jewish population stood at approximately 6,850 on the eve of World War II.

Brzeziny was occupied on September 8–9, 1939. Within a month, a series of anti-Jewish measures went into effect, and the local Jews suffered beatings, forced labor, and looting at the hands of the occupiers and local ethnic Germans.¹

The German authorities demanded that the remaining members of the Jewish kehillah (community), Yitzhak Dymant, the chairman, and Avraham Szafman, the secretary, supply a daily quota of workers for forced labor. The workers were ordered to pave roads and perform other arduous jobs and were often beaten and tormented by their German taskmasters. When the required number of Jews did not report for work, the German authorities berated the community leaders and beat them. Prominent members of the Jewish community formed a committee with the aim of aiding the Jewish population, who at this time also began to experience hunger and impoverishment. Yitzhak Dymant, Dr. Sh. Warhaft, Yaakov Za-

gon, and Dr. Ehrlicht collected money from members of the community who wanted to free themselves from forced labor duty and created a community treasury. The committee also raised funds surreptitiously: Zagon assigned a group of workers in the German clothing warehouse to smuggle out suits that had been confiscated from Jewish clothiers, by wearing them in layers. These suits were then sold and the money used for the benefit of the community. The committee aimed to create a public kitchen and to pay forced laborers supplied to the Germans. In time, the Germans treated this committee as a Judenrat.²

The German persecution of the Jewish community in Brzeziny intensified in November 1939. On November 9, they set fire to the great synagogue and tortured the rabbi. Rabbi Zalman Borensztajn was beaten, his beard was set on fire, and he was forced to sign a statement that he and other Jewish leaders had started the fire. A notice in the German newspaper in Łódź reiterated this fabrication and announced that the “provocateurs” had been arrested. The Germans fined the Jewish community 10,000 złoty and arrested the rabbi and other prominent members of the Jewish community; they were sent away to a jail in Łódź or other towns, where they were imprisoned for several months.³

In November and December 1939, the Germans violently evicted Jews living in better apartments, and a rumor spread that Brzeziny—renamed Löwenstadt and annexed to the Reich as part of the Wartheland—was going to be made *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews). The Jews were forbidden to remove anything except some clothing from their homes, which were then sealed. Members of the committee petitioned the mayor of Brzeziny and then the district head in Łódź to delay the expulsion and received his approval. The police in Brzeziny accepted a bribe and agreed to consider those Jews who had been expelled from their homes and were now living with relatives in other parts of the city as having “left” (*farlozt*) Brzeziny. Using the time bought (the district head delayed the expulsion until April 1, 1940), the committee proposed that the Germans employ the tailors in service of the German war effort. A small delegation then negotiated with the chamber of commerce in Łódź, and aided by a generous bribe, the plan was approved. The Jewish tailors were employed in the Guenther Schwartz workshops, producing German army apparel.⁴

The German authorities established the Brzeziny ghetto in April 1940 (some sources say May 1940) and ordered all the Jews in Brzeziny to move into the designated area. Roughly 6,000 Jews were imprisoned in the Brzeziny ghetto and were not permitted to leave its boundaries. The ghetto was surrounded by a fence. Occupants of buildings whose windows and doors looked out on to streets not within the ghetto’s boundaries had to enter through interior courtyards or through openings in the interior walls.⁵ The Gestapo created a Judenrat to replace the kehillah and appointed Fiszke Ikka, who had earlier been named the head of the kehillah, as the chairman of the ghetto. The Judenrat operated several departments focusing on: finance, housing, provisions, post office operations,



Pre-war photograph of the Brzeziny town synagogue, which was destroyed by the Nazis during the war.

USHMM WS #12231, COURTESY OF ADELE RAPAPORT

clothing manufacturing, a civil court, social welfare, and (security) police. Survivor testimony in the town's yizkor book suggests that Ikka was not well liked; Dr. Warhaft remarked that he "ruled as a dictator."⁶ Nevertheless, some members of the previous Jewish committee served on the Judenrat, including Avraham Szafman as secretary and Yitzhak Dymant as head of the housing office. Ikka was a controversial figure: in a trial after the war, he was accused of having been a Gestapo agent who pointed out well-to-do Jews to the police, who would then arrest and extort money from them. Others testified, however, that he had no choice but to obey German orders. When his opponents in the Judenrat attempted to influence the Germans to appoint a different chairman, four of them—Zagon, Grynszpan, Stark, and Sender—were arrested and tortured. Three later returned to the ghetto, but Sender was killed.⁷

Brzeziny was a working ghetto, and people worked 12 hours a day, primarily in large tailoring workshops producing clothing for the German army. Approximately 90 percent of the Jewish population was employed in manufacturing work for the Guenther Schwartz and Forscher und Bunger firms, according to a member of the Judenrat's manufacturing committee. The committee also opened workshops to offer more employment, including a netting shop, which employed 9- and 10-year-old children. Moreover, the manufacturing committee embellished the statistical listing by adding children's names to it, to show a larger number of Jews employed. The Judenrat tried to find work for all employable Jews, to provide them with a means of subsistence and security against deportation. The German authorities continued to demand a daily quota of workers for hard labor after the ghetto was established and also deported young men to forced labor camps. Those who were sent were abused and subjected to terrible work conditions. A group of 150 young men taken to dig peat near Stryków in June 1941, for example, returned to the Brzeziny ghetto severely emaciated two months later. Another challenge the ghetto faced regarding labor was the German inspection teams and Gestapo agents from Łódź, which occasionally visited the tailoring workshops. The Gestapo demanded expensive gifts from the community, which contributed to the impoverishment of the Jewish population.⁸

The living conditions in the Brzeziny ghetto were harsh; Jews suffered in overcrowded and cold apartments and experienced hunger and deprivation. Under these conditions, diseases spread throughout the ghetto. The food allotment was 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread daily and 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of sugar, 200 grams (7 ounces) of flour, 150 grams (5.3 ounces) of margarine, 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of honey, and small amounts of vegetables, soap, and coal weekly per person. Jews employed in the ghetto workshops could augment these rations by purchasing additional food with their small wage. They also received a daily bowl of soup and rations from their employers. To further supplement their food allotment, Jews also sold items of clothing made privately in a clandestine cottage industry. Polish neighbors provided food to the ghetto inmates as well—one baker prepared batches of bread espe-

cially for the Jewish population, which he had young children bring into the ghetto. Other sympathetic Poles also passed meat and other food products through the ghetto fence, often at no cost.⁹

A riskier illegal activity was smuggling, which was not uncommon in the ghetto. In the early history of the ghetto, it became established custom that when a smuggler was caught, the Jewish Police would confiscate the goods and the smuggler would pay a ransom for his or her release. If the smuggler was caught by the Gestapo, however, the punishment was more severe; one Jew received 50 lashes and was detained in the Gestapo building for 48 hours.¹⁰ Later, smuggling and trading were more severely punished and were greatly curtailed because the fence was guarded more rigorously by German guards. The Jews in the Brzeziny ghetto then began to suffer more severely from malnutrition, which resulted in reduced productivity by the physically weakened workers. The German overseers in the workshops responded with reduced food rations, further exacerbating the situation, and with greater violence.¹¹

The German authorities ordered a public hanging of 10 people on Purim in March 1942 as a punishment for smuggling. They ordered the Judenrat to select the victims, build the gallows on the site of the remains of the burned synagogue, and carry out the public execution. Germans posted notices announcing the execution and demanding that the entire Jewish population must witness it. The selected people were imprisoned smugglers and marginalized community members, including people who were mentally ill and homeless. After the hanging, all the Jews were forced to march past the scaffold with their faces towards the bodies.¹²

The work situation in the ghetto also deteriorated in 1942. German orders to the workshops declined and production slowed, then stopped. The Judenrat distributed funds to lessen the impact of the loss of income. The assistance did little to alleviate starvation throughout the ghetto, which was aggravated by the loss of rations from the workshops and food from trade and smuggling activity.¹³ In April 1942, the Germans demanded that the Judenrat conduct a census to provide exact numbers for the ghetto population. At that time, a Gestapo agent ordered Dr. Warhaft, the ghetto doctor, to prepare a transport of typhus patients, who would be taken to a "special sanatorium." The medical personnel would be permitted to accompany them. Suspicious, Dr. Warhaft and his staff decided to send home the sick, and only those patients on their deathbeds remained in the 25-bed hospital when a closed van arrived the next morning. According to Dr. Warhaft, the truck's doors were hermetically sealed behind the sick inmates, who were suffocated by gas fumes. Rumors about an impending resettlement spread among the ghetto population at this time.¹⁴

All Jews were then ordered to appear before a German medical commission, and healthy Jews capable of work were stamped on the chest with an "A," while the elderly and the sick received a "B." The Germans tormented and maltreated the Jews, especially elderly men and women, by sexually harassing and humiliating them.¹⁵

The liquidation of the ghetto began on May 14–15, 1942, when Hans Biebow, the chief of the German administration of the Łódź ghetto, and members of the Gestapo arrived in the Brzeziny ghetto and ordered all Jews marked with a “B” and mothers with their children up to the age of 10 to assemble in the market square. Some 40 young people from the ghetto who accompanied them to assist the mothers witnessed the Aktion. The mothers and children were forced to wait all day. At 3:00 A.M., the Gestapo arrived, began beating them with whips, and ordered the mothers to hand over their children. A horrible tumult ensued. The Germans tore children away from their mothers, as the mothers cried, pleaded, and fought to save their children. One witness gave testimony that the Germans killed three babies by throwing them against the doors of the train. Their screaming mothers were shot. The children and the people from group “B,” about 1,700 in total, were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp.¹⁶

Three days later, the final stage of the liquidation of the ghetto began on May 18, 1942. The Germans announced that the Jews could bring baggage up to 10 kilograms (22 pounds) and ordered them to assemble in front of their buildings in groups of 5. The Germans made another selection in the market square, and healthy men were sent off to work camps, while most people were deported to the Łódź ghetto via Gałkówka station. Younger Jews walked to Gałkówka, while others traveled by wagon. On the way, the Jews were beaten and a few were shot by the Germans. At the station, the Jews were loaded onto trains without their baggage and sent to the Łódź ghetto. Their baggage was returned to them in Łódź, less any food they brought with them, which was confiscated and sent to the ghetto’s storehouses for general distribution. About 4,300 Jews from the Brzeziny ghetto arrived in three transports to the Łódź ghetto on May 18–20. About 300 Jews remained in the Brzeziny ghetto after its liquidation to clear out the ghetto area for the Germans; they were shot dead on August 22, 1942.¹⁷

In the Łódź ghetto, the new arrivals were immediately quarantined in apartments separate from the rest of the population to avoid a potential typhus epidemic, since there were cases of the disease among the Jews from Brzeziny. Following another selection completed in the Łódź ghetto, over 1,200 men were sent for forced labor to Dąbrowa. To avoid a transport for forced labor, 268 Jews from Brzeziny went into hiding and later reported their presence in the ghetto. The remaining Jews of Brzeziny suffered further despair when a rumor spread that 200 children had arrived on May 19; however, these children were all above age 10.¹⁸ Heartbroken parents affected the mood of the Łódź ghetto, as local Jews began to wonder when their families would be torn apart.

Many of the Jews from Brzeziny who remained in the Łódź ghetto died of hunger and disease in the ghetto. Those still alive in August 1944 were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp during the liquidation of the Łódź ghetto. Only 200 to 300 Jews from Brzeziny survived the war from the pre-war population of about 6,850.¹⁹



Jews from the Brzeziny ghetto are marched through town en route to the Gałkówka railroad station, during the deportation Aktion of May 18–19, 1942.

USHMM WS #91561, COURTESY OF IPN

SOURCES The Brzeziny memorial book edited by A. Alperin and N. Summer, *Brzeziny Yisker-Bukh* (New York and Israel: Brzeziner Book Committee, 1961), contains survivor testimonies on the history and fate of Brzeziny’s Jewish community. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984) contains several references to the Brzeziny ghetto, including a report also published in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce, 1946), pp. 223–225. Oskar Rosenfeld wrote about the Brzeziny ghetto in his diary, *In the Beginning Was the Ghetto: Notebooks from Łódź* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002). The Brzeziny ghetto survivor George Fox’s interview conducted in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on July 12, 2006, was also referenced. There are encyclopedic entries in Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 1, Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 61–66; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979), p. 119; Roman Mogilanski, ed., *The Ghetto*

Anthology: A Comprehensive Chronicle of the Extermination of Jewry in Nazi Death Camps and Ghettos in Poland (Los Angeles: American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps, 1985), pp. 104–105; and Sara Neshamith, Shlomo Netzer, and Danuta Dąbrowska, “Brzeziny,” in Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, eds., *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 4:230–231. There is also mention of the Brzeziny ghetto in Isaiah Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto: A History*, ed. Robert Moses Shapiro (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); and in Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006).

Documentation on the Brzeziny ghetto can be found among other places in the YIVO Archive’s Nachman Zonabend Collection, YIVO, RG 241 (folders 912, 916).

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NOTES

1. Dr. S. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction of Our Shtetl: Recollections of the Ghetto Doctor,” pp. 135–139, here 135; and Abraham Blanket-Sulkowicz, “Destruction of Brzeziny,” pp. 140–143, here 140—both in Alperin and Summer, *Brzeziny Yisker-Bukh*.

2. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 135.

3. Ibid., pp. 135–136; and D. Tuszynski, “There Once Was a Jewish Shtetl Brzeziny,” in Alperin and Summer, *Brzeziny Yisker-Bukh*, pp. 144–146, here 144.

4. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” pp. 136–137; Tuszynski, “There Once Was,” p. 145; and Dora Zagon-Winer, “I Saw the Hurbn,” in Alperin and Summer, *Brzeziny Yisker-Bukh*, pp. 147–148, here p. 147.

5. Dobroszycki, *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, pp. 182–183.

6. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 138; Tuszynski, “There Once Was,” p. 145; Blanket-Sulkowicz, “Destruction of Brzeziny,” p. 141.

7. Rebecca Hendler-Gocial, “The Brzeziner Jewish Community during the Time of the Ghetto,” in Alperin and Summer, *Brzeziny Yisker-Bukh*, p. 156; and Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 138.

8. Hendler-Gocial, “The Brzeziner Jewish Community,” p. 156; Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 138; Tuszynski, “There Once Was,” p. 145.

9. Rosenfeld, *In the Beginning Was the Ghetto*, p. 107; Dobroszycki, *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, p. 183.

10. Dobroszycki, *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, p. 183; and PARI, interview of G. Fox.

11. Blanket-Sulkowicz, “Destruction of Brzeziny,” p. 141.

12. Ibid., p. 142; Zagon-Winer, “I Saw the Hurbn,” p. 148.

13. Hendler-Gocial, “The Brzeziner Jewish Community,” p. 156.

14. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” pp. 138–139.

15. Ibid., p. 138; Blanket-Sulkowicz, “Destruction of Brzeziny,” p. 142; Tuszynski, “There Once Was,” p. 145.

16. Tuszynski, “There Once Was,” pp. 145–146; Rosenfeld, *In the Beginning Was the Ghetto*, p. 107; and interview of G. Fox.

17. Dobroszycki, *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, pp. 183–184; Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 139; Blanket-Sulkowicz, “Destruction of Brzeziny,” p. 143; and interview of G. Fox.

18. Dobroszycki, *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, pp. 185, 217.

19. Warhaft, “I Saw the Destruction,” p. 139.

BUGAJ (AND NOWINY BRDOWSKIE)

Pre-1939: Bugaj, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bugitten (and Neubagen), Kreis Wartbrücken (Koło), Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Bugaj, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Bugaj and neighboring Nowiny Brdowskie are two villages in the community of Lubotyń, located 82 kilometers (51 miles) northwest of Łódź. In the fall of 1940 both villages were turned into a *Dorfghetto* (village ghetto), occupying an area of about 300 hectares (741 acres) and containing about 165 houses that formerly had been owned by Polish farmers.¹ The German designation for the ghetto was “Jüdische Kolonie Bugitten und Neuhagen” (Jewish colony Bugitten and Neuhagen).² On October 2, 1940, all the Jews, approximately 240 people, from the village of Babiak (German: Waldau) were resettled into the ghetto. Also, part of the Jewish community of Koło (German: Wartbrücken) was assigned to the “Jewish colony” (about 150 to 200 families).³ This brought the total number of people in the ghetto to about 800 (300 families). The ghetto residents were used for seasonal labor in the neighboring fields, farms, and estates. They fed themselves by selling their remaining possessions to non-Jews living in the area.⁴ Archival material at the Yiddish Scientific Institute (YIVO) in New York documents the harsh living conditions of the resettled Jews. In April 1941, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) reported to the “Service for Promotion of Agriculture among Jews,” based in the Warsaw ghetto, that the condition of the agricultural buildings was terrible. The available livestock consisted of only seven horses and a score of goats and fowl. The Jewish Council planned to acquire more horses, chickens, and other animals, as well as to grow potatoes, corn, other vegetables, tobacco, and medicinal herbs.⁵

These plans were not realized. The Germans liquidated the ghetto and transported the residents to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they murdered them using gas vans on Tuesday, January 13, 1942. About 15 or 16 able-bodied Jews from Bugaj had been sent to Chełmno by the Gendarmerie a few days before, and some of them were assigned to the grave-digging section there. One of them, Michał Podchlebnik, wept bitterly on returning to the camp cellar on the evening of January 13, as he had been forced to unload the bodies of his wife and two children from the third van that arrived at the grave site.⁶

After the Jews were deported, the Germans ordered that the remaining buildings of the ghetto be demolished, and a forest was planted on the site.⁷

SOURCES The main literature dealing with the Bugaj ghetto includes: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 339, no. 3019; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 201; Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (1972; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 113; and Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der*

Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943 (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993).

Primary sources regarding the ghetto in the villages of Bugaj and Nowiny Brdowskie can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (AJDC 210/123 [Jüdische Gemeinde in Bugitten und Nowiny Brdowskie an AJDC in Warsaw, January 1941]; and Ring I/152, 255, 382, 394, 665, 972, and 1219); IPN (ASG, sygn. 54, p. 103); ITS; USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 16); YIVO (Wassermann collection, document 48a); and YVA. Further information on archival sources can be found in BŻIH, nos. 13–14 (1955): 132, 136, 169. The court testimony of a survivor from the Bugaj ghetto can be found in Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), pp. 119–124.

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NOTES

1. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 339.
2. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 201.
3. Ibid.; Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 59; D. Dabrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” BŻIH, nos. 13–14 (1955): 169, table 12.
4. AŻIH, Ring I/152, report on the Chełmno extermination camp by “Szlamiek,” published in Sakowska, *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod*, pp. 159–185, here p. 176; and USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (IPN) ASG, województwo poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 103 and reverse.
5. YIVO, Wassermann collection, document 48a.
6. AŻIH, Ring I/152, report on the Chełmno extermination camp by “Szlamiek,” and Ring I/665; Pawlicka-Nowak, *Chełmno Witnesses Speak*, pp. 11, 119–124, 204–205. The testimony of Michał Podchlebnik given to the Polish authorities on June 9, 1945, is on pp. 119–124; a photograph of him is reproduced in Władysław Bednarz, ed., *Obóz straceń w Chełmnie nad Nerem* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1946), p. 11, which also includes the original Polish text of his testimony.
7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (IPN) ASG, województwo poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 103 and reverse.

CHOCZ

Pre-1939: Chocz, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Petershagen (1939–1943), Petersried (1943–1945), Kreis Kalisch, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Chocz, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Chocz is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) northwest of Kalisz. There were 99 Jews living in Chocz in 1921, constituting 5.6 percent of the total population.

On November 18, 1939, 44 Jewish residents of the village were deported to Kalisz, where Jews from throughout the Kreis were being concentrated while awaiting deportation into the

Generalgouvernement. They were held there behind barbed wire in a temporary transit camp set up in the “Market Hall.”

In the first months of 1940, most of the Chocz Jews who were being held in Kalisz were sent to Koźminek to work, around the time of the establishment of the Koźminek ghetto. Among these Jews may have been some who were sent initially to Łódź at the end of January 1940, only then to be returned to Kalisz after they were refused admittance to the city.

There were reportedly 40 Jews still living in Chocz in January 1940. As the German plan to clear the Wartheland of all its Jews during the winter of 1939–1940 encountered various difficulties and had to be postponed, a number of ghettos were established in the region.

A small ghetto was established in Chocz in March 1940. The local German Gendarmerie commander—Piechota—and his subordinates (i.e., Stefan Emanuel, Julian Peda, and Alfred Peda) were put in charge of the ghetto’s affairs.

The ghetto had 39 residents, including a Polish woman married to a Jewish convert to Catholicism and their children. There was also one foreigner, a Jewish doctor from Berlin. The ghetto inmates were forced to perform cleaning jobs in the village, sweep streets, chop wood, and carry water for the Germans.

The ghetto consisted of a single house standing on a 100-square-meter (1,076 square feet) piece of land. There is no information on whether the ghetto was fenced off from the rest of the village or concerning living conditions for the Jews residing there. There were no outbreaks of epidemic disease.

The Chocz ghetto was liquidated after 12 months, in March 1941, when all its residents were transferred to the ghetto in Koźminek,¹ which was ultimately liquidated in July 1942.

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Tomasz Kawski and Monika Opióła, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza Wielkopolski, Mazowsza, Małopolski i Śląska w latach 1918–1942* (Toruń: Wydawn. Adam Marszałek, 2008), pp. 131, 240, 245; A. Pakentreger, “Dzieje Żydów m. Kalisza i powiatu kaliskiego w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej (od 1940 do 9 sierpnia 1942 r.). Martyrologia i zagłada,” BŻIH, nos. 2–3 (1980): 5; and Janusz Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe spowodowane polityką okupanta hitlerowskiego w tzw. rejencji łódzkiej w latach 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 1987), pp. 169–171, 178.

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NOTE

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 59 (Chocz), pp. 1–3.

CIECHOCINEK

Pre-1939: Ciechocinek, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Hermannsbad, Kreis Hermannsbad, Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Ciechocinek, powiat Aleksandrowski, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Ciechocinek is located about 28 kilometers (17.5 miles) north-northwest of Włocławek. In 1921, there were 769 Jews out of

a total population of 2,451. A Jewish sanatorium opened in this famous spa resort in the early 1930s.

The first weeks of German occupation were relatively quiet in Ciechocinek. Only with the arrival of Gestapo representatives in the fifth week of the occupation did the situation deteriorate for the Jewish community. Decrees against the Jews were issued, forbidding them to walk on sidewalks, forcing them to pay special taxes, and requiring them to wear a yellow patch on the front and back of their clothes. The entire Jewish community was required to perform forced labor initially for no pay, often to the accompaniment of brutal beatings. Jews were also robbed of their possessions; business property was confiscated, leaving Jews without any means of earning a livelihood. The German authorities confiscated the better Jewish homes, forcing many Jews out onto the streets.¹ Some witnesses claim that this was the reason that a number of Jews were expelled to places in the Generalgouvernement in the fall of 1939, for example, to Wodzisław and towns in the vicinity of Siedlce. In any case, the number of Jews living in Ciechocinek declined considerably within a short time after the German occupation, probably to only about 120 people.

In 1940, the Germans forced the remaining Jews of the town into the former house of Lieb Wuzek. About 100 people

were housed in this single building under terrible sanitary conditions. The residents suffered from hunger, overcrowding, and various diseases.² German documentation explicitly avoids the use of the term “ghetto” when describing the concentration of Jews onto certain streets or in single houses in this Kreis.³ However, the Jewish survivors recall their experience in Ciechocinek as being forced into a ghetto for the Jews in the town.⁴

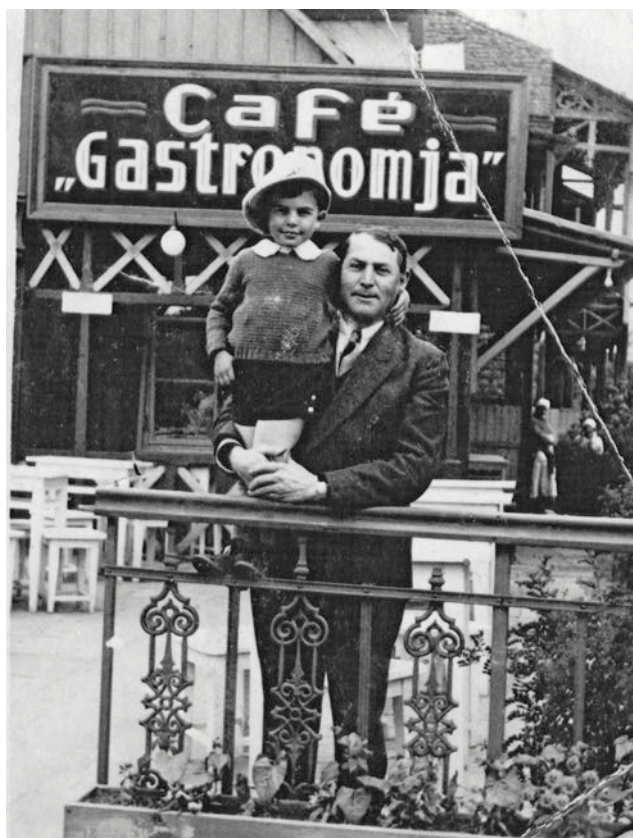
In 1941, all the adolescent Jews (about a dozen) in Ciechocinek were taken for forced labor in Inowrocław. On April 19, 1942, the German police “evacuated” all the remaining Jews from Ciechocinek. The inmates of the Wuzek house were brutally beaten and loaded onto waiting trucks. German police deported them to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were murdered using poison gas. On April 23, 1942, the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad reported that all the Jews of the Kreis had been “evacuated,” including 80 people from Ciechocinek. The deportation Aktion in Ciechocinek was conducted by the Schutzpolizei section stationed there.⁵ A subsequent German report dated July 1, 1942, recorded that only a single Jew was living in Ciechocinek at that time.⁶

At the end of the war, only six Jewish survivors from the town returned to Ciechocinek in search of their relatives.⁷

SOURCES This report on the Ciechocinek “ghetto” is based on two published sources: K.F. Thursh and M. Korzen, eds., *Włocławek ve-ha-sevivah: Sefer zikaron* (Israel: Association of Former Residents of Włocławek in Israel and the USA, 1967), p. 186; and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 395–396.

Archival documentation concerning events in the Ciechocinek district (Kreis Hermannsbad) under German occupation can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/ Bd. XXXVIII Polen, p. 37); IPN (RStiW 120); and USHMM (RG-15.013M).

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A man and young boy stand outside the Café Gastronomja in Ciechocinek, May 20, 1934. This photograph was discovered at the Majdanek concentration camp following its liberation in July 1944.

USHMM WS #70456, COURTESY OF APMM

NOTES

1. Thursh and Korzen, *Włocławek ve-ha-sevivah: Sefer zikaron*, p. 186.

2. Ibid.

3. USHMM, RG-15.013M (records of the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad), reel 2, files 5 and 6. Several reports for the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad from the end of 1940 until May 1941 mention the concentration and isolation of the Jews in certain towns but insist that no ghettos had been established.

4. Thursh and Korzen, *Włocławek ve-ha-sevivah; Sefer zikaron*, p. 186.

5. USHMM, RG-15.013M (records of the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad), reel 2, file 7, Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad an den Kommandeur der Gendarmerie bei dem Regierungspräsidenten in Hohensalza, April 23, 1942.

6. IPN, RStiW 120, folder 47, Regierungspräsident Hohensalza, “Breakdown of the population according to ethnic origin (Volkstum), as of July 1, 1942.”

7. BA-L, B 162, Bd. XXXVIII Polen, p. 37.

DĄBIE NAD NEREM

Pre-1939: Dąbie nad Nerem (Yiddish: Dombie), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Eichstädt, Kreis Wartbrücken, Regierunsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Dąbie, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Dąbie is located on the Ner River about 16 kilometers (10 miles) to the southeast of Koło. There were probably around 1,100 Jews in Dąbie at the outbreak of World War II in September 1939.

German forces occupied Dąbie in mid-September 1939. Soon after their arrival, they insisted on removing Jews from the town's administration and ordered the Jews to present themselves for forced labor. By mid-October, the German authorities had confiscated several Jewish businesses, appointing German trustees in charge. During the first weeks of the occupation, Jews were humiliated, being forced to perform gymnastics on the market square, and were rounded up for forced labor. In December 1939, Jews were ordered to wear yellow Stars of David. At this time Jews were also forbidden to use the sidewalks.¹ The Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the town, chaired by Josef Dyament. Other members included Lejb Strykowski, Pinkas Elbojm, Mosze Gostyński, Gerszon Engel, and Chaim Elie Lewin. Initially, the Germans appointed a local ethnic German, Nelter, as mayor of the town, but within a few weeks he was replaced by another ethnic German named Woltmann. By 1940, a German from the Reich had been appointed mayor of Dąbie.²



A church in Dąbie used in the liquidation of the ghetto's Jews at the Chełmno killing center photographed as part of a war-crimes investigation by the Tribunal of Łódź, ca. June 1945. The church was not a place of worship during the war.

USHMM WS #65656, COURTESY OF MUZEUM OKRĘGOWE KONIN

In the spring of 1940, the Jewish community in Dąbie applied for help from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw. However, an initial payment of 4,000 złoty was not received until May 1940, owing to the need to obtain approval from the German Currency Office (Devisenstelle). This money was used to distribute bread, flour, and sugar to more than 75 needy families, but further support from the AJDC was then interrupted due to German objections. The aid committee, also headed by Josef Dyament, raised some money within the Jewish community in order to maintain welfare efforts, and in September 1940 it opened a bakery. Profits from the bakery were used to provide bread to needy families, but in December 1940 the bakery was forced to close, owing to objections by the local ethnic German bakers. A further subvention of 500 Reichsmark (RM) was received from the AJDC in December 1940, which was used to aid 70 needy families, but after this date there is no further correspondence regarding welfare matters.³

The German authorities established a ghetto in Dąbie in the summer of 1940 on Kiliński Street.⁴ The ghetto contained about 1,100 Jews, and up to 10 people had to share one home. It remained an open ghetto throughout its existence, but Jews were only allowed to leave it with a special pass. The synagogue and the Bet Midrash were converted into storage areas by the Germans. The inhabitants of the ghetto were employed in various craft shops in the town and also cleaned the town's streets and parks.⁵ At the end of the summer of 1941, about 200 Jews—150 men and 50 women—were deported to two labor camps in the Poznań region. Most of those who survived these forced labor camps were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp from the fall of 1942.

On hearing news on December 9, 1941, of the deportation of the Jews from the nearby Koło ghetto, the Jewish Council in Dąbie sent a man named Volkevitch to Koło to try to discover what had happened to the Jews there.⁶ The liquidation of the Dąbie ghetto started on December 14, 1941. First the mayor summoned Josef Dyament and informed him that the Jews were being sent out of the town. German police forces then rounded up the remaining Jews on the market square—just less than 1,000 people—and concentrated them in the theater and the church. Here they were beaten, and the rabbi was threatened with a revolver and forced to scream that the war was the fault of the Jews. On the next morning, the Jews were released back to their homes, but soon afterwards the mayor ordered 6 men to report for work, and they were sent to the Chełmno extermination center, where they joined the grave-digger detachment that worked in the forest. On December 17, 1941, the Jews were gathered again in the theater and the church, and after being beaten there and tormented, on December 18–19 they were deported on trucks to Chełmno, where they were murdered by poison gas.⁷ After the deportation, the belongings of the Jews were collected and also stored in the church.⁸

A few survivors of the camps returned to Dąbie in 1945, but these people left soon afterwards, and the Jewish community in Dąbie was not reconstituted.



A house where Jewish victims' belongings were kept photographed as part of a war-crimes investigation by the Tribunal of Łódź, ca. June 1945. USHMM WS #51703, COURTESY OF IPN

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Dąbie during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Danuta Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 122–184, pp. 136, 169; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 149, no. 729; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 86.

Primary sources on the Dąbie ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/394 and I/799; 210/314); IPN (ASG sygn. 54, p. 93); USHMM (RG-15.079M; RG-15.019M, reel 16 [ASG, vol. 54]; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/314); USHMPA (2005.429.1); VHF (# 7567); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 38, Ring I/799; and VHF, # 7567, testimony of Martin Gruenfeld.
2. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 38, Ring I/799.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/314.
4. Ibid., RG-15.079M, reel 38, Ring I/799. RG-15.019M, reel 16, ASG, vol. 54 (województwo poznańskie), p. 93 (Dąbie), gives the date of July 15, 1941, for the establishment of the ghetto and states that it was on Kiliński and Pilsudski Streets.
5. Ibid., RG-15.079M, reel 38, Ring I/799.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., RG-15.079M, reel 14, Ring I/394, and reel 38, Ring I/799; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 437. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 86, claims that there were about 1,000 inhabitants of the ghetto at that time. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 149, put the number at about 920.

8. USHMPA, WS # 51704 and 51707.

DOBRA

Pre-1939: Dobra, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Doberbühl, Kreis Turek, initially Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Dobra, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

The town of Dobra is located 66 kilometers (41 miles) northwest of Łódź. The 1921 census registered 1,207 Jews living in Dobra.

As soon as the town was occupied, the Wehrmacht shot 10 residents, including both Poles and Jews. Wehrmacht forces and a detachment of the German Gendarmerie were permanently stationed in Dobra. A German named Schweikert was nominated as the Kreis administrator; after the ghetto's establishment, he was placed in charge of its affairs.

Mordka Francuz was the chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Judenrat conscripted Jews for labor that consisted of cleaning for the Wehrmacht and manual gravel extraction for road repair projects. As the Germans decided to redesign the center of the town, its streets were widened, and the rows of tenement houses on the market square and on Kilińskiego Street were demolished.

Some of the better-off Jewish families were driven out of their houses and businesses, which were given in turn to Germans and ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). The synagogue and two adjoining houses were razed in December 1939; other sources mention that the synagogue was converted into an officers' mess (*Kasino*).

Restrictions imposed on the community included a 7:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. curfew, which was so strictly enforced that several Jews were shot for disobeying it. The number of people allowed to attend Jewish funerals was limited to six. Jews above the age of six were obliged to wear a yellow patch with a Star of David emblem sewn on the front and back of their clothing. The word “Jude” also had to be written inside the star using Hebrew-like letters.¹

In May 1940, German soldiers stationed in Dobra were sent to fight in France and were replaced by another group that was more hostile to the Jewish population.

In the summer or fall of 1940, as survivor Benjamin Jacobs reported: “the Nazis decided to clear Dobra’s slums and create a ghetto there.” The ghetto was located in the town’s center, around Składkowskie and Tylne Streets. Jewish families who already lived there were allowed to keep only one room for

themselves and had to give up the rest to those moving in from other parts of Dobra. Jacobs estimates that the ghetto held 300 to 400 Jews. Throughout its existence its population had no access to medical assistance. The ghetto remained unfenced, but Jews were ordered not to leave it. Trade with Poles took place in secluded parts of the ghetto.²

In May 1941, Schweikert ordered the Judenrat to deliver men aged 15 to 60 for labor. Only one man in each family could remain in Dobra; the selection was left to the family. According to Jacobs, laborers were dispatched by trucks to a labor camp in Steineck, near Poznań.³

The Dobra ghetto was liquidated on October 3, 1941, and its Jews were deported to the gmina of Kowale Pańskie, where Jews from other towns in the Kreis (including Turek, Tuliszków, and Uniejów) were also transferred. Jechewet Trzaskała was registered as “deceased” in the course of the deportation from Dobra.

On October 20, 1941, the Kowale gmina and the settlements it encompassed became a so-called rural ghetto under the collective name of Kowale Pańskie. Such rural ghettos were erected for Jews deported from nearby towns, but they were treated by the Germans only as a temporary holding place. In Kowale, Jews were quartered in houses and farm buildings of evicted Polish farmers; some Poles remained there and were forced to house several Jewish families on their farms.⁴

In December 1941, the Judenrat in Kowale was ordered to select 1,100 Jews deemed unfit for labor, who were then deported via Dobra to the newly opened Chełmno extermination camp.⁵ The final liquidation of the Kowale ghetto took place at the end of July 1942, when its remaining residents were sent to Chełmno for extermination.

SOURCES Most of the information regarding the Dobra ghetto comes from Benjamin Jacobs, *The Dentist of Auschwitz: A Memoir* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995). The same survivor also has a testimony in VHF (# 17426).

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NOTES

1. See the Web site www.dobra.net.pl/dobra/strony/historia.htm; VHF, # 17426, testimony of Benjamin Jacobs, 1996; Jacobs, *The Dentist of Auschwitz*, pp. 20, 22–23, 25, 29.

2. See www.dobra.net.pl/dobra/strony/historia.htm; VHF, # 17426. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 202, 205, dates the formation of the Dobra ghetto in December 1940, citing OKBZHŁ, KO 13/85, p. 50, and describes it, however, as having been enclosed.

3. VHF, # 17426.

4. Czesław Łuczak, *Dzień po dniu w okupowanej Wielkopolsce i na Ziemi Łódzkiej (Kraj Warty)* (Poznań: Wyd. Lektor, 1993), p. 159; Artur Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1961), p. 226; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: województwo konińskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1981), p. 21.

5. Łuczak, *Dzień po dniu*, pp. 167–168.

GĄBIN

Pre-1939: Gąbin (Yiddish: Gombin), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Gombin, Kreis Gostynin, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Gąbin, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Gąbin is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) northeast of Łódź. On the eve of World War II the Jewish population of Gąbin was 2,312.¹ German troops captured Gąbin on September 17, 1939. In the first days of occupation a German military administration was in control of the town. At this time the synagogue was burned down, and the rabbi was arrested and probably murdered. Soon Jewish stores were confiscated, and some Jews were evicted from their homes to make room for ethnic German families. In October 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat), consisting of six persons, was established. The head of the Judenrat was Mosze Want; his brother served as head of the Jewish Police. The tasks of the Jewish Council included the preparation of identification registers and the collection of items demanded by the German authorities.² Forced labor was a key element in the persecution process from the start. Initially, Jews were kidnapped on the streets and were put to work clearing debris left from the bombardment of the city. Subsequently the Judenrat organized the compulsory forced labor imposed by the Germans on all Jewish men aged between 18 and 60.

According to a census conducted by the authorities in Hohensalza in December 1939, the Jewish population of Gąbin consisted of 1,949 Jews and 5,501 non-Jewish inhabitants.³

The first signs of a large Aktion against the Jews came on April 20, 1940, when a large number of German policemen arrived from Gostynin and the neighboring villages. During this Aktion the Jews were forced out of their houses and beaten with sticks and whips. Elderly and sick people were killed. Dozens of Jews were locked in the local pub guarded by the SS, where they were beaten with metal chains to force them to pay a large ransom. Such incidents happened repeatedly. Even the young son of the head of the Jewish Councils and a 14-year-old girl named Hanna Klinger were murdered. The following people were particularly brutal towards the Jews: Gustav Kramer, a pre-war resident of Gąbin and an active member of the Hitler Youth during the occupation, and others including Heinz Mass, Braun, Heiniger, and Schumacher.⁴

The Gąbin ghetto was established by August 1941. It was located in the southeast part of town. It was surrounded by Kiliński Street, Poprzeczna Street, Cmentarna Street, and parts of Suchy Pień Street. Poles who lived in houses located in the ghetto area were moved out and received mostly small former Jewish apartments.⁵ The mayor, Rode, was responsible for the maintenance of the ghetto. The following people occupied this position during the occupation: Ferdinand Schneider, Rode, Erich Ratzlaff, and Richard Hacke.⁶ At first the ghetto was “open.” That is, Jews could still contact the non-Jewish section of the population relatively easily. Subsequently,

the ghetto was surrounded by a fence and strictly guarded. The guards were ordered to shoot anybody who came close to the ghetto fence or who attempted to escape from the ghetto. In spite of the harsh conditions, such as the confined space and the prevalence of disease, especially typhus, school education continued within the enclosed ghetto under the supervision of Pola Pindek and Hinda Brzezinska.⁷ A.L. Gips managed financial resources received from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). The money donated by people in the ghetto helped to establish a communal kitchen for the poor and the distribution of clothes and medicine. However, conditions in the ghetto became so harsh that the Jewish Council requested help in an official letter. In the middle of 1941, the German authorities started to deport Jewish men from Gąbin to forced labor camps around Poznań. The Jewish Council was forced to prepare the lists of the men to be transferred. When news arrived about the terrible living conditions in these labor camps, the Jews were no longer prepared to report as requested. The German police and the Jewish ghetto police then conducted raids in the ghetto, dragging the men from their apartments.

In 1942, a total of 2,150 people were registered in the Gąbin ghetto. Among them were 250 Jews who had been driven into the ghetto from the surrounding area.⁸ In March 1942, a group of about 500 men was deported from the ghetto to the labor camp of Konin-Czarków (Gemeinschaftslager der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, no. 23 Konin). Before the deportation Aktion took place, the head of the local labor department personally shot the following people: Albert Eichelt, a printer; Majer Kielbert, a trader; and Moszke Geista, the night guard on the local estate. According to the available death records from just one of the labor camps, at least 23 Jews from Gąbin died there between 1942 and 1943.⁹ Sick and elderly people who were not able to work were transferred to the extermination camp at Chełmno and killed. The liquidation of the ghetto was carried out between April 12 and April 14, 1942. The Jews were told that they had to pay a fee of 8 Reichsmark (RM) per person in order to be sent to other ghettos in the "Wartheland." However, they were sent to Chełmno to be gassed.¹⁰ The following units participated in this Aktion: Schutzpolizei, Auxiliary Police (Selbstschutz), the SS, and the local Gendarmerie (Gendarmerieposten Gombin). Some local German residents also took part in the Aktion. At first, the Jews were herded to the Strażacki Square, where many of the victims were beaten, and some of the sick Jews, such as Rafal Mejdak with his wife Hanna and the tailor Żolna, were shot by the SS. The Jews were kept on the square for two to three days before facing a selection among the men, women, and children. The local Polish inhabitants were strictly forbidden to approach the Jews or give them food. However, some local residents managed to bring bread and water to the captives. The only provisions the Jews received from the German authorities for almost three days was a barrel of unclean water from the local pond. After a couple of days, the square became too small for all the gathered Jews. The first transport of 1,900 people was sent to Chełmno.¹¹

One week after the liquidation of the Gąbin ghetto, the remaining Jewish property was auctioned off to the local population. The German authorities took the most valuable items, while any worthless remaining Jewish property was simply burned. In May 1942, the Germans settled Poles into the former Jewish residences in the ghetto area. In exchange, the former Polish houses were given to ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) resettled from Romania to Gąbin. Between August and September 1942 the Jewish cemetery was destroyed.¹² Of the 2,312 pre-war Jews residing in Gąbin, only 212 survived. Of these, just 32 survived the forced labor and concentration camps, were hidden by non-Jews, or lived on the Aryan side; the remainder had escaped to the interior of the Soviet Union.¹³

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Gąbin can be found in the following publications: Jack Zicklin et al., eds., *Gombin: The Life and Destruction of a Jewish Town in Poland* (New York: Gombiner Landsmanschaft in Amerike, 1969); Janusz Szczepański, *Dzieje Gąbina do roku 1945* (Warsaw, 1984); Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma: konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, 3 vols. (Warsaw: PWN, 1997), vol. 1; Danuta Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w 'Kraju Warty' w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955); and Janusz Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach gostynińskim i kutnowskim," in *W 45 rocznicę zagłady skupisk żydowskich w Kraju Warty* (Zduńska Wola, 1987).

Documentation regarding the Gąbin ghetto can be found in the following archives: APŁ (sygn. 29698, Ghettoverwaltung); APP (sygn. 594, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland); AŻIH (sygn. Ring I/108); OKŚZpNPŁdz; USCK (Death books of the concentration camp Konin-Czarków); USHMM (2002.199.1); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Szczepański, *Dzieje Gąbina*, p. 52; M. Chudzyński, ed., *Dzieje Gostynina i ziemi gostynińskiej* (Warsaw, 1990), p. 229; Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk żydowskich," p. 168, table 11.
2. H. Krzewińska, "Zagłada Żydów gąbińskich," part II, in *Notatki Płockie* (Płock, 2000), no. 4/185, p. 18.
3. APP, sygn. 594, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, p. 17.
4. J. Borysiak, "W 50 rocznicę likwidacji getta. Prześladowanie i zagłada ludności żydowskiej Gąbina," in *Notatki Płockie* (Płock, 1992) no. 4/153, p. 37; Krzewińska, "Zagłada Żydów gąbińskich," part II, p. 19.
5. OKŚZpNPŁdz, sygn. OKŁ Ko 11/83, against Z. Tancer, J. Oziemski, J. Sobieski, and J. Matuszewski; OKŚZpNPŁdz, sygn. OKŁ Ko 27/83, against Z. Pytl; IPN, sygn. Zh III/31/35/68, getta, woj. warszawskie.
6. J. Borysiak, "Kalendarium wojny i okupacji w Gąbinie 1939–1945" (unpublished manuscript) p. 2; O. Budrewicz, "Ostatni polski mennonita," *Perspektywy*, no. 38 (1976).
7. Krzewińska, "Zagłada Żydów gąbińskich," part II, p. 19. Before the German occupation, both women had worked as teachers in Polish schools.

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8. Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich,” p. 168, table 11.

9. APŁ, Gettoverwaltung, sygn. 29698, pp. 110–117, 63–65; USCK, Death books of the labor camp Konin-Czarków; Jack Frankel, “Gombin Children in the Camps,” in Zicklin, *Gombin: The Life and Destruction*, pp. 79–82.

10. Sakowska, *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, 1:65–70.

11. Wróbel, “Getta w powiatach gostynińskim i kutnowskim,” p. 14.

12. Szczepański, *Dzieje Gąbina*, p. 282.

13. *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), 7:235; APŁ, Akta Gąbina, sygn. 763, p. 125—report from the town council to the elder of the region in Gostynin on February 4, 1946, which states that 16 Jews were saved; Krzewińska, “Zagłada Żydów gąbińskich,” part II, p. 24. Elisabeth Bates from Gąbin survived on the “Aryan” side on false papers; see USHMM, 2002.199.1.

GOSTYNIN

Pre-1939: Gostynin, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Gasten (renamed Walderode from September 12, 1943), Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Gostynin, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Gostynin is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) north of Łódź. On the eve of war in August 1939, 2,269 Jews were living in the town.¹

German troops occupied Gostynin on September 16, 1939. Despoliation, humiliation, beatings, and killings followed in the months after.

At the end of December 1939, 2,051 Jews were still residing in Gostynin, which had a total population of 9,744.² The German occupation authorities ordered the demolition of the Bet Midrash and used the wood from the ruins as heating material. After German forces had burned down the synagogue in November 1939, they levied a contribution of 10,000 złoty on the Jewish community, to be paid on the following day. This was the first of a series of financial demands made by the German authorities, including one for 25,000 Reichsmark (RM) in December 1939 and another for 5,000 RM in February 1940. This last demand produced only 3,300 RM. As a result, SS forces were sent to check every Jewish household, collecting the remaining amount by violent means.³

Sources disagree about the date on which the ghetto was established, but it was probably on March 15, 1941.⁴ It encompassed the right side of Zamkowa Street from the market square to Bagnista Street. It also included one house on Bagnista Street and one house on Piłsudski Street. On the left-hand side, the ghetto area extended from Olszowa Street and from Piłsudski Street to the Skrwa River. The area of the ghetto was 1.5 hectares (3.7 acres).⁵ Initially the ghetto was open, but later it was strictly isolated from the outside world. It was surrounded by barbed wire and a wooden fence. At first the residents of the ghetto maintained frequent contact



Jewish men wearing triangular badges walk along a street in the Gostynin ghetto, 1941–1942.

USHMM WS # 33442, COURTESY OF GFH

with the Polish population, who were always willing to exchange groceries for craft products. But this period of relatively easy contact between the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds was brief. During this period, Itsak (Antek) Cukierman came to the ghetto several times in his capacity as leader of the Hechaluts-Dror organization. Among the Germans, the following individuals acted in a particularly hostile manner towards the Jews: Jacob Pohl (the owner of a store selling metal products), Buder, Gustav Baum Arendt (partner of the company Arendt & Wilhelm, Hoch- und Tiefbau), Gustav Ilichmann, Weiland (the head of the labor office), and Hein (a shoemaker).⁶

On the orders of the German authorities a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, and among others, individuals named Zajac and Burak became members. A Jewish police force was also established, among whose tasks was to control—from inside the boundaries—entry into and exit from the ghetto. Outside the ghetto, the German Order Police (Gendarmerie and Schutzpolizei) were in charge and were assisted by the local auxiliary police. In accordance with the German authorities' orders, a number of Jews worked for companies outside the ghetto area in tailor workshops, in laundry shops, or in the fields. They were also used for construction projects, including the destruction of churches in Gostynin.⁷

The food ration for the Jews consisted of 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread per day, 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of fat per week, 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of sugar per month, and a quarter of a liter (half a pint) of milk daily. The Jews who worked outside the ghetto received an additional 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread.⁸ In the spring of 1941, a fire decreased the ghetto to only half of its size, with only the western section of the ghetto remaining. According to German sources, their troops accidentally set the buildings on fire on their way to the east. However, the majority of the local population of Gostynin, Jews and Poles, believed that the Germans intentionally set the ghetto on fire.⁹ After this incident, living conditions deteriorated considerably inside the ghetto. Two or more families had to live crammed together in one small apartment. There were also

10 Jewish families from Gdynia and Pomorze in the ghetto. These people had fled from the Generalgouvernement and became trapped in the Gostynin ghetto. One Jewish woman from Palestine was in the ghetto as well.

In June 1941, the first cases of typhus were recorded in the ghetto. Two Jewish medics from the Koło ghetto were sent to Gostynin to care for the patients. The Jews living in the ghetto received help from the Polish population, especially deliveries of food. There were some cases in which Polish families hid Jews. The Piechowicz family on Trakt Gąbin Street hid Moszek Dancyger throughout the occupation; the Sadowski family hid Berl Lejwin and his wife and daughter.¹⁰

In the spring of 1941, the Germans started to deport Jewish young men and women to labor camps in the Poznań region, including the Chodzież camp, called Kolmar in German. In March 1942, a number of Jewish men were transferred to labor camp number 23 in Konin-Czarków (Gemeinschaftslager der Deutschen Arbeitsfront). One German company, Otto Trebitz, Tiefbau, employed 71 Gostynin Jews from this camp on the construction of a railway line. Altogether 850 people from Kreis Gasten were deported to this camp. On February 14, 1942, a poll tax of 8 RM per person was levied on the residents of the ghetto. In the ghettos of Reichsgau Wartheland this tax was a signal of the impending deportation to the extermination camp in Chełmno.

The liquidation of the ghetto took place on April 16–17, 1942. Women with children and also the sick and the elderly—altogether about 350 families—were sent to Chełmno. In total, some 2,000 Jews from Gostynin were murdered in the Chełmno camp. Only about 30 Gostynin Jews survived the war in Poland under German occupation.¹¹

Jewish patients in Gostynin's ward for the mentally ill were exterminated within the framework of the T4 euthanasia program. In early 1940, the authorities ordered that Jewish patients be separated from Polish patients. The extermination of the Jewish patients began on February 27, 1940, when Gestapo men from Płock took away 3 men and 3 women and shot them in the forest near Łąck on Górskie Lake. Those who remained met a similar fate in subsequent transports.¹² In each of these cases, the Gestapo demanded that the patients be released to them on the basis of an order in their possession. It was established that before the war all of these patients had received medical treatment at the expense of the places from which they came. On October 22, 1940, 15 men and 7 women were deported to the institution in Kobierzyn near Kraków. During the first days of June 1941, the German authorities conducted a selection among those who were sick and unable to work. All of the sick Jews were selected. On June 9, 1941, 12 men and 10 women were taken to an institution for the poor in Śrem, close to Poznań. These were the last of the mentally ill Jews from the Gostynin hospital. Between June 10 and June 12, 1941, they were taken from Śrem to a forest in the vicinity of Mosina near Poznań, and there they were murdered, poisoned with fumes in a gas truck. This

Aktion was conducted by a special SS unit, called Sonderkommando Lange (named after its head, SS-Obersturmführer/Kriminalkommissar Herbert Lange) made up of Gestapo officers.¹³

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Gostynin and the ghetto can be found in the following publications: Y.M. Biderman, ed., *Pinkes Gostynin: Yizkor Bukh* (New York: Gostynin Yizkor Book Committee, 1960); Marian Chudzyński, ed., *Dzieje Gostynina i ziemi gostynińskiej* (Warsaw, 1990); Danuta Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w 'Kraju Warty' w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955); Janusz Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach gostynińskiej i kutnowskiej," in *W 45 rocznicę zagłady skupisk żydowskich w Kraju Warty* (Zduńska Wola, 1987); and Marian Kaczmarek, "Eutanazja," *Kraju Warty, Kronika wielkopolski* (Poznań), no. 1 (36) (1985).

Documents on the Gostynin ghetto can be found in the following archives: APP (Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, sygn. 594 and 2111); and AŻIH (Ring I, no. 952).

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NOTES

1. Chudzyński, *Dzieje Gostynina*, pp. 229, 311; Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk żydowskich," p. 168, table 11.
2. APP, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland (Reichsstatthalter), sygn. 594, p. 17.
3. R. Sakowska, "Relacje Daniela Fligelmana czfonka 'Oneg Szabat'," *BŻIH*, no. 1-2/137-138, pp. 188–189.
4. B. Konarska-Pabiniak, *Gostynin. Szkice z przeszłości* (Gostynin, 2004), p. 40, gives the date of March 15, 1941, for the establishment of the ghetto in Gostynin; see also Sakowska, "Relacje Daniela Fligelmana," p. 189; Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach," p. 3; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 186.
5. Konarska-Pabiniak, *Gostynin*, p. 40; Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach," p. 5.
6. APP, Akta Miasta Płocka, Zarząd Miejski w Gostyninie. Referat Administracyjny. Rejestracja Zbrodni Niemieckich 1945, sygn. 123.
7. Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach," p. 7.
8. Konarska-Pabiniak, *Gostynin*, p. 40.
9. Chudzyński, *Dzieje Gostynina*, p. 540.
10. APP, Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2111, pp. 262–264; Chudzyński, *Dzieje Gostynina*, pp. 540–542.
11. R. Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy* (Warsaw, PWN, 1997), 1:25, 27; AŻIH, Ring I/57, letter of M. Habergryc on February 17, 1942, to his family in the Warsaw ghetto regarding the impending liquidation Aktion; Chudzyński, *Dzieje Gostynina*, p. 542.
12. E. Wilczkowski, "Los chorych psychicznie w szpitalu dla psychicznie i nerwowo chorych w Gostyninie w latach okupacji niemieckiej," *Rocznik Psychiatryczny* (Warsaw) 37:1 (1945): 104–112.
13. Ibid.; Kaczmarek, "Eutanazja," p. 78; Z. Jaroszewski, ed., *Zagłada chorych psychicznie w Polsce 1939–1945* (Warsaw, 1993), p. 138; OKŚZpNPPoz, sygn. OKP. I.S. 24/67.

GRABÓW

Pre-1939: Grabów, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Grabow, Landgemeinde in Kreis Lentschütz (Łęczyca), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Grabów, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Grabów is located 52 kilometers (32.5 miles) north of Łódź and 17 kilometers (11 miles) northeast of Łęczyca. The 1921 official census recorded 915 Jews out of a total population of 1,658—or 55.2 percent.

German forces occupied Grabów about a week after the start of the invasion on September 1. Soon after their arrival, German forces temporarily rounded up all men aged between 16 and 30. In the fall of 1939, Jewish males, including young boys, were captured and sent to perform forced labor.¹ At this time, Jews who had escaped from other regions of the German occupation settled in Grabów. For January 1, 1940, it is reported that 142 of the 967 Jews living in Grabów were refugees.² By December 1940, the number of refugees had declined somewhat to 60 people out of a total population of 960. The refugees came from Pomerania, Poznań, Kalisz, and Łódź.³ Not much is known about antisemitic events in Grabów following the German occupation. Michael Alberti states that the Jewish population lived widely spread among the Germans and other non-Jews, and therefore it was impossible to impose restrictions on them, regulating the areas where they were allowed to live, or their access to certain areas of the town.⁴

Up until October 1940, there were 120 Jews employed by the authorities on local estates, receiving 50 Reichpfennigs per day. Initially the community was able to look after the refugees and impoverished Jews from its own funds, but by the end of 1940, 70 percent of the Jews were in need of help and local resources had been exhausted. Therefore, the Jewish aid committee in Grabów appealed urgently to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw for financial aid in December 1940, as scores of Jewish families were starving and freezing due to a lack of food and heating material.⁵

In 1941, the Germans began to concentrate the Jews in Landkreis Lentschütz. One of the designated concentration points was Grabów. Already in the first quarter of 1941, most likely in January, about 400 Jews arrived from nearby Łęczyca.⁶ According to *Obozy hitlerowskie*, in February 1942 there was a ghetto in Grabów, and the Jews from Łęczyca were moved into this ghetto. The ghetto probably held about 1,200 people.

Jewish survivor Harry Jacuby also mentions a ghetto, noting it was formed by the time Jews were brought in from other towns. The Jews were all confined within the ghetto and not permitted to leave. Additional people were moved into the houses of those Jews who lived there previously. By this time most Jewish stores had been closed down or taken over by local ethnic Germans. As shortages increased, Jews sold their remaining property to buy bread.⁷

In the course of 1941, the Germans began to make use of the Jewish labor force by establishing, as in many other

ghettos, a number of “workshops,” mainly sewing workshops. According to *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, a significant number of Jews was employed in these sites. The legal income provided here offered them a meager means of survival, as did smuggling and illicit commerce with the surrounding Polish population⁸—both indicators of the harsh living conditions in the ghetto.

During the summer of 1941, there were a series of round-ups of younger Jews, who were sent away to forced labor camps, including a camp known as Dornfeld, near Poznań. For a time their parents who remained behind in the Grabów ghetto were able to send them packages with food and extra clothing, but afterwards this contact was broken off. Some of the youths who survived these forced labor camps were subsequently sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp and, if they survived the selections and other ordeals there, on to other camps.⁹

Grabów was located not far from the extermination camp in Chełmno, so it is not surprising that the Jews of Grabów were among the first to learn about the events taking place there, once the Germans had commenced the mass murder of the Jews in Warthegau during the winter of 1941–1942. By January of 1942, the rabbi of Grabów sent a letter describing the Chełmno extermination camp to the Jewish Council in the Łódź ghetto, but the letter did not arrive there until the summer. An eyewitness who had escaped from Chełmno and arrived in Grabów in the second half of January 1942 provided details about the extermination of the Jews.¹⁰ Similar postcards with coded references to the fate of the Jews of the region around Grabów were also sent by the rabbi and other inhabitants of the town to relatives in the Warsaw ghetto.¹¹ As a result of this knowledge, some Jews tried to escape from the town and to reach the Generalgouvernement. Others tried to get back to Łęczyca, where they had come from originally. But not many succeeded, and the majority of the Grabów Jews had no place to escape to. In April 1942, the Jews in Grabów, around 1,240 people, were taken to the extermination camp at Chełmno and killed.¹²

SOURCES A detailed description of the Jewish community of Grabów can be found in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 84–85. One of the earliest mentions of the Grabów ghetto can be found in *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 137, 161. The fate of the Jewish population of Grabów is also documented in Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 201–202. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), mentions Grabów on p. 190.

Archival sources on the fate of the Jewish community of Grabów during the Holocaust include the following: AŻIH (Ring I/549 and 210/351); IPN (kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC 210/351]); VHF (# 9788); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 9788, testimony of Harry Jacuby.
2. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 84.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/351, Jüdische Hilfskomiteet an AJDC Warsaw, December 18, 1940.
4. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 201.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/351, Jüdische Hilfskomiteet an AJDC Warsaw, December 18, 1940.
6. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 84; Yitzhak Frenkel, ed., *Sefer Linshitz* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Leczyca in Israel, 1953), pp. 182–83.
7. VHF, # 9788.
8. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 85.
9. VHF, # 9788.
10. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. xx–xxi.
11. Manfred Struck, ed., *Chełmno/Kulmbof: Ein vergessener Ort des Holocaust?* (Bonn/Berlin: gegen Vergessen—Für Demokratie e.V., 2001), pp. 91–95.
12. Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), p. 84.

GRODZIEC

Pre-1939: Grodziec (Yiddish: Gruyets), village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Grossdorf, Kreis Konin, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Grodziec, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

The village of Grodziec is located 8 kilometers (5 miles) southwest of Rychwał. The 1921 census registered 107 Jewish residents.

In November or December 1939, the German authorities expelled approximately 300 Jews from Rychwał to Grodziec. Each of the newcomers was permitted to take with them up to 13 to 14 kilograms (30 pounds) of belongings. According to one of the expellees, survivor Lena Obar, each Grodziec family had to take in up to three families from Rychwał. She recalls life in Grodziec as very depressing, particularly due to the housing situation, as people were forced to sleep on the floor. As regards labor, Obar stated that the Jews did not have to work “too much.” She also described Grodziec “as a little ghetto” on her arrival.¹

Most sources date the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1940, when the remaining Jews of Kreis Konin were deported to a network of so-called hamlet ghettos (*Dorfghettos*) in the southern part of the Kreis; one of them was Grodziec and its adjoining settlements.

According to Ryszard Głoszkowski, the Germans planned to build a military training ground in the southern part of the Kreis and so wanted to depopulate the area of all its inhabitants; however, on July 14, 1940, the plan was postponed

“until the end of the war,” and “for this reason the deportations from the area were delayed.” The temporary abandonment of the construction of the training ground likely influenced the decision to concentrate the Jews of the Kreis in this area.

With the final expulsion of the Jews from Konin in mid-July 1940, some of its residents were resettled to the Grodziec ghetto. An account from the Ringelblum Archive, by an anonymous Jew from Konin, describes the deportation to the hamlet ghettos: “On July 17, the Gendarmes burst into all Jewish apartments, allowing everyone to take a small bundle and then driving them out, not even excluding the sick and paralyzed . . . to an assembly point. From there, after a nightlong march, everyone was brought to three villages: Grodziec, Zagórów, and Rzgów (around this time the remainder of the [Jewish] population of the Konin Kreis was [also] resettled there).”²

The same author adds:

One has to admit, that the [Christian] inhabitants of those villages took on a more warm-hearted attitude towards us. Before the war, there were boards with inscriptions like “Jews out!” or “Beat the Jew!” Now the deportees were offered bread and potatoes, [the locals] refusing to accept payment for them. There was a priest from Grodziec who told [his parishioners] to bring out bread and milk for the deportees, and then called from the pulpit “to help out our brother Jews.” He was later imprisoned in the concentration camp in Dachau.³

A Judenrat was organized in the ghetto; its composition is unknown. On their arrival, the Kreis Landrat had declared that the Jews in hamlet ghettos would have to “muddle through on their own,” denying them any special help, although other accounts credit him with having arranged at least some transport for the deportees. At that time, the Jews concentrated in Grodziec apparently were restricted in their movement. The Ringelblum account mentioned above notes that two days after their resettlement, five Konin Jews were required to obtain a special permit in order to return to Konin. Other accounts indicate that at least one Jew was severely beaten and died from his wounds when caught attempting to return home to salvage part of his property, as such trips were forbidden on pain of death. In the meantime, resettled ethnic Germans had moved into many of the vacated Jewish properties in Konin.⁴

Around this period (July 17–18, 1940), the Jewish community of nearby Skulsk (Jewish population of 210 in 1939) was expelled, with some of its inhabitants being relocated to the Grodziec ghetto. In addition, K. Gorczyca and Z. Lorek have established that the Jews from Kramsk and Wilczyn and a number of Jews from Ślesin were also relocated to the Grodziec ghetto that same summer,⁵ raising the number of inhabitants to 2,000.

According to Isaiah Trunk, residents of such hamlet ghettos in the Warthegau were supposed to draw their livelihood from farming. Secondary sources state that the majority of such ghettos were unfenced, unguarded, and only occasionally patrolled by the Germans. They disagree on whether Poles

living in the Grodziec hamlet ghettos were evicted from their households to accommodate the ghetto residents; it appears, however, that some at least took in the Jews on their farms, using them as unpaid labor in return for food and shelter. Jews generally describe conditions here as tolerable, although work hours were long. Some Jews subsequently were sent back from Grodziec to Konin and other towns for periods of forced labor, with most returning to Grodziec by February 1941.⁶

At the beginning of March 1941, it appears that all of the Jews were deported from the hamlet ghetto in Grodziec and its surrounding villages as part of the further removal of non-Germans from the region, but also in connection with the resumption of plans to establish a military training ground south of Konin. The Jews in Grodziec were loaded onto about 300 wagons and divided between their deportation destinations only during the journey to the Konin railway station. Some of the Jews were sent to the nearby Zagórów ghetto, and the others were destined for the town of Józefów Biłgorajski (Distrikt Lublin). According to one account, some people decided to go with the group destined for Józefów, as they wanted to see their hometown of Konin for one last time.⁷ This latter group was sent by rail first to Łódź, where they were forced to hand over jewelry and other valuables. Then they were dispatched to Distrikt Lublin by train a couple of days later. It appears that some of these deportees were instead sent to other destinations in Distrikt Lublin, including Izbica and Krasnystaw, while of those who reached Józefów Biłgorajski, some of them were sent on after a few weeks to other destinations, such as Dęblin, Szczepieszyn, and Zamość, due to overcrowding in Józefów. More than 2,000 Jews were deported from Kreis Konin at this time, of which just under half were probably from the Grodziec ghetto.⁸

Of the group of about 1,000 Jews sent from Grodziec to Łódź, some 180 able-bodied men were selected out from the deportations to Distrikt Lublin and kept initially for about six weeks in the Łódź ghetto for various work tasks. After that they were sent to a labor camp near Gdańsk to work on road construction. Subsequently some of the survivors of this group were deported to labor camps in the Baltic states.⁹

One account in the yizkor book mentions that some of the elderly and sick were selected out in Łódź and killed by lethal injections, but this report remains unconfirmed.¹⁰ Other sources indicate that there may have been a subsequent deportation from Grodziec to Distrikt Lublin, but most date the evacuation of the Jews from Grodziec and the surrounding villages in early March 1941, which effectively meant the liquidation of this hamlet ghetto.

It should be noted, however, that there were Jews and Poles working in a labor camp established in Grodziec at the turn of 1942–1943, but the origin of these Jews and their subsequent fate are unknown.

The fate of the Jews sent to the Zagórów ghetto is difficult to reconstruct, as there were probably no survivors. Available sources indicate that the Zagórów ghetto was liquidated in the fall of 1941, probably between September 24 and October 3 but possibly a few weeks later. Its inhabitants were murdered

between Niesłusz and Rudzica, in the “Długa Łąka” Forest or, according to other sources, in the Kazimierz Biskupi Forest. The executioners were members of an SS-Sonderkommando, led by SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Lange of the Gestapo in Poznań. According to a Polish witness, Dr. Mieczysław Sęnkiewicz, who was taken to the grave site to sort out the clothing during the massacre and fill in the graves, some of the Jews were more or less boiled alive in one mass grave when water was poured onto quick lime already in the trench, and other victims were brought to the site as corpses by a gas van. Presumably the Germans were experimenting with various forms of mass murder, as this was at the very onset of the killings in the Warthegau.¹¹ Buried in mass graves, the victims’ bodies were exhumed and burned in 1944.¹²

SOURCES The following publications contain information on the Grodziec ghetto: D. Sierpacka, “Postawy Polaków wobec ludności żydowskiej w Kraju Warty,” in A. Namysło, ed., *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy* (Warsaw: IPN, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), pp. 201–202; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 196; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 192; Ryszard Głoszkowski, “Zbrodnie hitlerowskie na ludności polskiej w powiecie konińskim w latach 1939–1945,” in *Eksterminacja ludności polskiej w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Wyniki badań ośrodków terenowych* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, GKBZHP, 1979), pp. 77, 81–82; J. Gulczyński, “Konińska relacja z Archiwum Ringelbluma,” *Rocznik Koniński*, no. 14 (2003): 198–199; Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 113; Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 1, Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 165 (Skulsk) and p. 262 (Rychwał); Janina Kiełboń, “Deportacje Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939–1943),” in D. Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt: Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2004), pp. 163–164; and M. Gelbart, ed., *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatah uve-burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Konin be-Yisrael, 1968).

Relevant archival documentation includes the following: OKŚZpNPPoz (III Ds. 19/68); USHMM (RG-15.079M, Ring I/841); and VHF (# 31143).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 31143, testimony of Lena Obar, 1997.
2. Julius Ancer, www.chgs.umn.edu/histories/minnesotansandholocaust/ancer/index.html; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/841, Lb. 848, Mf. 0827, reel 39.
3. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/841; see also Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 526–527, who notes that the priest soon died in the camp.
4. Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 527, 559.
5. “We Remember the Extermination Pits!” at www.zchor.org/extermination/pits.htm.

6. Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 536, 541.
7. Ibid., p. 536.
8. VHF, # 31143—Obar believes she was deported to Józefów in 1939 or 1940; Ancer, www.chgs.umn.edu/histories/minnesotans/andHolocaust/ancer/index.html. See also Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 529–530, 545–546, which estimates that about 800 Jews from Grodziec were sent to Józefów.
9. Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 545–546; but see also USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/841, for a diverging account.
10. Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 528–529.
11. OKŚZpNPPoz, III Ds. 19/68, testimony of Dr. Mieczysław Sękiewicz; Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 595–601; see also Isaiah Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto: A History*, trans. and ed. Robert Moses Shapiro (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), pp. 229–230.
12. “We Remember the Extermination Pits!”

IZBICA KUJAWSKA

Pre-1939: Izbica Kujawska, town, Poznań województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Mühlenthal, Landgemeinde, Kreis Wartbrücken (Koło), Regierungsbezirk Hohenlohe, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Izbica Kujawska, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Izbica Kujawska is located 88 kilometers (55 miles) northwest of Łódź. Before the outbreak of World War II, there were about 1,400 Jews living in Izbica Kujawska.

In the first days of the war, a number of Jews fled to areas further to the east, but some of these people returned within a few days, only to find their homes destroyed and the contents robbed. According to the account of Sarah Mancha, local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), who were mostly wealthy farmers, were among those who participated in plundering the Jews. Among the ethnic Germans who showed particular cruelty to their Jewish neighbors during the occupation were men named Schmalz, Hubert, Lizka, Karger, Wiesenthal, and Otto Parizka.¹

In early 1940, the German authorities established a ghetto in Izbica Kujawska in which about 1,000 people resided, possibly including Jews from nearby villages. In the ghetto, severe overcrowding, hunger, and disease caused a number of deaths.²

In the records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), one letter has survived and states that by the end of 1940 the Jews of Izbica Kujawska were starving and in desperate need of support. On December 4, 1940, the Reichsvereinigung der Juden (Reich Union of Jews) in Germany sent 500 Reichsmark (RM) via the AJDC to support the Jews in Izbica Kujawska. The Jewish Council (Judenrat) then asked for additional support, due to the onset of winter and the large number of Jews in need of help. In particular, the council asked for bread, potatoes, and other groceries.³

Another witness, Jehuda Czarnoczapska, claims that on June 24, 1941, all the men of the Izbica Kujawska ghetto—according to his statement, 255 men—were arrested and taken to labor

camps in the Poznań region. They had no time to say goodbye to their families.⁴ Among the various camps to which men from Izbica Kujawska were sent were those in Mogilno, Dąbrowka, Inowrocław, and Poznań. In the camps they suffered from hunger and exhaustion, and most probably did not subsequently return to the ghetto.⁵

The ghetto remained in existence only until January 1942. On January 12, 1942, the seven Gendarmes based in Izbica Kujawska ordered the Jewish Council to assemble a group of men for work. About 40 men reported and were told to come back the next day with shovels and bread rations for two days. Then on January 13, since only 15 men from Izbica reported for work, another 14 were taken from a work site in nearby Bugaj, and these 29 men were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp by truck. The Izbica Jews each carried a rucksack with spare clothes. As they departed, some of the younger Poles mocked them, but the elderly Poles wept to see them go.⁶

Then on January 15, 1942, the Germans ordered the Jewish Council in Izbica to gather all the Jews of the ghetto on the following day for the collection of a poll tax. Fearing that a deportation Aktion was likely, it seems that the Judenrat probably advised the Jews to hide or flee. At 5:00 A.M. on January 16, large units of German police, assisted by local ethnic Germans, searched the ghetto house by house and gathered the Jews in the local church. During the manhunt, several Jews were shot, including the head of the Jewish Council, Eliyahu Izbicki. Only a handful managed to escape and find refuge in other nearby Jewish communities that were still intact. The Jews in the church were closely guarded overnight and then sent to Chełmno the next day, where they were all murdered by asphyxiation.⁷

The male Jews from Izbica Kujawska and Bugaj sent to Chełmno a few days before were among the grave-digger detail; they had to bury the corpses of the Izbica Jews, once they were unloaded from the gas vans, in mass graves in the forest, not far from the Chełmno camp. Szlamek and Michał Podchlebnik said Kaddish (prayers for the dead) together briefly as they helped to cover the grave—a grave that held their relatives.⁸ By January 19, 1942, word had reached the ghetto in Grabów that the Jews of Izbica Kujawska had all been murdered either by shooting or by poison gas.⁹

SOURCES Information on the Izbica Kujawska ghetto and its liquidation is available in the following publications: Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung”* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 38–39; Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), pp. 101, 120; and Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993), pp. 177–178. The ghetto is also mentioned in: Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 200, no. 1441; and *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 169. On the operation

of the gas vans at Chełmno, see, for example, Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 427–432.

Several primary sources exist regarding the fate of the Jews of Izbica Kujawska during the Holocaust, including the following: AŻIH (210/386A, 301/786, and Ring I/412); IPN (“Ob,” sygn. 177); USHMM (RG-15.084M [AŻIH—Relacje], 301/786 [testimony of Czarnoczapska] and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/368A); and YVA (O-3/2228).

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NOTES

1. YVA, O-3/2228, testimony of Sarah Mancha, as cited by Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof*, p. 38. Schmalz later served in the Gendarmerie.

2. Ibid., gives the date of early 1940 and indicates that the Jews of Babiak and other places were moved in. Other sources, however, indicate that the Jews of Babiak were sent to the “village ghetto” of Bugaj. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 200, no. 1441, dates the establishment of the Izbica Kujawska ghetto in 1941.

3. Jewish Community of Izbica Kujawska to AJDC Kraków, December 23, 1940. See USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/368A.

4. USHMM, RG-15.084M, 301/786.

5. YVA, O-3/2228, as cited by Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof*, p. 38.

6. Accounts of Szlamek and Michał Podchlebnik published in Pawlicka-Nowak, *Chełmno Witnesses Speak*, pp. 101, 120.

7. YVA, O-3/2228, as cited by Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof*, p. 38.

8. Sakowska, *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod*, pp. 177–178, testimony of Szlamek. This source, however, dates the murder of the Izbica Jews a couple of days earlier, on January 13–14, 1942. See also AŻIH, Ring I/412.

9. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. xxi.

KALISZ

Pre-1939: Kalisz, city, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kalisch, center, Kreis Kalisch and Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Kalisz, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Kalisz is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) west of Łódź. On the eve of war in August 1939, there were between 24,000 and 28,000 Jews living in the city.

Around the time of the German invasion on September 1, 1939, thousands of Jews fled, and about three quarters of the population abandoned the city. German armed forces occupied the city on September 6, 1939.¹ Almost immediately the Germans began a typical program of murder, abuse, and robbery.

On October 10, 1939, the Germans ordered the establishment of a “Council of Elders of the Jewish Community” (Judenrat). Since none of the former community leaders re-

mained, the German governor of Kalisz summoned the cantor of the New Synagogue, Gustav Hahn, and ordered him to establish the council with 25 members to represent the Jews to the German authorities and ensure their obedience to all German orders and regulations. The Judenrat recruited a large staff of officials to carry out its tasks and prepared a detailed register of the Jewish population, with precise details about their professions and property. A series of German restrictions and orders soon followed, including demands for war compensation to be paid in money and valuables.²

Every day the German authorities requisitioned about 150 young men, sometimes more, for forced labor. The Jews were summoned for work two or three days per week, but the more wealthy Jews were permitted to buy replacements, which also supplemented the income of the Judenrat. The Jews were required to empty Jewish shops, clear away ruins, sweep the streets, repair damaged buildings, and clean barracks and police stations. The Jewish workers were brutally beaten, and Jewish women were forced to take off their clothing and use it to wash floors and clean toilets. Sometimes Jewish forced laborers were required to bury those sentenced to death and shot in the Jewish cemetery; some of these workers were also shot. The Germans did not pay any wages but provided food at some workplaces.³

In early November a rumor spread that a ghetto was to be established in a very small area. This required a number of Jews to move into the indicated quarter, away from the city center and major streets. Certain areas of the city began to be cleared systematically to make room for ethnic Germans resettled from the Baltic states. On November 15, Jews living on specific streets were given only a few minutes to pack and were led under guard to the monastery. Anxiety in the Jewish community grew, especially when the Jews were ordered to wear an identifying yellow badge.⁴

On November 20, 1939, several hundred German Gendarmes went into action, clearing entire streets of their Jewish population. The inhabitants were quickly removed from their homes, taking only a few of their belongings, and were escorted to the “Market Hall,” where the hundreds of Jews previously held at the monastery had now been taken. Here the Jews were robbed of any remaining valuables and held in overcrowded conditions under close guard until the next day, when the first group was packed like herrings into trains destined for Warsaw, Rzeszów, and other towns to the east. Many other Jews decided it was impossible to remain in Kalisz and left voluntarily by train. By the end of December 1939, several large transports had left Kalisz, taking almost 20,000 Jews, destined for various towns in the Generalgouvernement, including Lublin, Sandomierz, Kałuszyn, Łuków, Łochów, and Rembertów near Warsaw. The property of the expelled Jews was gathered in large warehouses. The best items were taken by German officials for themselves or sent to Germany, and less valuable items were sold cheaply to the Polish population.⁵

In mid-February 1940, 1,912 Jews held behind barbed wire at the “Market Hall” were receiving rations from the Jewish

hospital. On February 23, 1940, these Jews were transferred to the “open ghetto,” which was established for them and other Jews of the region in the small town of Koźminek about 20 kilometers (12 miles) to the northeast.⁶

After this deportation, only a few hundred Jews remained in Kalisz, mostly as patients or workers at the Jewish hospital, the Jewish old people’s home, or the Jewish orphanage, as well as a few unskilled laborers. These people were gradually augmented by a number of Jews who returned to Kalisz or emerged from hiding. For example, in the spring of 1940, some Polish-Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) returned to the city after being released by the Germans.

In June 1940, the residents of the old people’s home in the Talmud Torah were forced to move to a former lace factory at POW Street no. 13 (formerly Nowa Street). This location became the center of the Jewish labor camp or “ghetto,” which also comprised the Jewish hospital at Szopena 4, and two houses for the roughly 120 Jewish workers at POW Street nos. 16 and 18. Jews were not permitted to go out into the city without a special permit, but contacts with Poles continued, nonetheless. The reorganized Judenrat, still led by Hahn, organized craft workshops at POW Street no. 13 for tailors, shoemakers, furriers, and hatmakers, using machinery brought from workshops in the city that had closed down.⁷

The Jewish hospital, which from November 20, 1939, was directed by Dr. Devorah Gross-Shinagel, served as an important resource for the Jews of the Kalisz region for more than a year. About 1,000 patients passed through it, including some sick Jews brought from the ghettos and camps in the vicinity. Dr. Gross-Shinagel also organized inoculations against typhus for the Jews of the region.⁸

According to the Kalisz yizkor book, on October 26, 1940, the former mayor, Walter Grabowski, now in charge of the health department, selected more than 250 Jews as “unfit for work,” half of them chronic patients from the Jewish hospital. These Jews were loaded into “gas vans” and driven to a nearby forest, where the corpses were unloaded and subsequently burned. The Germans had previously stated that they were being sent for convalescence.⁹

On January 3, 1941, 439 people were registered in the ghetto. In spite of the difficulties, a number of Jews observed Passover in 1941, obtaining matzot from the Koźminek ghetto. In the fall of 1941, about 100 men from the Kalisz ghetto were sent to the Poznań region for forced labor in agriculture, leaving about 350 Jews in Kalisz. In mid-November 1941, the Gestapo conducted another selection, sending 127 Jews, mostly the sick and elderly, including 15 children, to their deaths. These Jews were murdered using a gas van (probably by forces of Sonderkommando Lange). At this time the remnant of the hospital on Szopen Street no. 4 was also closed down. Another 100 Jews, including the remaining youngsters, were sent to their deaths two weeks later on December 1, 1941. Even though the Jewish Council knew of this Aktion in advance, it did nothing to warn those affected.¹⁰

In 1942, the remaining Jews continued to work refurbishing army uniforms for a German industrialist named Sannwald. At the end of May, about 40 more Jews capable of work were sent to the labor camps in Poznań. Then on July 6–8, 1942, the last remaining Jews in the Kalisz ghetto (about 120) were transferred to the Łódź ghetto, and the Jewish community of Kalisz ceased to exist.¹¹

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by I.M. Lask, *The Kalish Book* (Tel Aviv: Societies of Former Residents of Kalish and the Vicinity in Israel and the USA, 1968), contains several personal accounts of the fate of the Jews under the German occupation. Mention of the “ghetto” in Kalisz can be found in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 214–215. Published memoirs concerning the initial German occupation of Kalisz in 1939 include: Henry Skorr, *Through Blood and Tears: Surviving Hitler and Stalin* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006); and Michael Kaplan, *Autobiography of Michael Kaplan* (Miami, FL: Michael Kaplan, 1990).

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Kalisz during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/4490; and Ring I/469); IPN (ASG sygn. 54, k. 62; and 202/II-29, p. 12); USHMM (RG-15.015M, reel 4); VHF; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. “From the Ringelblum Archives,” pp. 281–287, here p. 282; and Wolf Lassman, “Kalish, Kozminek and the Camps,” pp. 275–281, here p. 275—both in Lask, *The Kalish Book*.

2. “From the Ringelblum Archives,” p. 285; Dr. Moshe Gross (Henryk Zelikowski), “The End of the Community,” in Lask, *The Kalish Book*, pp. 251–274, here p. 251.

3. “From the Ringelblum Archives,” pp. 285–286; Gross, “The End of the Community,” pp. 251–252; Skorr, *Through Blood and Tears*, pp. 95–96; and Kaplan, *Autobiography*, pp. 11–12.

4. Gross, “The End of the Community,” p. 252; “From the Ringelblum Archives,” p. 287.

5. Gross, “The End of the Community,” pp. 252–253; Lassman, “Kalish, Kozminek and the Camps,” pp. 275–276.

6. S. Glicksman, “Some Figures (from the Ringelblum Archives and Elsewhere),” in Lask, *The Kalish Book*, pp. 287–288; “From the Ringelblum Archives,” p. 285.

7. Gross, “The End of the Community,” pp. 256–257. The term *ghetto* is used occasionally in the yizkor book, for example, on pp. 263, 272.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 253–256.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 258–259; Glicksman, “Some Figures,” p. 288.

10. Gross, “The End of the Community,” pp. 263–266; see also IPN, CA MSW 775/24, p. 4, Schupokommando Kalisch an Gestapo, Kripo, Gerndarmeriekreis und städt. Wirtschaftsamtsamt Kalisch, November 24, 1941.

11. Glicksman, “Some Figures,” p. 288; Gross, “The End of the Community,” pp. 268–271; see also Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 220–222, 233–234.

KOŁO

Pre-1939: Koło, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wartbrücken, center, Kreis Wartbrücken, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Koło, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Koło is located about 73 kilometers (45.5 miles) northwest of Łódź. In September 1939, there were 4,560 Jews among a total of 13,000 residents in Koło.¹

Forces of the Wehrmacht arrived in Koło on September 19, 1939. From the next day on, the Jews of Koło were subjected to forced labor, looting, abuse, and murder.

In December 1940, a ghetto was established in Koło.² It was located primarily in the area of the central market square, and one of its borders was the Warta River. The administration of the Jewish residential area was under the supervision of the mayor of the town, Willi Schönert, whose “energetic” actions against the Jewish population were highly rewarded by the regional government in Hohensalza.³ On the orders of the German authorities a Jewish Council was established. Pinkus Brenner served as the head of this institution. The Jewish Council created a labor department under the supervision of Wron, Neuman, Borkowski, Borensztajn, Lissek, and Frenkiel. The main task of this department was to organize daily the number of Jewish workers demanded by the German authorities.⁴ The ghetto area was supervised and guarded by various police units, including the Gendarmerie, the Security Police, and local ethnic Germans. The nearest main head-

quarters of the Gestapo was located in Konin. The internal Jewish ghetto police consisted of 15 people. The Jews still had the possibility to contact and trade with the surrounding Polish population, which eased living conditions in the ghetto somewhat.

On October 2, 1940, a total of 150 families were transferred to Bugaj and Nowiny Brdowskie (Kreis Wartbrücken, Gemeinde Lubotyń). An unknown number of Jews managed to escape the town, mostly in the direction of Żychlin.⁵ At the end of 1940, out of a total population of 11,228 in Koło, there were still 2,640 Jews.⁶ In June 1941, about 300 Jews were transferred to forced labor camps in the surrounding area. First, those collected were herded into the synagogue, where they had to wait for three days without any food or water. Dr. Franz Sieburg, a representative from the health department of the city of Poznań, was responsible for the selection of Jews fit for work. In addition, engineer Fritz Neumann and the head of the construction department in Poznań were also present.⁷ During their transport to the camps, the Jews were not given any food or water, and the guards beat them. In August 1941, about 100 Jewish girls were transferred to a forced labor camp near Breslau (Wrocław).

From the beginning of 1941, the Jews were strictly forbidden to leave the area of the Koło ghetto. The Jewish Council sent a delegation to the mayor of the town and to the head of the town district, attempting to revoke this order. The result of the negotiation was a ransom demand by the German authorities, officially called a poll tax, of 4 Reichsmark (RM) for every person in the ghetto. The German authorities stated that they required this money to pay for the transfer of the Jews to nearby ghettos in the Generalgouvernement.⁸

On December 8, 1941, the liquidation of the Koło ghetto started. The Jews were deported to the extermination camp in Chełmno. The liquidation Aktion lasted three days until December 10. Before their departure, the victims were gathered in the building of the Jewish Council and in a church. They were allowed to take with them only one piece of hand luggage. During this Aktion, the town was surrounded by armed SS, police, and Gendarmerie units. The Jews were loaded into trucks. During this procedure, one SS member per truck listed the name of every person on their truck (one of the SS men was Hauptsturmführer Böhm). The German authorities tried to make the Jews believe that they were being transferred to labor camps in the east, where they would work on farms and build railroad lines. The sick people were transported in cars and were even given a chauffeur for their “security.” During the organization of this transport the former owner of the sawmill in Koło, named Goldberg, held negotiations with the head of the Jewish Council about his possible succession to the position of “Jewish elder” after the deportation of the ghetto’s inhabitants. He even sent his application for this position to the German authorities.⁹ During the liquidation of the Koło ghetto, many people were shot during the deportation roundup, including Lajzer Feldman, Josef Brandt, Estera Brandt, Chaja Piotrowska, Dawid Zilber, Ela Zilber, and Reisz Zilberberg.¹⁰



German police search an elderly, religious Jew at gunpoint in Koło, ca. 1941. USHMM WS #51047, COURTESY OF IPN

The extermination camp in Chełmno was located only 14 kilometers (9 miles) from Koło. On the first day of the liquidation of the ghetto, about 800 Jews were transferred to this camp in groups of several dozen by truck. During this Aktion, between 2,000 and 2,300 Jews from Koło were killed in Chełmno. The Jews of Koło were the first victims of this extermination camp. However, many of the Koło Jews who had been deported earlier to Bugaj and Nowiny Brdowskie were also transported to Chełmno later on January 13, 1942.¹¹ Efforts were made by the Jews in nearby ghettos to discover the fate of Koło's Jews. For example, the Jewish Council in the Dąbie ghetto sent two separate missions to Koło to gather information about the fate of the deported Jews on December 9 and December 11, 1941.¹²

After the war a total of 27 Jews returned to Koło.¹³ The saddler Michał Podchlebnik managed to escape from the Chełmno camp. He was born in Koło, and he gave a statement on June 9, 1948, for the Polish Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes against the Polish Nation and testified about the liquidation of the Koło ghetto and the killings in Chełmno.¹⁴

At his trial after the war in Poznań, Fritz Neumann was accused of herding the victims to the transfer point and being responsible for their deaths; he was convicted and sentenced to death on November 18, 1948. He was executed on May 13, 1949.

SOURCES Publications with information regarding the Koło ghetto include the following: Mordechai Halter, ed., *Sefer Kolo: Finfbundert Yor Yidish Kolo* (Israel: Irgune Kolo be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1958); Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Dwa etapy. Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów w oczach ofiar. Szkic historyczny i dokumenty* (Wrocław, 1986), p. 136; M. Tyszkowa, "Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941–1943. Dokumenty Biura Propagandy i Informacji KG AK w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego," *BŻIH*, nos. 2–3 (1992): 47; W. Bednarz, *Obóz straceń w Chełmnie nad Nerem* (Warsaw, 1946); and J. Burszta, ed., *Sześćset lat miasta Koła* (Poznań, 1963).

Documents on the history of the Jewish community of Koło and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APP (sygn. 594 and 1407); AŻIH (301/29; Ring I/825, I/844, II/303); IPN (SOP 62); MMŻ (SPK, Zg 33/47, 164/47, 122/47, and 12/48); and YVA.

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trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Danuta Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w 'Kraju Warty' w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 169, table 12.
2. IPN, Kolekcja "Ob.," sygn. 177.
3. APP, Reichstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, sygn. 1407, files 62–63.
4. AŻIH, Ring II/300, p. 2.
5. Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk," p. 169, table 12.
6. APP, Reichstatthalter, sygn. 594, file 26.
7. IPN, SOP 62, case against Fritz Neumann, pp. 66–67, statement of Szymon Frajdlewicz; p. 68, statement of Abram Harap; p. 91, statement of Jakob Szulc; p. 176, statement of

Cham Majer; pp. 176 and verso, statement of Józef Fuchs. See also Halter, *Sefer Kolo*, pp. 252–253.

8. Tyszkowa, "Eksterminacja Żydów," p. 47.
9. Bednarz, *Obóz straceń*, p. 40.
10. MMŻ, SPK, Zg 33/47; Zg 164/47; Zg 122/47; Zg 12/48.
11. IPN, ASG, sygn. 54, file 103.
12. Sakowska, *Dwa etapy*, p. 136.
13. S. Szklarski, "Polityka Niemiec wobec Żydów na przykładzie Ziemi Konińskiej," *Głos Kolski* (Koło), no. 22 (1992): 6.
14. Bednarz, *Obóz straceń*, pp. 39–45.

KONIN

Pre-1939: Konin, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Landkreis Konin, Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Konin is about 100 kilometers (62 miles) north-northwest of Łódź. There were 2,300 Jews living in the Konin kehilla in 1936, which apart from Konin included the following gminas with small Jewish populations: Rzgów (Dąbie settlement), Brzeźno (Brzeźno, Krzymów, and Paprotnia settlements), and Gosławice (Czarków settlement). For example, in 1936, there were 11 Jewish families living in Brzeźno and 8 in Gosławice. By 1937, the number of Jewish residents was 2,386 and was estimated at approximately 2,500 in 1939. On the outbreak of World War II, the Jewish population constituted about 20 percent of the total population of Konin.

After the roundup of between 1,080 and 1,200 Jews on November 30, 1939, the first deportation of Jews from Konin took place on December 3, 1939. These Jews were sent to Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski in Distrikt Radom within the Generalgouvernement.¹ People were given only minutes to prepare for this trip and could take with them only necessities. Some of these deportees were reportedly then sent to Gorzków and



Wehrmacht troops prepare to shoot a Pole and a Jew on the Wolność Square in Konin. The Polish victim was Aleksander Kurowski and the Jewish victim was Ślodki.

USHMM WS #50294, COURTESY OF IPN

Turobin, both near Krasnystaw in Distrikt Lublin. Witnessing the hostility and brutality of the deportation process, many Konin Jews evaded the roundup to avoid expulsion.

From the fall of 1939, the German authorities ploughed in Konin's Jewish cemetery and began to demolish parts of the main Jewish residential area. In addition, ethnic Germans, who had been resettled from parts of the Soviet Union, were brought into the town. Jews were evicted from the more desirable residences in Konin, and their apartments were handed over to German officials and the newly arrived ethnic Germans.

An open ghetto was established for those Jews that remained, with the Jews being transferred into the designated area as early as December 1939. It was located in a neighborhood that had been predominantly Jewish before the war between the following streets: Słowacki, Obrońców Westerplatte, Zamkowa, Niecała, Mickiewicz, Kiliński, and Plac Zamkowy. The precise number of Jews residing in this ghetto is unknown, but it was probably around 1,000 people.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was organized and included Józef Aberman, Ajzyk Kelmer, Abraham Helman, Icchak Zajfer, Noach Helmer, and a man named Rozenberg. Twenty-eight-year-old Józef Aberman was the commander of the Jewish Police in addition to being a member of the Judenrat.²

Throughout the spring and summer of 1940, the ghetto residents were transferred to a single street (Grodzka). Most of the remaining Jews in Konin were deported that summer to a network of hamlet ghettos (*Dorfghettos*) organized around several villages in Kreis Konin: that is, Grodziec, Zagórow, and Rzgów. An account from an anonymous Konin Jew in the Ringelblum Archive describes the deportation from Konin and the Jews' arrival in the hamlet ghettos: "On July 17, the Gendarmes burst into all the Jewish apartments, allowing everyone to take a small bundle and then driving them out—not even excluding the sick and paralyzed . . . —to an assembly point. After a nightlong march, everyone was brought from there to three villages: Grodziec, Zagórow, and Rzgów (later the remainder of the [Jewish] population of the Konin Kreis was also resettled there)."³

Shortly after their resettlement to the hamlet ghettos, some Konin Jews attempted to return to Konin to salvage some of their property. A few Jews obtained special permits for this, but among those who traveled illegally was at least one Jew who was caught and so severely beaten that he died from his wounds. The authorities had forbidden such trips on pain of death. In the meantime, resettled ethnic Germans had moved into many of the vacated Jewish properties in Konin.⁴

A few Jews may have remained in Konin after this main expulsion in July 1940, and others were subsequently sent back to Konin from the hamlet ghettos for periods of forced labor in the fall of 1940, after the harvest had been brought in. Most of the latter had returned to the hamlet ghettos by February 1941. While in Konin, these Jews slept in a building that had belonged to the Jewish community and worked as painters or in construction.⁵

The three hamlet ghettos were liquidated between March and November 1941. First in March, more than 2,000 Jews were deported from Kreis Konin via Łódź to Józefów Biłgorajski, Izbica Lubelska, Krasnystaw, and other destinations in Distrikt Lublin.⁶ Of this group about 180 were selected out for assignment to road construction work near Gdańsk while passing through the Łódź ghetto. The Jews that remained in the Kreis were mostly concentrated around the village of Zagórow and murdered in the surrounding forests in the fall of 1941.

By 1942, a labor camp was organized in Konin; however, none of its laborers were Konin Jews.

SOURCES Several of the main publications on the fate of Konin's Jews, including the most extensive by Theo Richmond, *Konin: A Quest* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), and also the yizkor book, M. Gelbart, ed., *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatah uve-burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Konin be-Yisrael, 1968), do not mention the existence of a ghetto in Konin and assume that all of Konin's Jewish residents were resettled to hamlet ghettos in the summer of 1940. Nor is the ghetto mentioned by Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 235–238.

The ghetto in Konin is listed as such by Piotr Rybczyński in his article "Likwidacja skupisk ludności żydowskiej w powiecie konińskim," published in J. Kapustka, ed., *Ośrodek zagłady w Chełmnie nad Nerem i jego rola w hitlerowskiej polityce eksterminacyjnej* (Konin: Muzeum Okręgowe, 1995), pp. 109–116, an article that discusses the extermination of the Jewish residents of Konin county. It is also mentioned by Ryszard Głoszkowski, "Zbrodnie hitlerowskie na ludności polskiej w powiecie konińskim w latach 1939–1945," in *Eksterminacja ludności polskiej w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Wyniki badań ośrodków terenowych* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, GKBZHWP, 1979), pp. 81–82, 86; and in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 240. Most of the information regarding the ghetto is derived from Tomasz Kawski and Monika Opióła, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza Wielkopolski, Mazowsza, Małopolski i Śląska w latach 1918–1942* (Toruń: Wydawn. Adam Marszałek, 2008).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/841, 1089); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.079M); VHF (# 5609, 31143); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 5609, testimony of Felice Nitzky, 1995; Mike Jacob, *Holocaust Survivor: Mike Jacobs' Triumph over Tragedy—A Memoir* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2001), pp. 38–41.

2. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 45, Ring I/1089 (1408) (no. 1571), Mf. (ŻIH) 833.

3. Ibid., reel 39, Ring I/841, Lb. 848, Mf. 0827.

4. Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 527, 559.

5. Ibid., pp. 536, 541, 545.

6. VHF, # 31143—Obar believes she was deported to Józefów in 1939 or 1940; Julius Ancer, www.chgs.umn.edu/histories/minnesotans/andHolocaust/ancer/index.html. See also Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 529–530, 545–546.

KOWALE PAŃSKIE (AKA CZACHULEC NOWY)

Pre-1939: Kowale Pańskie, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Heidemühle, Landgemeinde, Kreis Turek, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Kowale Pańskie, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Kowale Pańskie is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) north-northwest of Łódź. The community consisted of 16 hamlets centered on the village of Kowale Pańskie. The Jewish ghetto that was established here during World War II is sometimes also referred to as Czachulec Nowy, the name of one of the main villages in the area.

Until September 1939, only a few Jewish families lived in this mostly agricultural area. On October 20, 1941, about 3,700 Jews from Kreis Turek were deported to the rural sub-districts (Amtsbezirke) of Kowale Pańskie and Małanów. These Jews mainly came from the communities of Turek, Dobra, Władysławów, Pęczniew, Tuliszków, Uniejów, and Brudzew.¹ The Germans instructed the Jews in Turek to pack everything they had, including the bugs. As many families were without their men, members of the Jewish Council (Judenrat) and Jewish Police assisted women to pack up their things. From Turek and Dobra, long columns of Jews, four abreast, followed by wagons carrying their work tools, set off under SS guard to the new “Kolonie.” The SS men of the Resettlement Office reassured the Jews that they would be able to live and work there in peace until the end of the war. Some Jews, however, were skeptical, especially when the displaced Polish farmers reported that they had been told that they would soon be able to return.² The Jews were scattered among the various farms and neighboring buildings in the area, from which the local Poles had recently been evicted to make room for them. The Jews lived under terrible conditions, some being accommodated in barns, and many of them remaining without any shelter, just living in the fields. The relocated Jews were employed on a number of agricultural work tasks and in the construction and maintenance of regional roads. The available bread supplies were rationed out among the Jewish settlements by the Judenrat.³

In late October 1941, the chairman of the Jewish Council, Hershel Zimnawoda, was ordered by the German Landrat in Turek to prepare lists of all ghetto inhabitants incapable of work, including all children under the age of 13 and all elderly persons over 65 years of age. Although the plans to exterminate the Jews were not yet known, the Judenrat was reluctant to obey this order. Zimnawoda asked four rabbis who were among the deportees for their opinion. After two days of deliberation and a day of fasting for the inhabitants of the ghetto, where people prayed, recited psalms, and blew the shofar (horn), the rabbis decided that, according to religious law, a decree of the government was obligatory and had to be

obeyed.⁴ However, after the chairman had prepared the lists, everyone was given a chance to check them and see how they had been marked. Also, the chairman decided to change the birthdates of children and the elderly so that the former would appear older and the latter younger. A few of the Jews classified as unfit fled to the nearby ghetto of Warta or sought refuge with non-Jews in the area.⁵

On Monday, December 8, 1941, German SS and police forces, Nazi officials, and members of the German Labor Front (DAF) drove the Jews from their houses in the Kowale Pańskie ghetto and assembled them in the village of Bielawki for a selection. To the surprise of the gathered Jews, the Germans did not rely on the lists provided, but selected about 1,100 Jews according to their physical appearance. Some members of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), including Mordechai Strykowski, were able to save a number of children during the selection.⁶ The selected Jews were taken to the village of Dobra, where they were held for a few days under terrible conditions in an overcrowded church without food or water. Some of the Jews died or were shot by the German Gendarmes in Dobra, but a number were also rescued. Then on December 13–14, 1941, the remaining 700 or so were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were gassed. A few weeks afterwards, the remaining Jews in the ghetto learned from local Christians that the deportees had all been murdered.⁷

By the end of 1941, Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto without permission on pain of death. To obtain food, people traded remaining possessions with local peasants at night. In the spring or summer of 1942, the Germans arrested 10 Jews and hanged them in public, allegedly for evading work, and the Judenrat was also forced to pay a fine.⁸ On the Shavuot holiday (May 21–23, 1942), a group of about 200 men from the ghetto were deported to a forced labor camp near Poznań. They were followed by another group of about 100 women on June 20, 1942. About one month later, the Germans finally liquidated the ghetto. All inmates deemed unfit for deportation were murdered in the vicinity of Kowale Pańskie. Several Jewish policemen were also executed at this time. The Germans selected 89 skilled workers and sent them to the Łódź ghetto. The remaining 1,660 Jews from the Kowale Pańskie ghetto were deported at the end of July 1942 to the Chełmno extermination camp to be killed.⁹ The Germans confiscated the remaining physical property of the deportees, and after the liquidation of the ghetto, the Polish farmers returned to their land.

SOURCES A short description of the Kowale Pańskie ghetto can be found in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 221. Immediately after the war the journal *Fun letstn kburbn* published two articles regarding the Kowale Pańskie ghetto: Y. Waldman, “Di Chelmnner Tragedie,” *Fun letstn kburbn*, no. 1 (1946); and Sh. Glube, “Di-din toyre,” *Fun letstn kburbn*, no. 6 (1947): 44–47. More detailed accounts of events in the

ghetto can be found in the yizkor book *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek veli-kedosbeha* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Turek be-Yisrael, 1982); and Czesław Kazimierz Łuczak, "Extermination of Population of Turek District during the Time of Nazi Occupation," part of his M.A. thesis, "Nazi Occupation in the Turek District during the Years 1939–1945" (Gdansk University, 1972). The ghetto is also mentioned in Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (1972; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 113, 429.

Several primary sources describe the fate of the Jews in the Kowale Pańskie area, including the following: AŻIH (records of JUS, file no. 32; 301/2243 and 2516; and Ring I/255 and 1160); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 432 and reverse; and RG-50.488*0223); and YVA (M-1/E/758 and 759, M-1/E/1946).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2516, testimony of Nachum Zajf. *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 350–351, gives the figure of 3,700 residents. And AŻIH, 301/2243, testimony of Dawid Jakubowicz, dates the establishment of the ghetto on October 20, 1940, stating there were about 4,250 residents. Other sources, e.g., USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 432 and verso, clearly date the establishment in 1941.

2. Shmuel Glubah, "Yidn in Turek in der Tseyt fun der Nazisher Okupatsie," in *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 350–351; Łuczak, "Extermination of Population of Turek District," p. 12.

3. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2006), p. 203; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 221; *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, p. 351.

4. Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 113, based upon Sh. Glube, "Di-din toyre," pp. 44–47. See also *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 351–352.

5. *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 315–319, reports that the Judenrat and the rabbis also pleaded with the Germans and paid a large bribe to keep the lists as small as possible.

6. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 221; *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 353–354.

7. *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 353–355.

8. Ibid., pp. 355–356; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 432 and verso; AŻIH, 301/2243 and 2516; USHMM, RG-50.488*0223, oral history with Stanisław Piekarski; Łuczak, "Extermination of Population of Turek," p. 13.

9. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, pp. 446–447. *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 360–362, notes that about 1,800 Jews were registered in the ghetto about one month before its liquidation. This source reports that 120 Jews were sent to the Łódź ghetto. AŻIH, 301/2243; the author of this testimony, Dawid Jakubowicz, was among those sent to the Łódź ghetto. Also see USHMM, RG-50.488*0223.

KOŹMINEK

Pre-1939: Koźminek, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bornhagen, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Koźminek, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Koźminek is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) west of Łódź. In 1921, the Jewish population was 729.

Forces of the German army occupied the village about a week after the start of the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939. At the time of the invasion, some Jews fled to the east ahead of the advancing German forces. During the first two months of the occupation, the Jews of Koźminek were subjected to a series of economic restrictions, including the confiscation of property and the imposition of forced labor. At the end of October 1939, the area was incorporated into the Third Reich. Koźminek, which the Germans renamed Bornhagen, became part of Regierungsbezirk Kalisch, in Reichsgau Wartheland. One of the first decrees issued by the governor (Regierungspräsident) of Regierungsbezirk Kalisch, Friedrich Übelhör, on November 14, 1939, was to impose a regulation requiring Jews to wear yellow armbands. Infractions against this regulation were punishable by death.¹ Shortly after this decree, the German authorities forcibly resettled most of the remaining Jews of Koźminek across the border into the Generalgouvernement.

In February 1940, about 1,300 Jews of Landkreis Kalisch were sent to Koźminek. This was seen as a temporary measure made necessary because the authorities in Łódź refused to accommodate them at this time. Most of the Jews were sent from the "Market Hall" in Kalisz, where they were held behind barbed wire, following the cessation of deportations from Kalisz at the start of 1940. However, several hundred Jews were sent to Koźminek from the town of Stawiszyn and a few from the village of Ostrów Kaliski. The arrival of these Jews marked the effective establishment of an "open ghetto" in Koźminek.²

The ghetto comprised a number of primitive single-story houses along a single street. The ghetto area also included a square, where the synagogue was located. Due to the small size of the ghetto, there was considerable overcrowding. The Jews worked mainly as craftsmen, in agriculture in the surrounding area, or on road construction.³ Several hundred Jews from the Koźminek ghetto were sent to the civilian labor camp at Opatówek, 11 kilometers (7 miles) away, where they worked 12 hours a day unloading coal, clearing ditches, building roads, or laboring in nearby factories.⁴

The first commandant of the ghetto was an ethnic German named Büchler. According to one survivor account: "[H]e often burst into the ghetto in a drunken state and beat anyone he met with a stick. If anyone was found with an egg or a pat of butter, he was fined. If word came that the 'Greener' was on his way, they all hid like mice in their holes."⁵ The ghetto was administered internally by the Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by a man named Landau, who received in-

structions directly from Büchler. There was also a Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which supervised the agricultural work. In charge of the Jewish Labor Office in the ghetto was a man called Haftke, who became notorious for his cruelty to his fellow Jews.⁶

From the summer of 1940, workshops were opened in the Koźminek ghetto. However, many women, children, and elderly people were unable to work. Sanitary conditions in the ghetto were very poor. The only physician was Dr. Shalit, who sent many patients to the Jewish hospital that continued to function in Kalisz. The Koźminek ghetto also received medical supplies, allotted food rations, and post from the Jewish camp or “ghetto” in Kalisz.⁷

German control over the Koźminek ghetto was not as strict as in the larger towns. The German presence consisted mainly of three Gendarmes. Illicit trading with the local population took place in spite of the severe penalties threatened. Jews did not starve as they could buy extra food in the villages. The Jews in the ghetto celebrated Passover in 1941 with dry potatoes and coarse matzot for the Seder.⁸

From the spring of 1941, Ferdinand Göhler, an official in the economic department of the regional government, was placed in charge of the Koźminek ghetto. Following his appointment, conditions in the ghetto deteriorated. The food rations were insufficient and of a poor quality; cases of typhus increased; Jews were forced to perform heavy, often useless, labor. Göhler also organized the collection of any remaining valuables, especially jewelry, from the Jewish inmates of the ghetto.⁹ In May 1941, 300 men from the Opatówek labor camp were sent to the Poznań region for forced labor in agriculture.¹⁰

In the fall of 1941, there were probably still some 1,500 Jews in Koźminek. On November 26, 1941, German police forces surrounded the ghetto. Then, the Gestapo and the SS burst in and drove the Jews into the courtyard of the synagogue. They took mainly the weak, the ill, children, and the elderly. However, with the aid of a bribe, it was possible to be released. The Jews were particularly outraged by the role of Haftke in assisting the Germans to select those who would be sent away.

The Aktion lasted several days, and some 600 Jews, about 75 at a time, were loaded into black trucks (similar to furniture vans). Some mothers chose to be deported with their children. Inside the trucks, it is presumed that the Jews were murdered using poison gas. Subsequently, the trucks were emptied out and the bodies buried in a forest near the village of Jedlec (Kreis Goluchow). The Aktion was possibly conducted by men of Sonderkommando Lange, which also was tasked, at this time, with establishing the Chełmno extermination camp, where killing operations started on December 8, 1941.¹¹

During 1942, the German authorities conducted further deportations from the Koźminek ghetto. Some sources indicate that several hundred (or even up to 1,000) Jews were sent from the Koźminek ghetto to the extermination camp in Chełmno between December 1941 and March 1942. However, this interpretation may also be the result of some confusion with the November 1941 “gas van” deportations. Other

Jews, mostly men fit for work, were sent to perform manual labor in the Inowrocław area in the first months of 1942. The last 400 hundred or so Jews left in the Koźminek ghetto were sent to the Łódź ghetto together with just over 100 Jews from the Kalisz ghetto. This transport arrived at the Radogoszcz station in Łódź on July 8, 1942.¹²

SOURCES The Kalisz yizkor book, edited by I.M. Lask, *The Kalish Book* (Tel Aviv: Societies of Former Residents of Kalish and the Vicinity in Israel and the USA, 1968), contains some information on the Koźminek ghetto. There is also a short article on the Jewish community of Koźminek in Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 221–222. The deportation Aktion using gas vans in November–December 1941 was the subject of a trial in Stuttgart (Ks 31/49). The verdict and subsequent revisions are published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 7 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 231, pp. 187–267. The court’s findings are largely supported by other sources cited by Michael Albertini, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 415–416.

Mention of the ghetto can be found in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 248; *BŻIH*, nos. 111 and 114–115 (1979–1980); and Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, eds., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (prepared originally by ITS in 1949–1951; repr., with new introduction, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 680.

Documentation on the Koźminek ghetto can be found in the following archives: IPN (ASG, sygn. 54, p. 65); USHMM (RG-15.015M, reel 4); VHF; and YVA (M-21/287).

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NOTES

1. *Łódzkiej Zeitung*, November 16, 1939, published in Isaiah Trunk, *Łódzkiej Ghetto: A History*, trans. and ed. Robert Moses Shapiro (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), p. 18.

2. S. Glicksman, “Some Figures (from the Ringelblum Archives and Elsewhere),” pp. 287–288; “From the Ringelblum Archives,” p. 285—both in Lask, *The Kalish Book*. Some sources do not date the formal establishment of a “ghetto” until the summer of 1940; see YVA, M-21/287, p. 35.

3. *JuNS-V*, vol. 7, Lfd. Nr. 231, pp. 187–267, here verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 31/49, August 15, 1950, p. 200.

4. Wolf Lassman, “Kalish, Koźminek and the Camps,” in Lask, *The Kalish Book*, pp. 275–281, here p. 277.

5. Dr. Moshe Gross (Henryk Żelikowski), “The End of the Community,” in Lask, *The Kalish Book*, pp. 251–274, here p. 262.

6. Lassman, “Kalish, Koźminek and the Camps,” p. 277; *JuNS-V*, vol. 7, Lfd. Nr. 231, p. 200.

7. Gross, “The End of the Community,” p. 261.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 261–262.

9. *JuNS-V*, vol. 7, Lfd. Nr. 231, pp. 189–190, 211–212.

10. Lassman, “Kalish, Koźminek and the Camps,” p. 278.

11. Ibid., pp. 277–278. This source (probably erroneously) dates the “gas van Aktion” as occurring in March 1941. Also see *JuNS-V*, vol. 7, Lfd. Nr. 231, pp. 187–267.

12. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 220–222, 233–234.

KROŚNIEWICE

Pre-1939: Krośniewice, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Krosniewice, Kreis Kutno, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Krośniewice, Łódź województwo, Poland

Krośniewice is located about 58 kilometers (36 miles) north-northeast of Łódź.

German troops occupied Krośniewice on September 16, 1939. During the first days of the occupation, Jews were made to perform forced labor, their property was confiscated, and many were expelled from their places of residence. Of the 4,476 inhabitants of the town, there were 1,238 Jews at the end of December 1939.¹ This number included not only local Jews from Krośniewice but also Jews from the surrounding area. An unknown number of local Jews managed to get to Warsaw, largely using the help of Polish guides.²

On May 10, 1940, the German authorities established a ghetto in Krośniewice. It consisted of parts of Kutnowska Street, which ran through the town in the direction of Kutno. The total area of the ghetto was 10,000 square meters (almost 12,000 square yards). The ghetto was under the authority of the mayor and also the head of the local civil administrator (Amtskommissar), Georg Becker.³ There were a number of houses inside the ghetto area. Initially the ghetto was not enclosed and sealed off, so the Jews were able to continue interacting with local Poles. Trade between them continued, with the Jews making handicrafts for the Poles who paid them with food. Poles also consulted Jewish physicians residing in the ghetto. After a while, the ghetto was sealed with a barbed-wire fence and separated from the rest of the town.⁴ On the orders of the German authorities, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in the ghetto. Its head was a man named Zilbe; Grabowski was the head of the ghetto Jewish Police.⁵

Right from the start of the German occupation, the Jewish population was forced to conduct physically demanding work of all kinds. The Jewish community had to meet a quota of 66 laborers per day, although some people who could not work paid 5 złoty per day for a replacement. Jews were employed as laborers on nearby farms, now belonging to newly resettled Germans. In April 1941, about 100 residents of the ghetto were deported to the Hardt labor camp in Wąsowo, close to Poznań.⁶ They worked on the construction of the highway between Frankfurt am Oder and Poznań. Starting in September 1941, other ghetto residents, both men and women, were sent to other labor camps in the Poznań area. Those deported wrote letters to their relatives in the ghetto, describing the terrible conditions in the camps. Hunger and beatings were the order

of the day. In spite of the difficult conditions in the ghetto, many residents responded to the requests of those who had been deported and helped them, sending packages with foodstuffs.⁷

On February 19, 1942, the German authorities demanded that a poll tax of 8 Reichsmark (RM) be paid for every resident of the ghetto. This was the signal for the beginning of the liquidation of the ghetto.⁸ On March 1, 1942, at the time of the Purim holiday, the remaining ghetto residents, mostly women, children, and the elderly, were informed that they were going to be resettled to Bessarabia the next day.⁹ The liquidation of the ghetto took place on March 2–3, 1942. For this Aktion, some market halls where cattle were usually slaughtered were used as a transit camp for the Jews. In this temporary camp the people were virtually starved. Twice a day the inmates received one liter (2 pints) of soup and a piece of bread. Most Jews were unable to eat this food because they did not have spoons or bowls. Some Jews were transferred from the ghetto to the temporary camp, and from there the Germans deported them directly to the Chełmno extermination camp. During the liquidation Aktion, a member of the Jewish medical services named Kopel Geisler and a Polish physician distributed medicine to the victims. Geisler, who was a member of the Krośniewice Zionist movement, became mentally unstable watching the brutal way the Germans forced the Jews into the trucks for deportation.¹⁰ Altogether about 800 Jews from Krośniewice were killed in Chełmno.¹¹

A report of the Amtskommissar in Krośniewice to the mayor of Kutno on April 10, 1942, described this liquidation Aktion as the “evacuation of those Jews unable to work.” After the deportation of the residents of the ghetto, the value of the movable property they were forced to leave behind, such as furniture, dishes, and watches, was estimated at about 25,000 RM, and this property was transferred to the German authorities.¹² After the property had been removed, the ghetto area was disinfected. It is possible that false identification cards were made in Krośniewice in January 1942 and that these helped three deported Jews to escape from the extermination camp in Chełmno. In any case, the German police were searching for these individuals.¹³

SOURCES Two articles published in the *BŻIH* contain information on the Krośniewice ghetto: Danuta Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955); and M. Tyszkowa, “Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941–1943. Dokumenty Biura Propagandy i Informacji KG AK w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego,” *BŻIH*, nos. 2–3 (1992). Published survivor testimonies relevant to the Krośniewice ghetto include the following: Abram Korn, *Abe’s Story: A Holocaust Memoir* (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet, 1995); and Dorothea Kusch and Helmut Winter, eds., *Pädagogische Handreichung und Materialien zur Ausstellung “Der Alltag jüdischer Kinder während des Holocausts* (Germany: Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1999), p. 122.

Documentation on the Krośniewice ghetto and its liquidation can be found in the following archives: APŁ (Gettover-

waltung, 30021); APP (Reichsstatthalter, 594); AŻIH (301/4490 and Ring I/469 and I/573); IPN (ASG 50, p. 38; and Zh III/31/35/68); OKŚZpNPŁdz (OKL.Ko 27/83 and 11/84); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

Anna Ziółkowska
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. APP, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, sygn. 594, p. 22.

2. AŻIH, Ring I/573, postcard of February 18, 1942, from Róża Kapłan to her husband in the Warsaw ghetto.

3. IPN, ASG, sygn. 50, p. 38; also Zh III/31/35/68, ghettos in Łódź province; OKŚZpNPŁdz, sygn. Ds. 45/67, zeznania Cz. Trzaskalskiej i R. Bednarka; Dąbrowska, "Zagłada skupisk," p. 172, table 14. In December 1939, 9 Jews from Pawlikowice and 11 from Bardzinek were resettled to Krośniewice.

4. OKŚZpNPŁ dz, sygn. Ds. 45/67, zeznania Z. Dopierały, H. Lubranieckiego, Cz. Trzaskalskiej i R. Bednarka.

5. J. Wróbel, "Getta w powiatach: gostynińskim i kutnowskim," in *W 45, rocznicę zagłady skupisk żydowskich w Kraju Warty* (Zduńska Wola, 1987), p. 7.

6. MMŻ, Wykaz imienny więźniów osadzonych w obozach pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Wielkopolsce w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej; see also Korn, *Abe's Story*, pp. 32–37.

7. AŻIH, 301/4490, Abraham Radziecki; AŻIH, Ring I/573.

8. AŻIH, Ring I/573(13), postcard sent on February 20, 1942, by Róża Kapłan to her husband in the Warsaw ghetto; also Ring I/573(8), postcard sent on January 24, 1942, by Róża Kapłan to the Warsaw ghetto.

9. R. Sakowska, *Dwa etapy. Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów w oczach ofiar. Szkic historyczny i dokumenty* (Wrocław, 1986), p. 154, report in Oneg Szabat written by members of the Warsaw Ghetto Archives, E. Ringelblum, H. Wasser, and E. Gutkowski, for the representatives of the Polish government in London in April 1942.

10. AŻIH, 301/4490.

11. Ibid., also Ring I/469; Tyszkowa, "Eksterminacja Żydów," p. 55, doc. no. 18.

12. APŁ, Gettoverwaltung, sygn. 30021, p. 53.

13. R. Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawskiego*, vol. 1, *Listy o Zagładzie* (Warsaw, 1997), pp. 35–36, 43, 113.

KUTNO

Pre-1939: Kutno, city, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: center, Kreis Kutno, Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Kutno is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) north of Łódź. In December 1939, there were 7,709 Jews in Kutno out of a total population of 27,761.¹

German troops arrived in Kutno on September 16, 1939, and the Germans established a civil administration in the city on October 26.² Arbitrary arrests, forced labor, expropriations, and various kinds of abuse became the norm. The head



A German policeman guards the entrance to the Kutno ghetto on Mickiewicz Street, n.d.
USHMM WS #91570, COURTESY OF IPN

of the Kutno Gestapo, Michel Stumpler, and his deputy, Hoffmann, were especially active in the measures taken against the Jews.³

On November 3, 1939, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Kutno. Among those on the council were Bernard Holcman (head of the council), Moses Fluger (deputy head), Sender Falc (head of the financial department), Paweł Goldszejder, I. Kubic, Sz. Opoczyński, Lauzer Praszker, and Maks Zandel.⁴ A Jewish police force was founded, which was commanded by the Frankenstein brothers and subordinated to the Jewish Council. The German authorities tasked the Judenrat with registering the Jews, including details of property ownership, in order to assist them with its subsequent expropriation. For example, a currency protection squad (Devisenschutzkommando Płock) organized the looting of Jewish property, seizing items such as jewelry, money, and valuable household goods in December 1939.⁵ The Jewish Council regularly bribed the German police and civil administration in an effort to appease them. Hoffmann received furniture for his house, valued at approximately 15,000 Reichsmark (RM).

On June 16, 1940, the mayor, Wilfried Schürmann, ordered the establishment of a ghetto. The ghetto was located on the property of a former sugar factory named "Konstancja" and included five buildings already occupied by Jews. Some documents do not refer to this enclosed Jewish area as a ghetto but call it rather a Jewish camp (*Judenlager*). The resettlement of the Jews into the ghetto provided a renewed opportunity for expropriation. The German authorities not only confiscated money; they also took any remaining items of value. The Jews were ordered to move into the ghetto area within one day. During the process, the police forces involved, including the local Criminal Police (Gemeindekriminalpolizei), the Order Police (Schutzpolizei and Gendarmerie), and the SS (SS-Sturmabteilung III/114), abused the Jews. Josef Schneider and Wilhelm Sauer attracted particular attention for their brutality.⁶ The Jews were only permitted to bring a small part of their movable property into the ghetto. Due to very limited transportation, most Jews had to carry everything in by hand.⁷



Jews transfer their belongings into the Kutno ghetto, July 1940.
USHMM WS #06214, COURTESY OF RAPHAEL ARONSON

The ghetto territory covered only 2 hectares (about 5 acres) and was isolated from the rest of the city by a brick wall with barbed wire on top. About 7,000 Jews lived in the ghetto initially, including more than 1,000 refugees from many different places, as well as some Jews who had been resettled into the ghetto from the surrounding villages. For example, 150 Jews were brought in from Dąbrowicki.⁸ Jews were forced to find a home anywhere they could, for example, in former pubs, horse and cow stalls, and even primitive shelters made of wood and mud. By October 1940, the first cases of typhus were reported.

Of the five buildings in the ghetto area, one housed the ghetto guards, and the Jewish Council and their families occupied two others. In one of these buildings, little more than a primitive shack, a hospital (*Krankenabteilung*) was set up. It consisted of one room for the physician and four rooms for the patients. On the first floor was the ghetto post office.⁹ The local police guarded the ghetto. The ghetto guards received the title of “Police Guards, Jewish Camp” (*Polizeiwache, Judenlager*). Their headquarters was located on Posen Street. Among others, 50 members of Police Battalion 132—and after November 26, 1941, 38 members of Police Battalion 41—guarded the Kutno ghetto. They were under the command of Oberleutnant Kurt Weissenborn, who was notorious for his corruption.¹⁰ He took large monetary bribes to allow goods to be smuggled into the ghetto. However, the food situation soon became desperate. The Jewish Council opened a soup kitchen for the poorest ghetto inmates and succeeded in organizing deliveries from farms in Chruścinek in the *Gemeinde Strzelce* and from a dairy farm in Kutno. Despite these efforts, food supplies remained insufficient. Food was distributed three times a day—breakfast, lunch, and dinner—in the Jewish Council’s building. The shortages induced a high level of smuggling. There were also occasional aid deliveries from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC).¹¹

The corruption of some ghetto guards helped a little, as they permitted some Jews to leave the ghetto to exchange

valuables with the non-Jewish population for food. It seems that the Jewish Council played a significant role in bribing the guards, but survivor testimonies remain ambiguous regarding the behavior of the *Judenrat*. Some survivors accuse members of the council of granting privileges to themselves and their families, especially better apartments and larger food rations. The ghetto population referred to the buildings occupied by the Jewish Council as “the House of Lords.”¹²

In February 1941, some ghetto inmates organized a riot against the Jewish Council. The insurgents demanded that the head of the financial department, Sender Falc, give a detailed account of all expenditures by the ghetto administration. The protest turned violent, and some of the rioters assaulted Falc. The German police intervened to halt further unrest.¹³ As a result of this incident, various smuggling operations involving the ghetto were uncovered, and several people were arrested in May 1941. Among those arrested were a Pole named Zenon Rzymowski and a Jew named Leon Stuczynski from the ghetto. All of the prisoners were sentenced to death and hanged in Włocławek.¹⁴ After this incident, several members of the Criminal Police and also the ghetto guards were replaced. The result was a considerable tightening of security around the ghetto, leading to the complete isolation of the Jews. The only remaining route to exit and enter the ghetto was a dried-out canal hidden underground, which, however, was soon blocked by the German police.

In 1941, an unknown number of Jews from Kutno were transferred to forced labor camps in the area around Poznań, where they worked building sections of the highway connecting that city (renamed Posen by the Germans) with Frankfurt an der Oder, a road that led through original German territory (the *Altreich*).¹⁵

There were several escapes by Jews from the Kutno ghetto to other ghettos such as Ozorków (in Wartheland) and Warsaw. In July 1941, the registered ghetto population was 6,015.

The health situation in the Kutno ghetto deteriorated, and the death rate from disease and starvation was very high. On March 21, 1942, the head of the civil administration in Inowrocław sent a letter to the head of the Health Department for Reichsgau Wartheland, stating that 1,369 persons were infected with typhus and 313 had already died in the Kutno ghetto.¹⁶ The Jewish Council managed to bring in two physicians from other ghettos, Juliusz Winsaft and Dr. Aperstein, to provide some medical treatment.¹⁷ Also, some Polish physicians tried to help: Józef Malinowski, Juliusz Perkowicz, and B. Jędraszko obtained permission to enter the ghetto to conduct research into epidemic diseases. However, the German authorities did not permit the delivery of typhus serum to Kutno’s Jews. In addition, there were many cases of abscesses and edemas caused by malnutrition, mainly affecting children. In total, more than 660 Jews died of starvation and disease in the Kutno ghetto, comprising about 10 percent of the average ghetto population.¹⁸

These were not the only causes of death, of course; other inmates were killed, for example, for leaving the ghetto ille-

gally. The German police taunted the Jews when food deliveries reached the ghetto.¹⁹ They threw the groceries into the gathered crowd to provoke a fight and shot at the desperate people grasping for food. The ghetto of Kutno became renowned as one of the worst ghettos, some Germans calling it the “camp of dying off” (*Krepierlager*).

In spite of the harsh conditions, the Jews in the Kutno ghetto, especially the younger ones, tried to maintain some cultural life. They held meetings to discuss literature, sang songs, and organized a library. Attempts were made to found a school in the ghetto, but the intended building was given to the ghetto hospital, which had a higher priority. Nevertheless, an underground education system was established in the ghetto.²⁰

German forces initiated the liquidation of the Kutno ghetto on March 19, 1942. The underground newspaper of the Warsaw ghetto, *Undzer Weg*, reported on May 1, 1942, that the Kutno ghetto had been liquidated on March 23, 1942. A report prepared in April 1942 in the Warsaw ghetto for the Polish government in exile stated that on March 26, 1942, the Jews of the Kutno ghetto were assembled in alphabetical order and loaded onto trucks.²¹ The victims were transported on the narrow gauge train to Koło, and from there they were sent immediately to the extermination camp at Chełmno. This mass Aktion lasted until April 1942, resulting in the death of some 6,000 Jews from the Kutno ghetto.²² The older residents of the ghetto were killed in Kutno. Following the liquidation Aktion, the members of the Jewish Police were shot just outside the ghetto area. Contemporary documentation indicates that Habus Sgiem, a former resident of the Kutno ghetto (born on February 7, 1918), managed to escape from the extermination camp in Chełmno and was wanted for arrest by the German authorities.²³ After the liquidation of the Kutno ghetto, 30 Jews from the Łódź ghetto were sent to Kutno as a so-called Aufräumungstrupp (cleanup detachment) and had to clear out the ghetto and sort the possessions left behind by the Jews. They too were mistreated and suffered from starvation and disease, including cases of typhus.²⁴

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jewish community of Kutno during the Holocaust include the following: David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Kutnah veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kutnah veba-sevivah be-Yisrael uve-huts-la-arets, 1968); Janusz Wróbel, “Getta w powiatach: gostynińskim i kutnowskim” (paper presented at the conference on the 45 Anniversary of the Destruction of the Jewish Communities of the “Wartheland,” Zduńska Wola, October 23, 1987); and J. Wróbel, “Żydzi w Kutnie 1939–1942,” *Rocznik Łódzki* 39 (1989) 279–288. Among the published survivor testimonies relevant to the Kutno ghetto is Abraham Korn, *Abe's Story: A Holocaust Memoir* (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet, 1995).

Documentation on the ghetto and the fate of the Jewish population of Kutno during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AIKP (IZ. Dok. I-744); APŁ (sygn. 30021); APP (sygn. 594, 2111, and 2430); AŻIH (Ring I/469, 683, 839, and 1157; 301/301-15); IPN (ASG, sygn. 50, pp. 41–46); MMŻ;

OKŚZpNPŁdz (OKŁ, Ds 50/67); USHMM (RG-02.191); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. APP, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, sygn. 594, p. 23.
2. R. Buzak, “Wojna obronna Polski 1939 i lata okupacji hitlerowskiej,” in R. Rosin, ed., *Kutno. Dzieje Miasta* (Warsaw-Łódź, 1984), pp. 240–241.
3. AŻIH, 301/303, p. 1, testimony of Łucja Stuczyńska.
4. APP, Treuhandstelle Posen, sygn. 2430.
5. AŻIH, 301/313, testimony of Mieczysław Kisielewski; 301/311, testimony of Kazimierz Śpiewankiewicz.
6. Ibid., 301/303, testimony of M. Kisielewski; 301/309, testimony of Tadeusz Białecki.
7. Ibid., 301/303, p. 2, testimony of Ł. Stuczyńska; 301/315, testimony of Łuzer Jakubowicz; OKŚZpNPŁdz, sygn. Ds 50/67, testimonies of A. Wojtczak, Z. Koszański, and L. Cieślak. See also Shtokfish, *Sefer Kutnah*, p. 327. Some sources date the establishment of the ghetto earlier, in March or April 1940.
8. D. Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 172, table 14; *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, September 22, 1940.
9. APP, Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2111, p. 1; see also APP (zespół nr. 4045), an 8mm film made by unknown Germans, which probably includes scenes from the Kutno ghetto.
10. Ibid., Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2111, p. 112; AIKP, sygn. Dok. I-734, p. 7; *Amtliches Fernsprechbuch für den Bezirk der Reichspostdirektion Posen* (1942), p. 90.
11. AŻIH, 301/303, testimony of Ł. Stuczyńska.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 301/304, testimony of Ł. Stuczyńska; 301/314, testimony of Stanisław Wojtysiak; J. Wróbel, “Getta w powiatach: gostynińskim i kutnowskim,” in *W 45 rocznicę zagłady skupisk żydowskich w Kraju Warty* (Zduńska Wola, 1987).
14. AŻIH, 301/303, testimony of Mieczysław Kisielewski; 301/303, testimony of Ł. Stuczyńska.
15. MMŻ, Wykaz imienny więźniów osadzonych w obozach pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Wielkopolsce w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej.
16. APP, Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2111, pp. 6–8, 11–13, 111–112, 157–158, 170–171. Shtokfish, *Sefer Kutnah*, p. 329, gives figures of 1,000 typhus cases and 500 deaths.
17. AŻIH, MSS of cities, no. 44, as cited by Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), p. 158.
18. Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 154.
19. APP, sygn. 2111, p. 157.
20. R. Sakowska, *Dwa etapy. Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów w oczach ofiar. Szkic historyczny i dokumenty* (Wrocław, 1986), p. 142; AŻIH, 301/306, testimony of B. Jędraszko; 301/304, testimony of Ł. Stuczyńska; Korn, *Abe's Story*, p. 21.
21. R. Sakowska et al., eds., *Archiwum Ringelbluma: Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy* (Warsaw: PWN, 1997), 1:18.
22. AŻIH, 301/311, testimony of Kazimierz Śpiewankiewicz.

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23. APP, Gendarmerie Kreis Ostrowo [Ostrów Wielkopolski], sygn. 1, p. 42.

24. APP, Reichsstatthalter, sygn. 2111, p. 202; AŻIH, 301/311, testimony of Kazimierz Śpiewankiewicz.

ŁASK

Pre-1939: Łask, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Łask, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litza), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łask, Łódź województwo, Poland

Łask is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Łódź. At the outbreak of World War II, the population of Łask numbered about 5,000 people, of which 3,864 were Jews.

A few days after occupying the town in early September 1939, a group of Germans came to the synagogue and shot the beadle. Subsequently the synagogue was converted into a slaughterhouse for horses.

The Germans issued an order forbidding Jews from praying in public, so on Rosh Hashanah (September 14, 1939) all Jews had to pray at home. Some Jews were driven onto the streets in their prayer shawls and forced to pluck geese. On the holiday of Sukkot, the Germans threw Rabbi Leib Eisenberg, wearing his prayer shawl, into a garbage bin.

The Germans pillaged the Jews systematically. They demanded that the chairman of the local Jewish bank pay them 40,000 złoty within 24 hours. The Jewish charity fund was also required to pay a heavy “contribution.”



Postcard of the marketplace in Łask during the German occupation.
COURTESY OF MUZEUM HISTORII ŁASKU

After hearing from some Jewish informers that Rabbi Eisenberg had hidden a horde of valuables, including silver artifacts from the synagogue, the Germans summoned him and demanded he reveal the hiding place. The rabbi was beaten cruelly, but he only gave away the location of the valuables after the Germans brought his wife to the cemetery and tortured her.

The German sanitary commissioner, who was a degenerate sadist, abused Jewish women, commanding them to wash naked with a brush at the water pump in the marketplace. On other occasions, he ordered women to wash in the *mikveh* (ritual Jewish bath) or in the municipal baths and return to him with a written confirmation. He also arranged orgies in his home, forcing Jewish women to participate. He left Łask in 1941.¹

The chairman of the Jewish community was Salman Kochman. When the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), they nominated Kochman as its chairman. Among the other members of the Judenrat were Avraham Burakowski, who ran the economics department; Aaron Pinchas Brzezinski, Yekel Levkovitz, and Motle Friedman from Łódź, who ran the labor department; Dov Mandel, who ran the post office; and Wolf Reichert, who ran the secretarial department.

The Judenrat chairman established a court of justice, with the judges Yitshak Kantorowitz and Mordechai Feibel Kochman. He also established the Jewish Police and nominated Hersch Lein as its chief.

The Judenrat tried its best to make life tolerable for the Jews. With some financial assistance received from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the Jewish Council established a kosher public kitchen, which served a half a liter (1 pint) of soup and a slice of bread to those in need every day.

Despite acknowledgment by some of Kochman's efforts for the community, there were complaints against the Judenrat, mainly concerning how people were selected for labor camps and the brutality of the Jewish Police.²

The Germans started seizing Jews for work off the streets, almost immediately after they arrived. At first Jews were taken to repair two bridges on the Zduńska Wola road, which were blown up in the fighting. Others had to work for local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). Subsequently work tasks included removing and breaking up tombstones from the Jewish cemetery to pave the streets of the town.³

Deporting Jews to work camps, mainly in the Poznań region, had started by the summer of 1941. As time went on, the Germans made repeated demands for workers. The lists of people to be sent away were hung up in public places. When those people named did not report, the Jewish Police, and sometimes also the German Schutzpolizei, rounded them up. This caused a public outcry and even attacks on representatives of the Judenrat and its labor department.

In the years 1939–1940, food supplies were reasonable. Jewish bakeries continued to function until March 1940, as did Yankl Schmuelewitz's butcher shop, which sold horseflesh supplied by the German slaughterhouse in the synagogue. But in March 1940, all the Jewish bakeries were closed, and the Jews had to buy their bread rations only from “Aryan”

bakeries, using official coupons. In time all food was rationed. Only Jews employed as workers by the Germans received a supplementary food ration.

On February 22, 1940, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a ghetto (*Judenviertel*) in Łask.⁴ At first many Jews were ordered to move to the vicinity of Garbarska and Tylna Streets. Then, on November 18, 1940, all Jews in town were driven into the ghetto area, being beaten on the way.

The area of the ghetto was too small for the number of Jews crammed into it, and several families had to share a single dwelling. In October 1940, the number of Jews in the Łask ghetto was 3,467, of which 630 were refugees from other places, including Kalisz and Turek.⁵

In the first year of the ghetto, it was not fenced, apparently due to a shortage of fencing material,⁶ and Jews could come and go as they pleased within the town. They were not, however, permitted to leave the town limits, which had a serious economic effect as many Jews earned their living as peddlers. Only in late 1941 were Jews prohibited from leaving the ghetto. Traffic was allowed between 6:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. for those going out to work. Poles were allowed to enter the ghetto until 6:00 P.M. and Germans until 9:00 P.M. Jews caught outside the ghetto illegally now faced the death penalty. This development dramatically worsened living conditions. Famine and disease became widespread, and the death rate rose steeply. Occasionally the Schutzpolizei broke into the ghetto, searching for valuables and beating and killing Jews arbitrarily.

Nevertheless, Jews continued to sneak out of the ghetto at night to buy food.⁷ The suppliers were non-Jews, and the prices were very high. Jews also slaughtered animals without an official permit. When caught, Jews faced severe punishments, and many of them perished.

The Judenrat undertook various efforts to make life tolerable. In August 1940, the Jewish Council established a hospital on the insistence of the German authorities, following an outbreak of typhus. The hospital was located on Tylna Street and was managed by doctors Bal and Singer. The number of fatalities remained small, despite a large number of sick. The hospital also took in Jews from the surrounding communities, including from Lutomiersk and Żelów.⁸ Religious rites were also observed in spite of the prohibition by the German authorities.

In early 1942, news about the liquidation of other Jewish communities and the extermination of Jews in the Chełmno extermination camp started to reach the Łask ghetto. Responses were varied: some believed, or wanted to believe, that the Jews of Łask would be spared. Others began to look for places to hide themselves or at least their children. There were also some who simply accepted the fact that they were doomed.

At some date in 1942, two brothers, aged 16 and 18, from Kalisz were publicly executed by the Schutzpolizei for stealing coal. Through the intervention of the Judenrat, 10 others were reprieved.⁹

The liquidation of the Łask ghetto started on August 24, 1942, when a special German SS unit arrived from Łódź. The

German head of the local Savings Bank (Sparkasse), Oskar Wolfinger, witnessed the roundup:

The houses were searched individually and the Jews driven onto the street. Some Jews were shot as the houses were searched. The SS-men occasionally shot into the houses, when the Jews did not emerge immediately. In one case, two Jews who had hidden did not come out of the house, but after shots were fired into the doorway, they were driven up onto the roof. Then the SS shot them down from the roof. All the Jews were then driven through the town and herded into the Catholic Church. Here they were held under catastrophic conditions.¹⁰

The Jews were kept in the church for three days, suffering from starvation. In the end, Hans Biebow, head of the German Ghetto Administration (Gettoverwaltung, GV) in Łódź, and Günther Fuchs, of the Gestapo in Łódź, selected 760 people, mostly artisans and men capable of work, and sent them to Łódź.¹¹ The rest of the Jews, about 2,700 people in all, were sent to the Chełmno death camp, where they perished. At the same time the Germans put the Judenrat chairman Kochman with 20 other people on a truck and drove them away, never to be seen again.

After the Germans were driven out of Łask by the Red Army, 1 Jewish survivor emerged from hiding with local peasants, and about 20 Łask Jews returned from the camps.¹²

SOURCES Information on the ghetto in Łask and the persecution and destruction of its inmates can be found in the following publications: *Łask Memorial Book* (Tel Aviv: Va'adat ha-ma'arekhet shel ha-sefer shele-yad Irgun yots'e Łask be-Yisrael, 1968); Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 134–139; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006); Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 92–93; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979).

Relevant documentation on the fate of the Jews of Łask during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APL (278/994, pp. 166–167); AŻIH (e.g., 210/446 [AJDC]; 301/1874); BA-L (Pol. Ordn. 358, p. 833); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (e.g., # 17565 and 22839); and YVA (M-1/E/1683 and M-1/Q/511).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. *Łask Memorial Book*, pp. 91–92.
2. AŻIH, 301/1874, testimony of Dr. Singer.
3. Ibid.; *Łask Memorial Book*, pp. 74–75.
4. AŻIH, 301/1874; 210/446, report of the Jüdische Kultusgemeinde in Łask to AJDC in Krakau, July 21, 1941—stated that the Judenviertel had been created 15 months earlier.

5. *Łask Memorial Book*, p. 91; AŻIH, 210/446, report of the Jüdische Kultusgemeinde in Łask to the AJDC in Warsaw, December 18, 1940.

6. *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, April 28, 1940, as cited by Albertini, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 195.

7. VHF, # 22839, testimony of Mordechi Friedel.

8. AŻIH, 210/446, report of the Jüdische Kultusgemeinde in Łask to the AJDC in Kraków, July 21, 1941.

9. *Łask Memorial Book*, pp. 78–80.

10. Report of events by Oskar Wolfinger, trans. from the extract cited by Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chelmo/Kulmbhof*, p. 92.

11. APL, 278/994, pp. 166–167; VHF, # 17565, testimony of Toby Rais.

12. AŻIH, 301/1874.

ŁĘCZYCA

Pre-1939: Łęczyca, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Lentschütz, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łęczyca, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Łęczyca is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) northwest of Łódź. In 1939, there were around 4,200 Jews residing in the town.

German forces first captured Łęczyca on September 7, 1939. They promptly ordered all Jewish men into the synagogue and all Polish men into the church and the movie theater, where they were held overnight. The Poles were sent home the next day, but the Jews were sent to dig trenches on the outskirts of town.¹ Polish forces briefly recaptured Łęczyca, and the Germans pulled back, but they returned on September 13. Jews were seized for forced labor marked by cruel beatings, hunger, and no pay. On September 22, all males, Jewish and non-Jewish, aged 16 to 70 were ordered to assemble in the town square. The German commander announced that a high-

ranking officer had been murdered by a treacherous citizen of Łęczyca. Therefore, 50 Jews (leading members of the community) and 100 Poles (mostly common criminals) would be held hostage to assure the safety of German personnel. After three weeks the non-Jewish hostages and most of the Jews, with the exception of the rabbi and a few Jewish leaders, were released. The Germans imposed a fine of 1 million złoty on the Jewish community, due by a certain date. They established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by Herzke Muchnik, who then selected the other members of the council. They set to work assessing and collecting the money (and ordering the Jewish Police to arrest recalcitrants). The fine was paid on time.²

In December 1939, Jews living on certain of the “better” streets were ordered out of their homes for relocation to another area—the first step towards a ghetto, which was eventually to be enclosed. Jews were forbidden to appear on certain streets even if they lived there. They had to enter their houses from a side street or alleyway. The Germans ordered that all Jews living on Ozorków, Kalisz, and Piątków Streets, on the city square, and on other major streets must leave their houses and be concentrated on other streets.³ Over the following months, all the Jews were concentrated into a closely confined area that served as an open ghetto. It included the Street of the Jews, Kowalska and Ogrodowa Streets, and the entire area from there up to the jailhouse.⁴

Each day the Judenrat was ordered to provide a certain number of people for forced labor. They were put to work on the most humiliating and backbreaking tasks—one of which was the dismantling of the Jewish cemetery. The gravestones were used as paving stones.⁵ People with money could buy their way out of forced labor, but only a few could afford to do so. Those who had lost their livelihoods sold whatever they had to avoid starvation. In February 1940, the Germans placed buckets of tar and incendiary materials in the large synagogue and burned it down. Then they accused the Jews of arson and forced the Judenrat to sign a statement to that effect. They also imposed a heavy fine.⁶

In late 1940, the systematic expulsions began. The first transport was to Częstochowa in December 1940.⁷ The next expulsion, to Poddębice, was ordered in January 1941. People were told to assemble in the town square within two hours, bringing only household utensils and bedding. Their goods were loaded onto horse-drawn wagons, which also transported children and the elderly. The procession of 500 or 600 people was photographed as they began the forced march to Poddębice.⁸ They were met by the Jewish Police, which put them into horse stables until they could find housing for them. Four families were crowded into a single room. Jews from the surrounding area were brought into Łęczyca, from which in early 1941 there were three additional deportations—to Poddębice, to Grabów, and possibly to Parzęczew, another concentration point within the Kreis.⁹ The inflow of refugees from the countryside and the expulsions to other ghettos kept the population of Łęczyca at a rough equilibrium. On January 1,



View of the Łęczyca ghetto's gate and barbed wire fence, n.d.
USHMM WS #91661, COURTESY OF IPN

1940, the number was around 3,000. On January 1, 1941, the total was 2,987. In April 1942, it was approximately 1,750.

At some time between December 1940 and February 1941 (just following the expulsions), the establishment of the Łęczycza ghetto was completed when it was enclosed with barbed wire.¹⁰ No one was permitted to leave the area. Within the ghetto there was freedom of movement from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., after which a strict curfew was enforced. At first Jews wore a yellow patch with a Star of David on their sleeves. Afterwards, they were forced to wear it on the front and back of their clothing. Jewish converts to Christianity—still regarded as Jews by the Germans—had to wear an extra-large patch. Judenrat members had their own distinctive patches. Within the ghetto all communal life was suppressed—no prayer services, no cultural programs, no schools, no social interaction, and no trade or business activity were permitted. The ghetto cooperative, which provided meager rations and other basic services, was the only organization allowed to function. Due to famine and lack of fuel, diseases were prevalent, including cases of typhus. Funeral processions to the cemetery were forbidden; only a few close relatives were allowed to inter the deceased.¹¹

After the expulsions, the only Jews left in Łęczycza were the relatively well-to-do, who held on to the delusion that money could shield them from their ultimate fate. Around this time the Germans ordered the Jews to salvage the bricks of the burned synagogue and clean them for further use. This difficult and heartbreaking task was accomplished in three non-stop shifts. Each day the inhabitants of the ghetto were lined up for a head count. In March 1942, 10 men who were under arrest allegedly for smuggling were publicly hanged. After five hours their bodies were buried in a common grave.¹²

On April 11–12, 1942, the remaining 1,750 Jews were sent to the extermination camp at Chełmno.¹³ During the month of April, all the Jews of Łęczycza who had been expelled to the nearby towns of Poddębice and Grabów were also transported to Chełmno and murdered.¹⁴ In June 1942, the Gestapo in Łódź reported that about 9,000 Jews had been evacuated recently from Kreis Lentschütz, which was free of Jews (*judenfrei*) with the exception of the ghetto in Ozorków.¹⁵ During July 1942, a group of Jews was brought to the Central Prison in Łódź from the prison in Łęczycza.¹⁶ At the end of the occupation, local Poles were occupying the houses in the former ghetto area.¹⁷

SOURCES Published sources on the Łęczycza ghetto include the following: Yitzhak Frenkel, ed., *Sefer Linshitz* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Leczyca in Israel, 1953); Avraham Tsigler, *Hazak ve-halash: Sipuro nitsol Sho'ab* (Israel: A. Tsigler, 1987); and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 151–155.

Information on the Łęczycza ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/1047 and 1172); BA-L (ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67); IPN (ASG, vol. 50, p. 83); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 15; and RG-50.488*0153); VHF (# 5802, 20465, 21749, and 23061); and YVA.

Samuel Fishman

NOTES

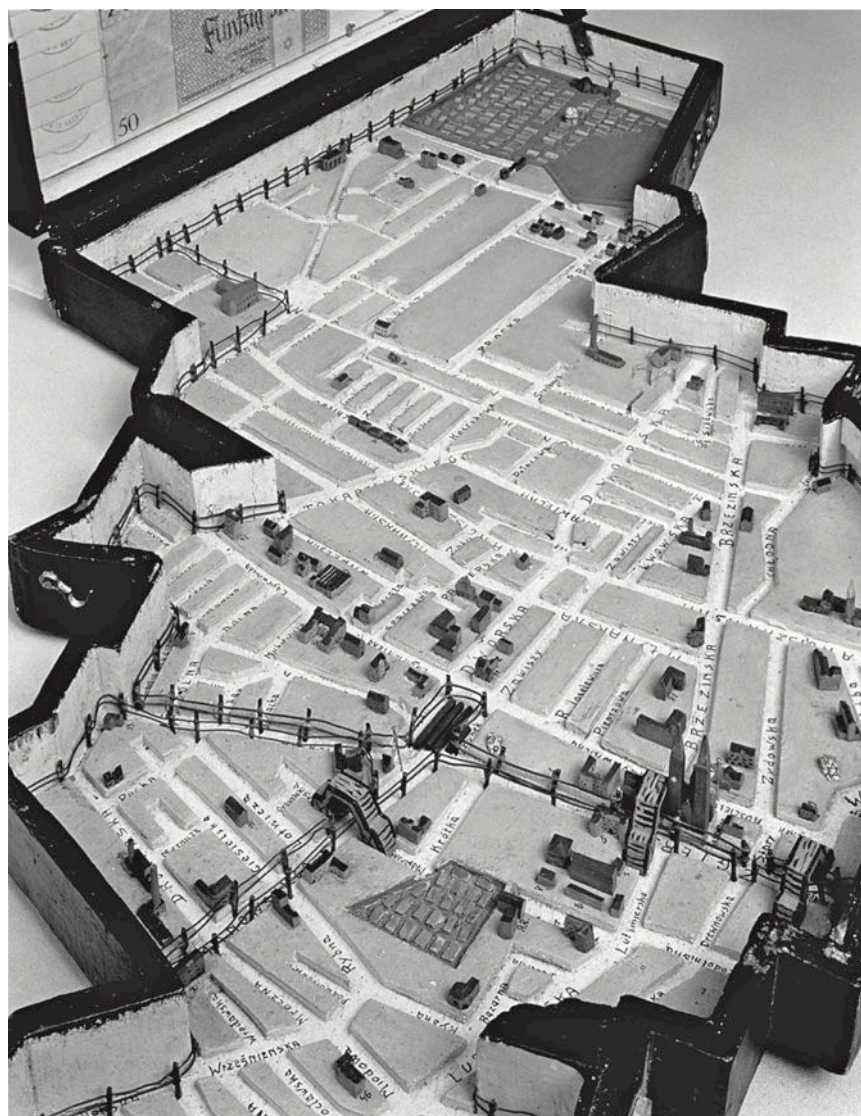
1. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, p. 179.
2. Ibid., pp. 180–181; a photograph of Herzke Muchnik can be found in Tsigler, *Hazak ve-halash*, on the final page.
3. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, p. 181.
4. Ibid., p. 183.
5. Ibid., p. 186; and VHF, # 5802, testimony of Abraham Lipschitz.
6. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, p. 181.
7. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ba-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 155.
8. See Tsigler, *Hazak ve-halash*, final page.
9. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, pp. 182–183; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Warthe-land 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 202.
10. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15 (IPN, ASG 50), p. 83, dates the establishment of the ghetto in February 1941. BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 7, p. 181, witness statement of Gerhard J., August 6, 1971, however, dates it only at the end of 1941.
11. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, pp. 183–185; AŻIH, Ring I/1172.
12. Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 686; Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, p. 185.
13. “Łeczyca,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., vol. 12 (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), pp. 594–595.
14. Frenkel, *Sefer Linshitz*, p. 186; and Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), pp. 205–207.
15. Lagebericht der Gestapo in Lods, June 9, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 285–286.
16. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 236.
17. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15 (IPN, ASG 50), p. 83.

ŁÓDŹ

Pre-1939: Łódź (Yiddish: Lodzh), city, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Litzmannstadt (April 1940), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Warthe-land; post-1998: Łódź, Łódź województwo, Poland

Łódź lies 137 kilometers (85 miles) southwest of Warsaw. Its textile industry was the largest in interwar Poland. In 1931, its 604,629 residents included among others 356,987 Poles, 191,720 Jews, and 53,562 Germans. On the eve of World War II, its Jewish community, numbering around 235,000 members, was the second largest in Europe.

Upon occupying Łódź on September 8, 1939, the Germans unleashed three months of sustained anti-Jewish violence, including seizing Jews for forced labor, plundering and confiscating Jewish property, and executing or deporting to



A model of the Łódź ghetto created by ghetto resident Leon Jacobson in 1940. The ghetto's footbridges are visible in the foreground.

USHMM WS #N00051, COURTESY OF LEON JACOBSON

concentration camps hundreds of the city's Jewish political, business, and cultural elite.

Arthur Greiser, Gauleiter and Reichsstatthalter of Warthegau, officially lobbied for Łódź's incorporation into Warthegau on November 9, 1939, and because he was anxious to Germanize the city by resettling Reich and ethnic Germans there, authorities initially planned to expel the Jews, rather than to ghettoize them. From December 11, 1939, German police, security officials, and local ethnic Germans organized in a Selbstschutz (Auxiliary Police) unit, and German civilians, including youth brought from the Reich, began deporting Jews (and Poles) into the Generalgouvernement. Plans called for the expulsion of 30,000 Jews (and 30,000 Poles) from Łódź, but protests from Hans Frank, head of the Generalgouvernement, suspended the deportations on December 16, after the transfer of 25,374 people. Jews likely were

overrepresented among the expellees because German youth had targeted them for eviction.¹ Ongoing antisemitic terror and rumors of a total expulsion prompted another 60,000 to 75,000 Jews to leave Łódź on their own.

On December 10, 1939, Friedrich Übelhör, Regierungspräsident in Kalisch, secretly ordered authorities to plan a "transitional" measure: a closed ghetto to imprison the Jews until their expulsion to the Generalgouvernement.² On February 8, 1940, SS-Brigadeführer Johannes Schäfer, the city's Polizeipräsident, publicly announced the establishment of a ghetto in northern Łódź, ultimately on 4.13 square kilometers (almost 1.6 square miles) in the Bałuty, Stare Miasto (Old Town), and Marysin neighborhoods. Ethnic Germans and Poles had until April 30 to vacate residences there. Given until April 19 to move into the ghetto, Jews could bring one suitcase of clothing, linens, photographs, and a bed. Chaim Mordechai Rum-

kowski, whom German authorities appointed head of the Jewish Council (officially, *Der Älteste der Juden*) on October 13–14, 1939, established a Jewish police force (*Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*) to transfer the Jews into the ghetto.

Starting on March 1, 1940, the SS and police, impatient with the transfer rate, arrested Poles still living in the ghetto and drove Jews into it. The Germans released some 600 Poles, designating them for residency in a Polish neighborhood established in southern Łódź, and filled their places with Jewish expellees. About 200 Jews were shot dead during the evacuations, mostly on March 7–8 (“Bloody Thursday”). Some 160 from among those arrested were executed in the *Lućmierz Forest*, near *Zgierz*. Another 400 to 500 Jewish prisoners were expelled to the *Generalgouvernement*.

In March and April 1940, the Germans encircled the ghetto with a barbed-wire and wooden fence. On April 30, the gates closed on its 163,777 residents (including 6,741 refugees). On May 10, the *Schutzpolizei* (*Schupo*) and its auxiliaries, posted at 50- to 100-meter intervals (about 55- to 109-yard intervals) along the outside of the 11-kilometer (6.8-mile) ghetto perimeter, received orders to shoot Jews approaching the fence without warning. About 180 Jews were killed for being too close to the fence and for other offenses related to securing the ghetto’s perimeter.

In April 1940, the Germans changed Łódź’s name to *Litzmannstadt*. Therefore, the Łódź ghetto is also known as the *Litzmannstadt ghetto*. *Karl Marder* and *Werner Ventzky*, respectively, the city’s *Oberbürgermeister* and *Bürgermeister*, were the chief administrative and economic officers of the ghetto. They initially charged the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsamt Hauptstelle* (Food Supplies and Economy Department) with day-to-day responsibility for the ghetto. The department in turn created a Ghetto division, officially the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto* (EWG), led from May 1940 by *Hans Biebow*, a coffee merchant from *Bremen*. The *Schupo*, *Kripo*, and *Gestapo* exercised police authority over the ghetto. In January 1942, *SS-Sturmbannführer* *Dr. Otto Bradfisch* replaced the first commander of the *Litzmannstadt Gestapo*, *SS-Hauptsturmführer* *Dr. Robert Scheff*. In August 1942, *Bradfisch* also assumed *Ventzky*’s position. Through 1943, *SS-Obersturmführer* *Günter Fuchs* headed the *Gestapo*’s section for Jewish Matters (*Judenangelegenheiten*).

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. Because Jewish authorities had designated the housing in *Marysin*, a more rural, middle-class neighborhood, mainly for schools, old-age homes, and an orphanage, almost all the Jews were squeezed into about 2,300 homes located in a 2.31 square kilometer (0.9 square mile) residential area in *Bałuty* and *Old Town*. The two neighborhoods were notorious slums, whose mostly 100-year-old wooden houses lacked central plumbing. The exclusion from the ghetto of *Nowomiejska-Zgierz* and *Limanowski Streets*, thoroughways left open to non-Jewish traffic, made movement within the ghetto difficult. Initially, the Jews crossed the streets at specific gates, only at designated times.

From the fall of 1941, Jews from beyond Łódź were consolidated in the ghetto: 2,900 from the *Kujawy* region (including

Włocławek, *Brześć Kujawski*, *Chodecz*, *Kowal*, and *Lubraniec*); 19,954 from *Prague*, *Vienna*, *Luxembourg*, *Berlin*, *Düsseldorf*, *Emden*, *Frankfurt am Main*, *Hamburg*, and *Cologne*; and 18,000 to 18,500 from localities near Łódź. From November 5–9, 5,007 Roma arrived from *Burgenland*, *Austria*. Additionally, some 2,306 children were born in the ghetto. The total number of people who lived there amounted to around 210,000.

City administrators further exacerbated conditions in the ghetto. Initially, they moved haltingly on *Rumkowski*’s requests, in March and April 1940, to establish factories to enable the Jews to work to pay for their provisioning and instead decided to finance the ghetto by extracting movable wealth from the Jews. The EWG debited *Rumkowski*’s account for requests he made to ease living conditions, including for the medical equipment and furnishings in a modern pre-war public health clinic and for three wooden pedestrian bridges (60,000 *Reichsmark* [RM]) constructed in July over the roads excluded from the ghetto. To resolve the ghetto’s growing indebtedness, the EWG ordered the Jews in June 1940 to exchange their convertible currency at a ghetto bank for vouchers. (The Jews called the ghetto currency *Chaimki* or *Rumki*, because they carried *Rumkowski*’s name.) A special *Kripo* unit, the *Kriminalpolizei Sonderkommissariat Getto*, commanded by *Bruno Obersteiner* and *Wilhelm Neumann*, established offices in the ghetto in May to facilitate searches for items the EWG and the Jewish administration ordered the Jews to surrender. In July, *Rumkowski*, on *Gestapo* and EWG orders, created a special division of the Jewish Police, the *Sonderabteilung*, to assist in *Kripo* searches. From August, a second ghetto bank assessed and purchased for ghetto currency Jewish-owned valuables, including paintings, jewelry, leather goods, clothing, and linens.³

These policies rapidly pauperized the ghetto because they forced almost all the Jews, save perhaps for the approximately 7,000 employed on June 25, 1940, to sell possessions to survive. By August, just 52.2 percent of ghetto residents could afford to buy food. On August 10–11 and 25, *Rumkowski* called on German forces to dispel food riots and distributed 70,000 kilograms (154,324 pounds) of potatoes to the most impoverished. On September 19, he declared his administration financially incapable of feeding the impoverished and requested a 2 million RM loan. Officials caused looting by suspending food deliveries into the ghetto for two weeks to extract additional valuables.

Since *Hans Frank* refused to resettle the Łódź Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*, on October 18, 1940, the municipal authorities acknowledged that the ghetto would continue to exist. They approved a 3 million RM loan to provision the ghetto and to develop workshops there. To cut costs, they ordered that the Jews receive prison rations, from the worst of the available food supply, and insisted that only the most productive workers be awarded supplemental rations. *Biebow*’s office became an autonomous division, the *Gettoverwaltung* (Ghetto Administration, GV), which reported directly to the mayor. *Biebow* elevated the ghetto *Kripo*, giving it identical



Children work in a wood workshop in the Łódź ghetto, 1941–1942.
USHMM WS #89491, COURTESY OF MOSHE ZILBAR

access as the Gestapo to his meetings with Jewish administrators. Police authorities insisted the ghetto be surrounded with an elaborate “fire break,” or a no-man’s land. Some neighborhoods were razed beginning in late 1940. Guard booths and electric lights were installed in the vacant expanse. However, plans to install searchlights and to build watchtowers were never implemented, in part because the subsequent success of industrial expansion eased concerns about security by the spring of 1941 and may also have diminished retributive police terror.

By July 1942, the GV oversaw 74 ghetto workshops, officially called *Arbeitsressorte* (work sections) but popularly known as *ressorts*. Some 90 percent of all production was for the Wehrmacht. German department stores placed most of the remaining orders. A small pre-war railway depot, the Radogoszcz station, located in the ghetto, was expanded to deliver machinery and raw materials and to send out finished products, including clothing, shoes, carpets, furniture, telephone equipment, toys, and paper bags.

Ressort workers labored 10 to 14 hours a day in poorly ventilated, overcrowded workshops, earning wages on a piece-work basis. The wages were held low, because Gau authorities took 35 percent off the top, the GV another 30 percent, and the Jewish administration another 10 percent. The most skilled worker received at best 4 ghetto marks daily. Nonskilled labor received 1 mark. Workers rapidly produced large quantities of finished goods, including in a week’s time almost 5,000 complete sets of Wehrmacht uniforms. Such output fueled industrial expansion but never allowed for full employment. By March 1942, the *ressorts* employed 53,000 workers.

Rumkowski built a vast bureaucracy, numbering more than 13,000 people in August 1942, to oversee factories, housing, food supply, health care, and sanitation. In August 1940, he opened soup kitchens for the poor. In October, he implemented a promised welfare system, sending monthly stipends of 7 to 10 marks to 82,000 children and adults. However, the Jewish administration struggled over how to apportion the limited food the Germans sent into the ghetto, which likely amounted in most food categories to half a prisoner’s ration.

A 15 percent surcharge for food purchased on credit and a 15 percent fee to transfer food into the ghetto added costs to the few provisions the ghetto received.

Rumkowski responded to the food shortages by demanding the Jews work harder to pay for their maintenance and by instituting increasingly authoritarian measures. In December 1940, he ordered the Jewish administration to take over private soup kitchens and restaurants and to ration food. In the spring of 1941, he liquidated the pioneer training camps of young Zionists and seized their farms in Marysin. To snuff out speculation, he ordered periodic crackdowns and arrests of smugglers and black marketeers.

Within the ghetto, the shrinking economy exposed cleavages in the Jewish community. In January 1941, Rumkowski announced a more equitable distribution of bread rations by discontinuing a 600-grams (21-ounces) daily supplemental ration for manual workers to increase the general population’s ration from 300 to 400 grams (10.6 to 14.1 ounces). In February, underground political groups protested the decision with the carpenters’ strike. Most strikers returned to work after Rumkowski offered 580 grams (20.5 ounces) of meat and 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of potatoes to ressort workers. The Jewish Police put down the remaining opposition. In March, 700 welfare recipients demanded increases in relief payments and decreases in the prices of food. The West European Jews, in particular, found adjusting to the ghetto’s economic realities difficult. About half never found jobs.

Material conditions for the Jews continued to decline, just as the daily food rations diminished—about 1,800 calories in the first months of the ghetto’s existence decreased to 600 calories by mid-1942. Most Jews subsisted on a daily bowl of watery cabbage or potato soup, a piece of bread, and a small evening snack of radish greens or potato peels. Paltry heating rations and restrictions on electricity use in residences forced almost everyone to eat collectively in soup kitchens, to curtail the laundering of clothing and linens in hot water, and to eat unheated evening meals—factors that contributed to outbreaks of typhus and dysentery. In 1942, the annual death toll peaked at 18,000. (Officially, 2,811 deaths were attributed to starvation.) The West European Jews, many of them older, also were overrepresented among the victims. From October 1941 to May 1942, 3,318 died in the ghetto (about 50 percent of the total number of deaths in this period). Overall, 45,327 people died from “natural causes” in the ghetto.

Because Rumkowski had centralized so much authority for day-to-day ghetto operations in his hands, portrayed himself as the ghetto’s supreme ruler, and boasted of Jewish autonomy in the ghetto, many blamed him for their plight. Some maintained he had established a system of patronage and privilege in which the ghetto leadership and elite, who were entitled to “enormous” supplemental rations, “[were] gorging, unafraid of death from exhaustion or tuberculosis . . . while the rest [were] swelling up and dying of hunger.”²⁴ Others privately bemoaned Rumkowski’s incompetence in economic affairs and castigated him for silencing opponents by ordering them conscripted for forced labor outside the ghetto, among the approximately



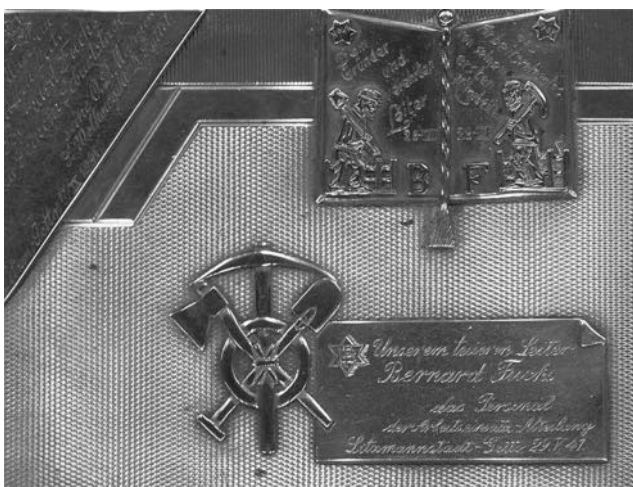
Nachman Zonabend (center) and Mendel Grosman (right) examine a framed portrait of the Łódź Judenrat chairman, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, 1941.

USHMM WS #02685, COURTESY OF NACHMAN ZONABEND



A 10-Pfennig stamp from the Łódź ghetto, bearing the likeness of the Judenrat chairman, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, n.d.

USHMM WS #N00359



A silver cigarette case with gold decorations presented to Bernard Fuchs, head of the Łódź ghetto Labor Department, on the occasion of his birthday by his staff. From top left, the inscriptions, which have different signatories and dates, read: "Our beloved director Bernard Fuchs on his birthday - His OD [Ordnungsdienst, Order Service] staff, L. Wolkowyski [and] D. Pyttel, Litzm[annstadt] ghetto, 19 September 1941." Top right: "To the founder and honored director of the Labor Department from his first assistants, 28 June [1941] to 28 June [1942] B[enard] F[uchs]." Bottom right: "Our dear director Bernard Fuchs, the personnel of the labor deployment section, Litzmannstadt ghetto 29 May 1941."

USHMM WS #01367, COURTESY OF BERT AND IRENE FLEMING



The Łódź ghetto police at roll call, 1941.

USHMM WS #05653, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

13,000 people sent to 160 forced labor camps, established mainly near Poznań, to construct the Autobahn to Frankfurt an der Oder.

Despite the grim living conditions, the ghetto sustained a variety of cultural activities. Until September 1942, religious observance continued in 27 Batei Midrash. Poets, writers, and musicians presented works in soup kitchens and at a cultural

hall, opened in March 1941 by the Jewish administration. Between June 1940 and October 1941, 14,798 children attended 45 primary and 2 secondary schools. The cultural events enabled individuals to forget their isolation, hunger, and despair for a time. The schools served one subsidized meal daily, providing students important nutritional sustenance. A Department of Archives, established in November 1940, wrote a chronicle of events in the ghetto. Though rarely critical of Rumkowski, it remains an important source for understanding daily life in the ghetto.

Starting in the fall of 1941, German authorities debated the Łódź ghetto's fate. Local and regional officials, including Biebow, Übelhör (until his removal in mid-December 1941), and Greiser, had made money from the ghetto and argued for its continued existence based on its contributions to war production. They found powerful allies in those responsible for war production, most notably Albert Speer, and managed to ratchet down demands, from Adolf Eichmann, Reinhard Heydrich, and Heinrich Himmler, to liquidate the ghetto.

They agreed to shield the ghetto's productive capacities, which netted official profits from March 1942, by targeting first for "resettlement" "non-productive" Jews. Biebow had adopted such a policy from early in 1942, while participating in the liquidation of the provincial ghettos, by retaining 18,000 to 18,500 mostly male craftsmen and laborers for work in the Łódź ghetto.⁵

In March 1942, Rumkowski informed the Łódź Jews: "A new rule has been introduced . . . only working people can stay in the ghetto," and in April he trumpeted employment as a "guarantee of peace."⁶ The Jewish administration attempted to insulate the Jews from German violence by organizing the deportations. Rumkowski appointed a commission of five to draw up deportation lists; the commission in turn sent notices to those slated for "resettlement"; teachers and others from the Jewish administration filled out documentation at assembly points. Those who failed to report were brought to assembly points by the Jewish Police. From April 1942, German authorities intervened, ordering the nonworking population over the age of 10 to report for cursory medical exams, conducted by a commission of a few German doctors, members of the Gestapo, and Jewish physicians, to determine which of the unemployed were fit for labor and which were to be "resettled." The warnings and examinations likely played some role in the Jewish administration's decision in the spring of 1942 to expand factory employment to include tens of thousands of youths aged 8 to 14 in apprenticeship programs.

In Łódź, the first deportation Aktion, totaling 57,064 people, took place from December 21, 1941, to May 15, 1942. The Roma were the first to be transported to the extermination center in Chełmno nad Nerem between December 20, 1941, and January 10, 1942. The Jews, also transferred to Chełmno, left the Radogoszcz station in 55 trains in three deportation waves (January 16–29, February 22–April 22, and May 2–15, 1942). Among the deportees were a third of the Kujawy Jews (January); 10,943 unemployed West European expellees (May); native welfare recipients; and all those convicted of crimes and their families (January).

The second deportation Aktion, on September 1–2 and 5–12, 1942, first targeted the sick at the ghetto's hospitals. On September 4, Rumkowski appealed to the Jews to hand over their children and elderly relatives to save themselves. The German authorities imposed an *allgemeine Gehsperr*e (general curfew), forbidding ghetto residents from leaving their homes for five days to make it easier for the Jewish Police and firemen to locate the victims. On September 7, the SS and Kripo stepped in to oversee the searches. Some 164 to 570 people were killed on the spot; 15,682 children, elderly, and infirm Jews were sent to their deaths at Chełmno.

The SS likely ordered the ghetto's children and elderly surrendered.⁷ But because Rumkowski knew at least from the summer of 1942 that the Germans were gassing the Jews at Chełmno, most survivors consider his actions during the Gehsperre unforgivable.⁸ A few survivors maintain the Germans determined the scope and timing of the deportations and believe Rumkowski acted realistically, according to the



A child who has been selected for deportation during the Gehsperre Aktion bids farewell to his family through a fence of the central prison in the Łódź ghetto, September 1942.

USHMM WS #89772, COURTESY OF MOSHE ZILBAR

context and morality of the time, by attempting to make the Jewish labor force indispensable to the Germans, while capitulating to their demands for population reductions in a desperate effort to save a part of the Jewish population. They attribute him with formulating a policy that enabled the Łódź ghetto to survive beyond any other ghetto in German-occupied Poland and as a result increasing the survival chances for many thousands of Jews. All scholars acknowledge the important role economics played in the German decision to maintain the ghetto but tend to attribute its longevity to local, regional, and national German authorities with vested financial or military interests in its retention.

After the deportations, the ghetto resembled more of a labor camp. Some 73,782 Jews, about 85 percent of the surviving population, were employed at 101 ressorts, which were monitored directly by Biebow and Germans from the GV. The orphanages, old-age homes, and hospitals were closed. Biebow ordered all Yiddish and Hebrew signs replaced with German signs and suspended the rabbinate. Biebow also diminished Rumkowski's authority by reducing the size of the Jewish ghetto administration and transferring responsibility for factory production and food supply to 2 Jews with close ties to the Gestapo and Kripo.

Some welfare schemes were reestablished, though at times they were transformed to accommodate the new realities. Malnourished workers received eight weeks of bakery employment to provide them extra bread rations. Rest homes provided weeklong vacations, with larger rations, to 11,706 workers before Biebow closed them on August 25, 1943. Rumkowski successfully appealed to ghetto residents to adopt 2,000 children orphaned by the evacuations. He also served as a chaplain at marriages, which the authorities required be civil ceremonies.

In mid-February 1944, Greiser accepted Himmler's demands for a gradual liquidation of the ghetto, ordering in

March the Chełmno extermination center rebuilt and about 1,600 Jews deported to forced labor camps in Częstochowa and Skarżysko-Kamienna. German military defeats in April and May ended whatever hesitation he may have had to liquidate the ghetto. On June 15, Fuchs, recalled to Łódź to oversee the deportations, and Bradfisch demanded 3,000 Jews be evacuated weekly, ostensibly to clear war damage in the Reich. Between June 23 and July 14, 10 transports carried 7,196 Jews to their deaths at Chełmno. Fears that the Red Army would capture the extermination center temporarily suspended the deportations. They began anew between August 1 and 29, this time under the pretense that the ghetto was to be relocated to the Reich. Instead, more than 65,000 Jews, including Rumkowski, were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people, including 30 to 270 who had evaded the deportations, remained behind in the ghetto to clear and sort the possessions there and to disassemble some of its workshops. On October 21, 1944, 500 inmates were sent to the Ravensbrück and Königs Wusterhausen concentration camps. In January 1945, as the Red Army approached Łódź, the Germans ordered a brigade of ghetto inmates to dig mass graves at the Jewish cemetery, but on January 17, the Jews hid, rather than assemble for evacuation. Some 877 Jews were still hiding in the ghetto when the Red Army liberated Łódź on January 19, 1945.

Another 5,000 to 15,000 Łódź Jews survived the concentration camps.

SOURCES Contemporary press coverage, important official German documentation, and excerpts of important memoirs are in Alan Adelson and Robert Lapides, *Łódź Ghetto: Inside a Community under Siege* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1989), though the translations have been questioned by Robert Moses Shapiro, “Diaries and Memoirs from the Lodz Ghetto in Yiddish and Hebrew,” in Shapiro, ed., *Holocaust Chronicles: Individualizing the Holocaust through Diaries and Other Contemporaneous Personal Accounts* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1999), pp. 95–115. Shapiro also is the translator of Isaiah Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), an important secondary source, which contains translations of about 140 documents. Of the English-language materials, particularly important are the memoir excerpts by Jakub Hiller and Leon Hurwitz, neither of which has appeared elsewhere in English, and by Shlomo Frank and Jakub Szulman, because they are still available only in Yiddish and Hebrew.

Available in Polish, with transcriptions of the original German-language documentation, are: *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3, *Getto Łódzkie*, ed. Artur Eisenbach (Warsaw: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół CZWH w Polsce, 1946); and the relevant sections in vol. 1, *Obozy*, ed. N. Blumenthal (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Centralnej Komisji Historycznej, 1946), with the first book particularly important, because it established much of the framework for the initial postwar scholarly understanding and subsequent analysis of the Łódź ghetto.

In addition to Trunk, scholarly works include: Łódź ghetto survivor Icchak Rubin, *Żydzi w Łodzi pod niemiecką okupacją 1939–1945* (London: Kontra, 1988); more recently, Michal

Unger, *Lodz’: Abaron ha-geta’ot be-Polin* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005); Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006); Andrea Löw, *Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt: Lebensbedingungen, Selbstwahrnehmung, Verhalten* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006); and Peter Klein, *Die “Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt” 1940–1944: Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009). All contain important bibliographies.

Julian Baranowski, an APL archivist and for decades the primary specialist of the repository’s documentation for the Łódź ghetto, has published a smaller, more accessible bilingual history, *The Łódź Ghetto 1940–1944. Łódzkie Getto 1940–1944. Vademecum*, 3rd ed. (Łódź: APL and Biblio, 2005). Gordon Horwitz, *Ghettostadt: Łódź and the Making of a Nazi City* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008), also an accessible account, devotes several chapters to the ghetto but leaves much unsaid about its main subject.

Diaries, memoirs, notebooks, journalistic accounts, and periodicals left by those who perished in the Holocaust include: *The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak*, trans. Kamil Turowski (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Hanno Loewy and Andrzej Bodek, eds., “*Les Vrais Riches*,” *Notizen am Rand: Ein Tagebuch aus dem Ghetto Łódź (Mai bis August 1944)* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1997); “Yomano shel Menahem Oppenheim mi-geto lodzh,” ed. and trans. Mordecai Zer-Kavod, *Sinai* 14: 5–6 (1951): 241–278; a handwritten Hebrew-language periodical published in the ghetto, *Min ha-metsar*, which appeared in *Dapim le-beker ha shoa ve-ha-mered* 2 (February 1952): 149–153; Y. Szulman, “Der Aelteste der Juden,” *Yediot Bet Lohamei ha-Geta’ot Yediot* (April 1958): 69–81; “Papiery oświęcimskie,” in Janusz Gumkowski and Adam Rutkowski, eds., *Szukajcie w popiołach: Papiery znalezione w Oświęcimiu*, trans. Szymon Datner (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1965), pp. 41–121, found buried at Auschwitz; Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., “Polska Anna Frank nazywała się? Fragment pamiętnika dziewczynki z getta łódzkiego,” *Mówią wieki*, no. 7 (1958): 4–11; and more recently, the diary of Jehuda “Lolek” Lubiński, recovered in Bałuty in 2003, available as “Getto Litzmannstadt 1941: Pamiętnik,” *Przegląd Powszechny*, no. 11 (2003): 268–281, with excerpts of the last translated into English at the Web sites of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Łódź Ghetto Museum.

The works of a number of individuals employed by the Department of Archives, who perished in the Holocaust, include: Josef Zelkowitz, *In Those Terrible Days. Notes from the Łódź Ghetto*, ed. Michal Unger, trans. Naftali Greenwood (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002); Oskar Rosenfeld, *In the Beginning Was the Ghetto. Notebooks from Łódź*, ed. Hanno Loewy, trans. Brigitte M. Goldstein (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002); and Oskar Singer, “*Im Eilschritt durch den Gettotag*,” *Reportagen und Essays aus dem Getto Lodz, 1942–1944* (Berlin: Philo, 2002).

Memoirs by survivors include: Riva Chirung, *Bridge of Sorrow, Bridge of Hope*, ed. Rebecca Camhi Fromer, trans. Arlene and Jerry Aviram (Berkeley, CA: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 1994); Jakub Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta* (Łódź: Bellon and ŻIH, Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 2002); Lucille Eichen-green, with Harriet Hyman Chamberlain, *From Ashes to Life: My Memories of the Holocaust* (San Francisco: Mercury House,

1994); Rebecca Camhi Fromer and Lucille Eichengreen, *Rumkowski and the Orphans of Łódź* (San Francisco: Mercury House, 2002); and Edward Reicher, *W ostrym świetle dnia: dziennik żydowskiego lekarza 1939–1945* (London: Libra Books, 1989), for particularly devastating portraits of Rumkowski. Shlomo Frank, *Togħukh fun Lodzsher geto* (Tel Aviv: Menorah, 1958), from a former policeman, also is important, although it has been criticized for being more of a memoir than a diary. Among memoirists pleading to rethink Rumkowski's reputation are Arnold Mostowicz, *With a Yellow Star and a Red Cross: A Doctor in the Łódź Ghetto*, trans. Henia Reinhartz and Nochem Reinhartz (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003); and Abraham Cykiert, "The Uniqueness of the Łódź Ghetto," in Paweł Samuś and Wiesław Puś, eds., *Fenomen getta łódzkiego, 1940–1944* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2006), with the latter appearing in a multilingual work in which contributors discuss, among other topics, youth groups, sports organizations, theater, and religious life in the ghetto and which contains a large bibliography, mostly of Polish-, German-, and English-language works.

A vast visual iconography exists for the Łódź ghetto, with selected photographs of the ghetto appearing in publication, including from Jewish ghetto photographers: Mendel Grossman, *With a Camera in the Ghetto*, ed. Zvi Szner and Alexander Sened (New York: Schocken Books, 1972); and Henryk Ross, *Lodz Ghetto Album. Photographs by Henryk Ross* (London: Chris Boot, 2004). *Fotoamator* (The photographer), a 1998 documentary film by Dariusz Jabłoński, juxtaposes the color slides taken of the ghetto by the amateur photographer Walter Genewein, a non-Jewish Viennese accountant employed by the GV, and his writings about the ghetto with Mostowicz's recollections of the ghetto. A rich collection of visual iconography documenting the Łódź ghetto also can be found at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum photo archives.

Also not to be overlooked is the award-winning fictional work written by survivor Chava Rosenfarb, *The Tree of Life: A Trilogy of Life in the Lodz Ghetto*, 3 vols., trans. Goldie Morgentaler (repr., Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004–2006); and Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Łódź Ghetto* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992). The songs are available as a CD, *Brave Old World / Song of the Lodz Ghetto* (Winter & Winter, 2005).

Published transcripts are available for several postwar trials, including the updated *Proces Hansa Biebow: Zagłada getta łódzkiego. Akta i stenogramy sądowe*, ed. Jerzy Lewiński (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1987); and *Proces Artura Greisera przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym* (Warsaw: GKBZNWP, 1946), for Biebow and Greiser, respectively, both convicted and executed for war crimes in Poland; with summaries of the trials and convictions in Hanover, West Germany, of Bradfish and Fuchs in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 19 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1978–), Lfd. Nr. 557; and East German trials of former Schupo members in *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 14 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), Lfd. Nr. 2074.

A much larger popular bibliography, with many more works about cultural life, additional memoirs, yizkor books, and published name lists, is available at the Lodz ShtetLinks pages at www.jewishgen.org.

A vast body of sources documents Jewish life in the Łódź ghetto. Archival documentation is located in the following repositories: AAN; APL; AŻIH; BA-BL; BA-L; FVA; IPN; IPN-Ł; NARA; USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

A part of the archival documentation has appeared in publication, including in English, for example, Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto*, trans. Richard Lourie et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), which offers a broad sampling of the *Chronicle* and a valuable introduction with a history of the ghetto. Unabridged translations of the *Chronicle* are available in Hebrew and in German.

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NOTES

1. Ludwik Landau, *Kronika lat wojny i okupacji*, 3 vols. (Warsaw: PWN, 1962–1963), 1:133, 137.
2. *Dokumenty*, 3:26–31; and "temporarily" used in the English translation in Trunk, *Łódź*, pp. 19–21.
3. USHMM, RG-05.008M (Stadtverwaltung Litzmannstadt), EWG Bericht, September 3, 1940.
4. Sierakowiak, *The Diary*, pp. 174, 176, 196.
5. *Proces Hansa Biebow*, pp. 111–113, 145–146, 155–156, 159, 170, 172–174, 183–184; IPN, SOŁ Biebow, vol. 13, pp. 328, 332–334, 336–339.
6. *Chronicle*, March 1942; also April 18–20, 1942.
7. AŻIH, 301/4006, testimony of Alicja Puterman.
8. *Dokumenty*, 1:233.

LUTOMIERSK

Pre-1939: Lutomiersk, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Lutomiersk (renamed Nertal in 1943), Kreis Lask, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Lutomiersk, Łódź województwo, Poland

Lutomiersk is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) west of Łódź. By 1921, there were 775 Jews living there, constituting 35 percent of the village's population.

At the beginning of the German occupation, Jews were conscripted for the restoration of a bridge destroyed in the course of the September Campaign, widening roads, and agricultural work at large German and ethnic German (*Volksdeutsche*) estates.

The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) including Moritz Curkowicz, Ch. Wartecki, Z. Kepiński, M. Żydkowski, and Josek Kartovsky. Survivor Frank Burstin (Bursztynowicz) describes one of its members as being "very bad" to Jews.¹

An open ghetto was set up in Lutomiersk in August 1940. Many houses in which Jews were forced to live were pre-war summer bungalows rented to visitors of the Hasidic court in neighboring Aleksandrów Łódzki. These dwellings were not built for year-round occupancy. Many suffered from the cold during the ghetto's first winter. The termination of public works, due to the winter's onset, was another burden, as Jews were previously paid meager wages of 5 Reichsmark (RM) a week

(or 1.20 RM daily) for public works they performed. Jewish craftsmen suffered from a lack of material for production.²

The Judenrat estimated there were 720 Jews living in the ghetto in December 1940, including 35 refugees.³ Nearly 300 people required some sort of financial support. The Judenrat provided cash handouts from its monthly budget of 950 RM, as it was unable to open a soup kitchen due to lack of space and money. The community received some additional financial assistance from Mojżesz Merin, the chairman of the Central Office of the Jewish Council of Elders in Eastern Upper Silesia in Sosnowiec. Burstin recalls that there was no difficulty obtaining sustenance, as Jews were free to leave the ghetto; however, rations for Jews did not include any fat or meat. Smuggled horsemeat was the most commonly consumed form of protein.⁴

The ghetto remained unfenced but was pronounced closed in the summer of 1941. From that time on, Lutomiersk's Jews were required to obtain passes to leave it. Conscripted for labor, they were regularly led out of the ghetto in work gangs, which were guarded by five or six members of the Jewish Police. According to Burstin, some "were just as bad as the Germans." Jews feared most of all Szarpański. There were no German forces stationed in the village.

The first deportation to labor camps was a group of 40 males aged 16 to 40, which took place in September or October 1941. Burstin's brother-in-law, Kartovsky, who refused to enlist Jews for this deportation, was severely beaten and included in the transport. Laborers were held for two days in the Łódź prison and then dispatched to a labor camp near Poznań. A number of sick people were sent to the Łódź ghetto.⁵ In December 1941, 83 laborers were sent to Frankfurt an der Oder.

By the end of 1941, the newly appointed German Amtskommissar in Lutomiersk improved the situation of the Jews by opening a tailors' shop, as well as furrier and tinsmith workshops. The income was divided between the Amtskommissar (50 percent) and the Judenrat (50 percent). The Judenrat paid the workers half of its share. A Polish teacher was the manager of the tailors' workshop.

The Lutomiersk ghetto was liquidated and the Jews were murdered, most likely on July 29, 1942, in the Chełmno extermination camp. A number of Jews were selected for labor and sent to the Łódź ghetto.

SOURCES The following publications include references to the Lutomiersk ghetto: Maria Tyszkowa, "Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941–1943. Dokumenty Biura Informacji i Propagandy Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej ze zbiorów oddziału rękopisów Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego," *BŻIH*, nos. 2–3 (1992): 40–43; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 279; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 13:272–273; Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), p. 88; Aleksandra Namysło, "Wpływ kierownictwa Centrali Żydowskich Rad Starszych Wschodniego Górnego Śląska na postawy i zachowania Żydów wobec rzeczywistości okupacyjnej," in A. Namysło, ed.,

Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy (Warsaw: IPN. Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), p. 180; and Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 206.

The following archival sources were used in this entry: AŻIH (210/462 [AJDC]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 37151).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/462 (Lutomiersk), p. 1; VHF, # 37151, testimony of Frank Burstin, 1997.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/462, pp. 2–4.
3. Ibid., p. 4. F. Burstin, who stayed in the ghetto until September or October 1941, estimates 700 to 750 residents, all of them local Jews. Some sources give much higher figures, but these could not be substantiated.
4. VHF, # 37151; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/462, pp. 4–5.
5. VHF, # 37151.

LUTUTÓW

Pre-1939: Lututów, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Landstett, Kreis Welungen (Wieluń), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Lututów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Lututów is located 70 kilometers (44 miles) southwest of Łódź. On the eve of World War II, about 1,100 Jews lived in the town, which had approximately 3,000 inhabitants in total.

With the outbreak of war in September 1939, the number of Jews in the town increased considerably as many people fled to Lututów from other towns closer to the border. Being completely without means and having no chance to make a living, these refugees placed a considerable strain on the Jewish community. Out of 1,375 Jews living in Lututów shortly after the start of the war, 247 were impoverished refugees in need of assistance.¹

At the start of the occupation in the first days of the war, the Germans arrested young Jews and sent them to Germany, where they were paraded as criminals, who supposedly had been shooting at German soldiers.² In the first months of the occupation, the German authorities imposed a number of restrictions on the Jews. Jewish property, especially commercial wares and businesses, was confiscated; Jews were required to wear distinguishing markings; and Jews were made to perform forced labor. By 1940, the Germans had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by a wealthy man named Noah Erlich, and Jewish Police, which received its orders from the Germans. The Jewish Council raised taxes among the Jewish community to provide bedclothes and other support to the needy, and it agreed to supply a number of Jews for forced labor each day. Erlich died of the cold during the occupation,

when he went out on a mission to try to save a Jewish youth who had escaped from a camp.³

At some time before the end of 1941 (available sources conflict on this), either during 1940⁴ or in the spring of 1941,⁵ the authorities established a ghetto in Lututów. In addition to the Jews of Lututów, Jews from the small neighboring communities of Łagiewniki, Wydryniwa, and Kobieles Wielkie were also brought into the ghetto in 1942.⁶ In total, the ghetto held somewhere between 1,200 and 1,600 Jews.⁷ It was located in a group of separated houses on Wieruszowska Street but was not enclosed by a fence. Many Jews were already living in this area prior to the ghetto's establishment; the few Poles who lived on this street were resettled. As a result of the influx of Jews, there was overcrowding in the ghetto, with several families sharing a single house. Members of the SA and German Gendarmes guarded the ghetto and frequently beat the ghetto inmates. However, at times they were also susceptible to bribes. The Jews of the ghetto were employed to clean streets and public places and to collect trash. Available sources indicate that living conditions in the ghetto were harsh.⁸ In February 1940 or 1941, one Jew, Józef Gelcman, was hanged in public inside the ghetto. Apparently he had refused to give the Germans his secret recipe for tanning leather, which brought him into conflict with the powerful new ethnic German director of the leather company in Lututów, Walter Dittberner.⁹ Six Jews were accused of membership in a resistance movement, and one of Communist agitation. All of them were shot and buried at the Jewish cemetery in Młynek near Lututów. It is not known how many Jews died or were killed in the ghetto in total.¹⁰

Over time, most of the able-bodied Jews were sent away to forced labor camps; mainly women, children, and the elderly remained. Labor in the camps included digging up potatoes and working on water regulation projects.¹¹ Further deportations to forced labor camps in the area around Poznań took place in 1942.

On August 11, 1942, a detachment of the Gestapo from Wieluń arrived in Lututów and organized the liquidation of the ghetto. The Jewish families were driven to the local Catholic Church; then, men of the Gestapo and Gendarmes searched the ghetto and shot everyone they found in hiding. The Aktion continued until the evening.¹² Witnesses mention the following Gendarmes as perpetrators during the liquidation of the ghetto: Georg Streicher, N. Lipa, Link, and Katholnik.

During the liquidation of the ghetto, German forces shot at least 12 inhabitants of the ghetto.¹³ Their corpses were put on horse-drawn carriages and were taken to the local Jewish cemetery, where they were buried. After being held for three days in the local church, where they were kept under terrible sanitary conditions without food, the remaining Jews were loaded onto trucks, which had been provided by the Schutzpolizei in Łódź. The 10 Jews who were too weak or too sick to be transported were shot on the spot. Jews capable of work were taken to the Łódź ghetto; all the others were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp via the Wieluń ghetto.

On August 21, 1942, the Amstkommissar in Lututów reported having purchased all the furniture and household goods of the "deported" Jews, for which the sum of 5,000 RM was paid to the Ghetto Administration (GV) in Łódź, as legal heir to this property.¹⁴ Some of the few Jewish survivors from Lututów were also prisoners in the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp after working in the Łódź ghetto.¹⁵

Investigations into Nazi crimes committed in Lututów were conducted by the Austrian and German authorities in the 1970s, but these did not result in any prosecutions, owing to a lack of credible evidence against specific perpetrators.¹⁶

SOURCES The most important secondary sources on the Lututów ghetto include the following: Maria Paduszyńska, "Zagłada Żydów lututowskich w latach 1939–1942," *Biuletyn Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w Łodzi*, IPN 3 (1994): 74–80; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 280; *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 137, 164; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 146–148.

Information regarding the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Lututów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Jüdische Gemeinde in Landstett an AJDC 210/106, pp. 10, 50, 52; AJDC 210/126, p. 10; AJDC 210/335, p. 2; and AJDC 210/352, p. 33); BA-L (ZStL, 203 AR-Z 361/77, investigation of the Stapostelle Wieluń and the Gendarmerie post in Lututów); IPN (ASG, sygn. 22, p. 578); USHMM (RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodni hitlerowskie], reels 32 and 35); VHF (# 3762, 21971, 27524, 38454, 46852); and YVA. See also OKŚZpNPŁdz (formerly OKBZHŁ): Akta gminy Lututów, sygn. 12, Ds 30/67, and zeznania obywateli polskich z 1945 roku, Ds 374/67; these records also contain the names of many of the perpetrators and names of a few of the victims.

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NOTES

1. See Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 208.

2. Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 768.

3. VHF, # 21971, testimony of Abram Erlich; Noah Erlich was his father.

4. BA-L, ZStL/203 AR-Z 361/77, statement of Stanisław Magiera, p. 30.

5. Paduszyńska, "Zagłada Żydów," p. 77.

6. In 1921, the Jewish populations of these three hamlets was only about 50 people.

7. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 280, gives the number of 1,200 ghetto inmates; USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 32, gives the number as 1,600.

8. USHMM, RG-15.042M; see especially the witness statement of Bronisław Kucharski; and VHF, # 3762, testimony of Mayer Goldbart.

9. BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 361/77, pp. 30–37, statements of Władysław Stulczewski and Stanisław Magiera.

10. USHMM, RG-15.042M, witness Bronisław Kucharski.

11. VHF, # 21971.

12. BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 361/77, pp. 27 ff., statement of Stefan Lesiewicz; and Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 207.

13. See USHMM, RG-15.042M.

14. Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 400.

15. VHF, # 46852, testimony of Leon Nyss.

16. See Sta. Wien, 15 St 49.632/71 and ZSSta-D 45 Js 33/75.

OSJAKÓW

Pre-1939: Osjaków, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ostwerder, Kreis Welungen (Wieluń), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Osjaków, Łódź województwo, Poland

The town of Osjaków is located about 62 kilometers (39 miles) north-northwest of Częstochowa. In 1921, out of 1,544 inhabitants, 759 were Jewish. By 1939, their number had slightly declined to around 700.¹



Deportation of Jews from Osjaków, n.d.
USHMM WS #91674, COURTESY OF IPN

When the Nazis occupied Osjaków in early September 1939, about 100 Jews fled the town. A few days later, the Germans arrested the rabbi of Osjaków in Piotrków Trybunalski and imprisoned him with other Jews.² The prisoners were tortured and then sent to an unknown destination, most likely to be killed.

Within the first weeks of the occupation, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the town. In 1940, the Jews were gradually evicted from their homes and were concentrated together in a specific area that became the ghetto.³ The ghetto area was quite small, with more than one Jewish family sharing a house, and according to one witness, it was not enclosed. At first it was not strictly guarded, and Jews were able to leave to supplement their meager rations by exchanging property for food such as potatoes, bread, or chicken with the local peasants. Living conditions were very harsh, and no schools existed for the children.⁴

While some of the Jews in the ghetto were employed locally as forced laborers cleaning and maintaining local roads and buildings, others were rounded up and sent off to labor camps. Over time the roundups by the German police to obtain forced laborers in accordance with name lists became more intensive, and few able-bodied Jews remained. Among the destinations were various forced labor camps for Jews, including that in Bełchatów and one based in a church building in Wieluń, which entailed work on road construction. Subsequently young able-bodied Jews from the Osjaków ghetto were sent further away to labor camps in the Poznań region.⁵

To a limited extent, Jews in Osjaków were still able to communicate with other ghettos by post. In late October 1941, one resident of the Osjaków ghetto wrote to the Jewish Council in the Łódź ghetto to inquire about the health of certain relatives living there, as no news had been received for some time.⁶

In July 1942, in preparation for the final extermination of the Jews in Kreis Welungen, about 500 Jews from the neighboring town of Kielczygłów were brought into the Osjaków ghetto.⁷ The liquidation of the Osjaków ghetto took place around August 15, 1942. The ghetto inhabitants were sent to Wieluń, where a number of those capable of work were selected out and sent to the Łódź ghetto; all the others were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were killed. The Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) in Wieluń reported to the head of the Gestapo in Łódź that by August 22, 1942, “Kreis Welungen was free of Jews [*judenrein*].”⁸ Only a few Jews from Osjaków managed to survive the rigors of the ghetto and successive labor and concentration camps until the end of the war.

SOURCES The most important published sources on the Jewish community of Osjaków and the ghetto there include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 52–53; Tadeusz Olejnik, “Zagłada ludności żydowskiej w powiecie wieluńskim w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *Rocznik Łódzki* 29 (1980): 249–265; and Y. Goldberg and A. Wien, “The

Book of the Community of Działoszyn,” *Pages of History* 16 (1966): 159, 161–162, 170–171.

There are only a few primary sources available on the history of the ghetto in Osjaków: APŁ (Piotrkowski Urząd Włościański 106); AŻIH (301/1904); VHF (# 22539); and YVA. Evelyn Zegenhagen

NOTES

1. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 52.

2. Ibid.

3. AŻIH, 301/1904, testimony of Meir Przemysławski, dates the establishment of the ghetto in 1940.

4. VHF, # 22539, testimony of Esther Sendrowicz.

5. Ibid.; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 52.

6. A facsimile of this postcard has been reproduced on the Web at www.edwardvictor.com.

7. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 53; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001), p. 622.

8. Excerpt from a situation report by the Grenzpolizei-kommissariat in Welungen to the Head of the Gestapo in Lods, August 31, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 311.

OZORKÓW

Pre-1939: Ozorków, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ozorkow, Kreis Lentschütz (Łęczyca), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Ozorków, Łódź województwo, Poland

Ozorków is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) northwest of Łódź. At the outbreak of World War II, the town had about 15,000 inhabitants including just over 5,000 Jews; the others being about equal numbers of Germans and Poles.¹ After the German occupation in September 1939, the Polish and German populations turned openly against the Jews.

Jews from other towns—among them Kalisz and Zgierz—arrived in Ozorków soon after the occupation began. In the fall of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by the lawyer Szymon Barczyński.² The members of the Judenrat had been the members of the former Jewish relief committee in the town of which Barczyński had also been the head.³ A Jewish police force commanded by a man named Wartski was established in the winter of 1940–1941.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw distributed some 5,000 Reichsmark (RM) of aid to Ozorków. By this time, the Jewish population in Ozorków numbered about 4,700 people, of whom 200 were refugees.⁴

In the spring of 1941, several hundred young Jews (especially those aged between 17 and 21) were rounded up and sent to forced labor camps near Gdańsk and Poznań.⁵

In the summer of 1941, an open ghetto was established, which contained about half of the Jews in Ozorków, while the others continued to live elsewhere in the town. Although the concentration of the Jews from the surrounding area had already started at this time, initially only male Jews from various locations in the area, including Piątek and Parczew, were resettled to Ozorków. By mid-October 1941, the situation of the Jews in Ozorków had deteriorated so badly that the Amtskommissar considered it “untenable” and a “public danger for the rest of the population.”⁶

There are contradictory statements as to when the Ozorków ghetto finally became the only area in town in which Jews could live. Some sources put the date as November or early in December 1941.⁷ Other sources claim that the ghetto was only finally established—and enclosed—in the spring of 1942 after all Jews incapable of work had been selected and sent to be exterminated.⁸ According to statistics regarding the liquidation of the ghetto, there were likely around 5,000 Jews living there in early 1942, among them probably some German Jews.⁹ The ghetto was located in the Wiatraki suburb of Ozorków along what are now known as Partyzantów, Polna, and Krasicki Streets.

The ghetto’s Jews, including children as young as 10, were employed cleaning streets, working on fortifications along the Bzura River, and producing uniforms for the Wehrmacht. Work outside the ghetto provided an opportunity to obtain a little extra food by bartering or scavenging, but most work details were closely guarded, allowing little or no contact with local non-Jews.¹⁰

Living and sanitary conditions in the ghetto were harsh; food and space were both in short supply. The Judenrat established a soup kitchen that distributed 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread and one cup of soup per person per day. Local Poles helped the Jews by providing groceries, especially bread and potatoes.¹¹ Only limited medical assistance was available, and according to one source, about 150 people died, most of them from typhus.¹² Some sources note that typhus cases were transferred to a hospital, which had two doctors.¹³

The employee of the Ozorków town administration in charge of the ghetto (Ghettokommandant) was a man named Lenz. He was very much liked by the Jews, and after the war, they made statements in his favor to the investigating authorities.¹⁴

On April 25, 1942, the Germans ordered that 8 or 10 Jews be hanged publicly on the market square, forcing the Jewish Police to participate in the executions. Immediately after the hangings, all Jews were taken to the “white school,” where they were surrounded by armed Gendarmes or SS men and were sorted into two categories, A and B.¹⁵ All “B” Jews had to remain in the school, among them mostly young children and adolescents, comprising about half of the ghetto population. From here they were deported by truck to be murdered in the Chełmno extermination camp. One source claims that the commander of the German police demanded 2,000 RM per person to release some of them, but the Judenrat could only ransom 93 women, without their children, claiming that they

were specialist workers. Within the ghetto, only two children remained, in hiding.¹⁶ According to a witness statement quoted by Isaiah Trunk, the secretary of the Jewish Council, Mania Rzepkowicz, that day rejected an offer by the German official in charge of the ghetto to be excluded from this “re-settlement” and instead, together with her child, joined the group that was taken to Chełmno.¹⁷ A report from June 1942, preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, indicates that by then some 2,700 Jews from Ozorków had been exterminated.¹⁸

A few weeks after the hangings and deportation Aktion, in the first half of May 1942, Biebow (head of the German Ghetto Administration, GV) and Rumkowski (head of the Judenrat) in the Łódź ghetto arrived in Ozorków to claim workers for their enterprises. They selected 1,387 Jews as laborers, who were transferred by tram into the Łódź ghetto on May 21–22, 1942. In June 1942, the Gestapo in Łódź reported that about 9,000 Jews had been evacuated recently from Kreis Lentschütz, which was free of Jews (*judenfrei*) with the exception of 1,000 in the Ozorków ghetto, who were urgently needed to complete production orders for the Wehrmacht.¹⁹

After this large transfer of Jews to Łódź in May, all Jews remaining in the Ozorków ghetto had to perform forced labor in the factories and workshops, making uniforms and boots for the German army.²⁰ The workers received monetary payment, which was sufficient to buy a little food at inflated prices.²¹ The final German selection took place in August 1942. More workers were selected for the Łódź ghetto, and all the others were killed. A handful of Jews remained in the ghetto for a few more days to clean it up and prepare the Jewish property for shipping to Germany.²²

The names of some of the perpetrators active in the Ozorków ghetto are known: Max-Karl Heidenreich, the NSDAP-Kreisstellenhauptleiter and deputy Landrat of Landkreis Lenschütz, frequently visited the ghetto. On these occasions he insulted and beat Jews, searched apartments and took food from Jews, forced the ghetto inhabitants to perform “gymnastic exercises,” and destroyed Jewish property. He was tried in Poland and executed on May 17, 1949.²³ A certain Freund was accused of having murdered children in the ghetto; however, his fate after the war remains unknown. August Binneweis was a Gendarme in Ozorków who participated in the execution of at least eight Jews in April 1942, as well as in the liquidation of the ghetto.²⁴ Witnesses also name several officials of the German Criminal Police (Kripo), including Werner Hermann, Bruno Uhle, Eduard Zimmermann, and Stanisław Przybyłek; the commander of the Gendarmes, Zalewski; and Gendarmes Kar, Schmidt, Land, and Arenz—all perpetrators who beat Jews—including children—and participated in deportation Aktions.²⁵

SOURCES Published sources relevant to the Ozorków ghetto include the following: *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 161; Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); and Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006). Isaiah Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution: Collective and*

Individual Behavior in Extremis (New York: Stein & Day, 1979), contains an eyewitness statement on Ozorków on pp. 95–97, recorded in a DP camp in 1946. Trunk also mentions the Ozorków ghetto in his book *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Stein & Day, 1977). Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), lists the ghetto on p. 377.

Quite a number of primary sources exist describing the Ozorków ghetto, including several located in Polish archives. In IPN: Regierungspräsident Posen, Abt. III, an OB Posen und Landräte des Bezirkes, September 17, 1941 (Zbiór “OB” 267, p. 5); ASG sygn. 50, pp. 85, 133; Bd. 505/Rep. 162/50, as well as Ankieta GKBZHwP, getta, województwo łódzkie. APL holds the following collections: Judenrat Ozorków an “Ältesten der Juden in Litzmannstadt,” July 18, 1940 (ÄJ 161, n.p.); and Urząd G-po w Łodzi 1093/1, pp. 4, 11. AAN has further sources regarding the establishment of the ghetto and the internment of Jews from the surrounding villages: see Zespół Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, sygn. 202/III, t. 28, p. 64; sygn. 202/III, p. 110; sygn. 202/XV, t. 2, p. 258 (report on the liquidation of the ghetto); sygn. 202/II, t. 30, p. 18; and Zespół Ikonografia Nr. filmu A.5872 (nr. oryg. 2466—images of Ozorków taken during the execution in April 1942). At AŻIH, see Ring 1/472, 557/2, 569, 573/6, and 962; and 301/2920 and 3331-33.

At USHMM, a valuable collection is RG-15.042M (Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie), reels 28 and 51, which contains many witness statements and other information collected from various sources, including a map of the ghetto. Further information on the Ozorków ghetto can be found in RG-15.019M (ASG copied from IPN) and RG-50.002*69, Oral History Interview with survivor Henry Yungst. VHF has 43 testimonies of relevance to the Ozorków ghetto. YVA also holds several testimonies: e.g., testimony R-102/1665, questionnaire No. 462, and testimony W-123/2261. Investigations of the ZStL can be accessed at BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. VII).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.002*69 Ozorków, Oral History with Henry Yungst.
2. Ibid., RG-15.042M, reel 28, Postanowienie, 1979.
3. Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 15, based on YVA testimony R-102/1665.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/535, correspondence from March to December 1940.
5. See *ibid.*, RG-15.042M, reel 28, statements of Szmul Drajhorn and Tauba Gelbartowicz; and RG-50.002*69 Ozorków, Oral History with H. Yungst, who erroneously dates this on April 1, 1940.
6. Alberti, *Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 380.
7. See USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28, statement Tauba Gelbartowicz.
8. Alberti, *Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 205.
9. For German Jews in the Ozorków ghetto, see USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28.
10. VHF, # 20619, testimony of Irvin Kalski; and # 20279, testimony of Marty Storch.

11. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28, Odpis.
12. See witness statements in *ibid.*, RG-15.042M, reel 28, Postanowienie, 1979.
13. *Ibid.*, among others, see witness Masza Julkiewicz; and RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, sygn. 50, p. 85.
14. See, for example, witness statement Eugenie St., in BA-L, 203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. VII, p. 40.
15. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28.
16. *Ibid.*, Dzieje getta w Ozorkowie.
17. Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 443, quoted after YVA, questionnaire No. 462, testimony W-123/2261; see also VHF, # 20279, testimony of M. Storch.
18. AŻIH, Ring I/144, "Die Hölle der polnischen Juden unter der Hitler-Okkupation," Rapport von Oneg Szabat [ausgearbeitet von Emanuel Ringelblum, Hersz Wasser und Eliahu Gutkowski], June 1942, Warsaw Ghetto, published in Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993), pp. 200–223, here p. 213.
19. Lagebericht der Gestapo in Lods, June 9, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 285–286.
20. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28.
21. VHF, # 20279, testimony of M. Storch.
22. Alberti, *Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, pp. 446–447; Trunk, *Jewish Responses*, p. 96—unfortunately this survivor account is not reliable concerning specific dates.
23. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28, OKL/S.-47/74. The court case reference is SOŁdz 329 and 329a.
24. IPN, Ankieta AGKBZHWP, Bd. 505/Rep. 162/50. See also USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28, witness statement of Edzia Schesinger, collected in 1948 by the Ojsforschungsapteil der D.P. Police, Jidiszer center Landsberg, in preparation for a trial against Binneweis.
25. APŁ, Urząd G-po w Łodzi 1093/1, pp. 4, 11; and USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 28. See the latter source for more names of perpetrators.

PABIANICE

Pre-1939: Pabianice, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Lask, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Pabianice is located 13 kilometers (8 miles) southwest of Łódź. On the eve of World War II, there were approximately 9,000 Jews living in Pabianice. Units of the German army had occupied Pabianice by September 8, 1939. On their arrival in the town, German soldiers shot several Jews, and other Jews were made to collect the corpses and bury them. Shortly thereafter, on German orders, local inhabitants destroyed the interior of the synagogue.

In the fall of 1939, the German authorities introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures. Jewish factories were confiscated, and several Jews were ordered flogged by other Jews for



A deportation Aktion in Pabianice. The Hebrew annotation reads: "Deportation of Pabianice Jews by the Nazis, 1–2 Sivan [May 17–18] (1942)." USHMM WS #07264, COURTESY OF REGINA FRANT STAWSKI

alleged disrespect to the Nazi flag. On October 21, 1939, the Landrat of Kreis Lask appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Pabianice, which consisted of the leading figures in the community. However, their tenure was short-lived. In November 1939, the German authorities forcibly expelled Jews from the wealthier sections of town to make room for Germans. Members of the Judenrat tried to intercede, but they were arrested and sent to concentration camps, never to be heard from again. A series of Jewish Councils were appointed and then in turn replaced in quick succession. In December 1939, the Judenrat was ordered to organize 1,000 Jews who were to be expelled from Pabianice. The Judenrat supplied these expelled people with food, clothing, and some money for the journey to Kałuszyn in Distrikt Warschau within the Generalgouvernement. On arrival the local Jewish leadership there helped to find them housing. After a few months, several hundred of these Jews returned illegally to Pabianice.

In February 1940, the Germans established a ghetto in Pabianice, which was one of the first to be set up in occupied Poland. Its establishment appears to have been linked to an outbreak of typhus among the Jews, which was defeated with the aid of inoculations given to 3,500 Jews during 1940. The ghetto, which consisted of 109 houses, was located in the old town section of Pabianice. The Jews were required to move into the ghetto by February 21, and according to the *Lodscher Zeitung*, they could bring in with them only what they could carry themselves. The ghetto was not fenced (an open ghetto), but on the border there was a large sign with a yellow Star of David on a light blue background. The ghetto was divided into two sections by a main road, and the Jews were only permitted to cross the road during certain hours of the day. Some Jews risked leaving the ghetto illegally in search of food. Accommodation in the ghetto was allocated by the housing office (Wohnungsamt) of the Judenrat. There was overcrowding, an average of about one room per family.¹

On March 1, 1940, a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was established, which by the end of 1940 employed 34 people. Among its main tasks were securing the

ghetto internally and arresting Jews who did not turn up for compulsory labor or committed other offenses. Such persons could be incarcerated in a separate prison established within the ghetto. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a hospital in the ghetto in April, to isolate those suffering from typhus. In May 1940, responsibility for overseeing the ghetto (*Judenviertel*) was transferred from the office of the Landrat of Kreis Lask to the Polizeiamt (Office of Police) in Pabianice under the command of Hans-Georg Mayer. On the establishment of the ghetto, Jewish communal property, which lay outside its borders, was no longer to be administered by the Jewish Council.²

Many of the Jews in the Pabianice ghetto worked in factories and enterprises taken over by Germans. The Jewish Council was keen to make the Jews productive, such that in November 1940 more than 900 Jews were employed as tailors in various workshops, including more than 600 as new trainees. Two of the main employers were the companies of Kelle and Günther u. Schwarz, which both produced uniforms for the Wehrmacht and competed with each other. Both companies were often late in paying the Jews, but the Jews were still content to go to work, as it gave them the opportunity of bartering items for food and receiving news from the outside world.³ In addition, Jews had to perform forced labor organized by the Judenrat, which included work to assist the resettlement of ethnic Germans into the region in the winter of 1939–1940. Initially this work was unpaid, but from October 1, 1940, German offices began to make payments for this forced labor. Additional sums to pay the laborers were also raised from Jews who paid a levy to be excused from this work.⁴

The Judenrat was responsible for the distribution of food rations, as well as extra support given to the needy. One of the main sources of income for the Judenrat was a 10 percent tax on the income of those Jews who were employed. At the end of 1940, the Judenrat itself employed 130 people and was composed of 10 separate departments: Central Office, General Administration, Finances, Social Welfare, Health, Contracts, Economy, Labor, Court, and Audit Office. Among the Jews that ultimately ended up in the Łódź ghetto, most reported that they had received enough to eat in the Pabianice ghetto, but those Jews who had returned to the ghetto illegally after their initial flight were not registered and received no rations. In addition, there were complaints that some food rations ended up on the black market at high prices and that the Judenrat lived comfortably.⁵

Children were educated in small groups and in a school that was established in the ghetto. After a few months, the Germans closed down the school, but schooling continued clandestinely.⁶ The Jews in Pabianice were forbidden to speak Polish, as German and Yiddish were the only permitted languages. In December 1940, the Jewish Council in Pabianice reported that there were 9,000 Jews in the town, including 320 refugees and 420 returnees.⁷

On May 22, 1941, German police aided by the Jewish Police arrested 231 young men and sent them to the Łódź ghetto; from there they were transferred to forced labor camps in the

area around Poznań. Of this group, about 40 people survived to the end of the war. Similar manhunts for forced laborers continued into 1942; both men and women were sent to forced labor camps. In the winter of 1941–1942, the Germans collected winter clothing in the ghetto, and they also confiscated any hidden food stores.

Living on the margin caused some Jews to complain to the Germans that the Judenrat was responsible for the poor conditions. As a result, the Gestapo arrested the Judenrat members in June 1941 and publicly executed them. It is not known who succeeded the murdered members of the Judenrat, which included Rubinstein, Landsman, and Goldblum.

By late 1941, the Germans began to make preparations for the subsequent deportation of the Jews of Pabianice. The Judenrat was ordered to submit lists of all ghetto inhabitants, with the mentally ill, disabled, and children under age 6 all listed separately. In February 1942, the Gestapo conducted a health examination of everyone in the ghetto. All those under age 60 were tattooed with the letter “A,” the rest with a “B.”⁸ By 1942, restrictions on the movement of Jews were also intensified. At least two Jews were hanged on the orders of the Germans for being caught outside the ghetto without permission.⁹

On May 16, 1942, all the ghetto residents were ordered to appear in front of their houses at 4:00 p.m. The ghetto was surrounded by German police, and all the Jews were ordered to a sports field of the company Krusche und Ender in the center of town, allegedly for a new registration. The German police searched the houses, and anyone found attempting to hide was shot on the spot. The assembled Jews had to stay all night on the sports field. The next day, in the pouring rain, the A group was separated from the B group, with many families being rent asunder. Some members of the B group were killed on the spot, as were 150 sick and disabled Jews in the hospital. The remainder of group B, probably about 3,200 people, was then loaded into cattle trains and transported to the death camp in Chełmno.¹⁰

On May 17–18, 1942, at least 3,648 Jews (those from group A) from Pabianice arrived in the Łódź ghetto by tram with almost no possessions.¹¹ Soon after their arrival, some of them were sent to forced labor camps in surrounding towns. A few of the Pabianice Jews tried to escape, but most were caught with the assistance of the Jewish Police of the Łódź ghetto. Two of the Pabianice escapees, Joseph Greenboim, age 16, and Shimon Makowsky, age 45, were caught and hanged in public in the Łódź ghetto. A smaller group of Jews remained in Pabianice for a time after the ghetto liquidation, to clean up remaining property there.

After the war, 148 surviving Jews returned to Pabianice in 1945. They established a community kitchen and restored the cemetery, but over the following years, all the Jews left the town.

After the war, the U.S. forces extradited Hans-Georg Mayer to Poland, where initially he was sentenced to death by the regional court in Łódź for crimes in Pabianice. In 1948, his appeal saw the sentence reduced to five years’ imprisonment for membership in the SS and preventing escape attempts from

the Pabianice ghetto. He was released and returned to West Germany in February 1951.¹²

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jewish community of Pabianice during the Holocaust include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 172–180; Andrzej Kardas, “Z problematyki organizacji i działalności policji hitlerowskiej w Pabianicach,” *Biuletyn Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Łodzi* 1 (1989); Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chelmo/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung”* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 83–84; and Wolf A. Jasny, *Sefer Pabyanits: Yizker-bukh fun der farpaynikter kehileb* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Pabyanits be-Yisrael, 1956). Further information on conditions in the Pabianice ghetto can be found in Sascha Feuchert et al., eds., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz/Litzmannstadt* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), vol. 2 (1942).

Documentation on the Pabianice ghetto can be found in the following archives: APL (PSZ 19); AŻIH (e.g., 210/537 [AJDC]; 301/2764, 2820, 2928, 3584, and 4405); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. VII); IPN; NARA; USHMM (e.g., RG-50.030*0002); VHF (e.g., # 18433, 30355, and 40076); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. *Lodscher Zeitung*, February 18, 1940; VHF, # 18433, testimony of Jack Adler; # 30355, testimony of Sarah Brett; USHMM, RG-50.030*0002, oral testimony of Rita Kerner Hilton, 1994; AŻIH, 301/2764; BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, Bd. VII, p. 214.

2. AŻIH, 210/537 (AJDC Pabianice), pp. 2, 6, 22, 27, Arbeitsbericht des Ältestenrates der Juden in Pabianice, November 1, 1939, to November 1, 1940.

3. Feuchert et al., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz*, 2:206, 209, 228; VHF, # 30355.

4. AŻIH, 210/537 (AJDC Pabianice), pp. 30–31, Arbeitsbericht des Ältestenrates der Juden in Pabianice, November 1, 1939, to November 1, 1940.

5. Feuchert et al., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz*, 2:206–207, 228; AŻIH, 210/537 (AJDC Pabianice), p. 54; USHMM, RG-50.030*0002.

6. VHF, # 30355.

7. AŻIH, 210/537 (AJDC Pabianice), p. 54.

8. *Ibid.*, 301/2928.

9. *Ibid.*, 301/2764.

10. Feuchert et al., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz*, 2:207–208; AŻIH, 301/2764; see also Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 285–286.

11. Feuchert et al., *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz*, 2:201, 203; VHF, # 18433; AŻIH, 301/2928. Regarding the exact numbers, see APL, PSZ 19, p. 234.

12. AŻIH, 301/2928; and Elżbieta Kobierska-Motas, ed., *Ekstradycja przestępców wojennych do Polski z czterech stref okupacyjnych Niemiec 1946–50* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 1991), 2:160.

PAJĘCZNO

Pre-1939: Pajęczno, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Pfeilstett, Landkreis Welungen (Wieluń), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Pajęczno, Łódź województwo, Poland

Pajęczno is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) north-northwest of Częstochowa. In the 1930s its Jewish population stood at about 450.

German forces occupied the town in early September 1939; vandalism, plunder, and killings followed.

In September or October 1939, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The chairman was Yaakov Lieberman, a member of the pre-war Jewish community council. Around the same time a Jewish police force was appointed, consisting of four policemen and a commander—David Kwart. One of the first problems the Judenrat had to deal with was the influx of more than 1,000 Jewish refugees from the neighboring town of Działoszyń, which had been almost completely destroyed by German bombing during the first days of the war. In Pajęczno, the refugees from Działoszyń, many of whom had nothing, initially received support, thanks to financial aid from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC).

The Jews of Pajęczno were all required to perform forced labor once or twice a week. The assignments were organized by the Judenrat on instructions from the German authorities. Initially, 100 Jews per day had to work in the quarries or on agricultural estates supervised by local ethnic Germans. Women cleaned. According to one source, many of the refugees, like the local poor, took the places of wealthy Jews who paid to be exempted from forced labor.

The ghetto in Pajęczno appears to have been established in two stages. Jewish survivors report that an “open ghetto” was created in the first months of 1940.¹ Certainly a number of Jews were evicted from their houses at this time to make way for Poles, and overcrowding among the Jews increased.²

The establishment of an enclosed ghetto followed at the end of 1941, possibly as a consequence of a visit by the mayor of nearby Praszka, where an enclosed ghetto already existed. On the day of his visit, all the Jews were ordered into the market square, where the elderly were chased and beaten with clubs. Three days later, the German authorities ordered the Jews to move within one day into the poorest quarter in the heart of the town.³ The ghetto area stretched along Kanał, Zapłocie, and Starodziałoszyńska Streets.⁴ The Jews were permitted to bring in their belongings, but much was left behind because of the short notice. The German authorities ordered the Judenrat to surround the ghetto with a fence of barbed wire, erected by Jewish laborers. There were two or three gates in the fence, only one of which was for the use of Jews with permits. The Jewish guards ignored illegal movement and transactions with the outside population, which continued up until just prior to the liquidation of the ghetto. Despite the overcrowding—two

families to a room—conditions remained reasonable, mainly thanks to the smuggling, which supplied sufficient food. Official rations supplied by the authorities were distributed within the ghetto. About 30 Jewish craftsmen received permits to continue working, and they also sold some products on the side to private German and Polish customers.

Sholem Weiss, a member of the Jewish Council and the head of the council's labor department, maintained regular contacts with the Polish underground movement. In this way, he was able to help Jewish refugees to cross the border into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Among these refugees, there may also have been some Jews from the Pajęczno ghetto. Weiss, despite his senior position, was not safe either. He managed to operate relatively freely for a while, but ultimately he was compelled to seek refuge in the Częstochowa ghetto.

From the summer of 1941, the Germans rounded up groups of Jews in Kreis Welungen and sent them to camps in the Poznań region for forced labor, including also a number of Jews from Pajęczno. The Jews feared the terrible conditions in these camps, and many tried to evade the roundups. The remaining Jews in Pajęczno organized a "Bread Committee for the men in Poznań" and sent them food, despite an official ban.⁵

Jews from the ghetto were employed at the quarry on Mickiewicz Street and by a German firm, Borne und Guetter. According to one source, in January 1942 there were approximately 2,000 Jews in the Pajęczno ghetto.⁶ Just before Passover (on April 20 in 1942), the Germans terrorized the Jews and looted their property. Just after this, the remaining Jews from Brzeźnica were brought into the Pajęczno ghetto.⁷

There is no information on how many Jews died in the Pajęczno ghetto, but some witness statements claim that several dozen Jews were killed during its existence.⁸ For example, in June 1942, shortly before the ghetto's liquidation, officials of the German Gendarmerie and the SS shot Yaakov Lieberman, the head of the Pajęczno Judenrat, and 11 other Jews. Their bodies were buried in the Jewish cemetery.⁹

The ghetto was liquidated in August 1942. On August 19, 1,800 Jews from the ghetto were herded into the Pajęczno church, where they remained for three or four days without food or water. During this period, about 50 of the younger Jews were formed into a squad to help clear out the ghetto. From the church the rest were transported to Wieluń. Following the selection of some Jews for forced labor in the Łódź ghetto, the remainder of the Jews were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp to be killed.¹⁰ The German Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) in Wieluń reported to the head of the Gestapo in Łódź that by August 22, 1942, "the Kreis Welungen was free of Jews [*judenrein*]."¹¹

During the Aktion against the ghetto, at least 3 people—but most probably 5 people (3 men and 2 women)—were killed because they had attempted to escape. A number of other Jews were also shot around the time of the liquidation.¹² On September 7, 1942, 9 Jews from Pajęczno were among 18 Jews hanged on that day in the Łódź ghetto, apparently for at-

tempting to escape deportation or leaving the ghetto illegally.¹³ Only a few Jews from Pajęczno managed to survive until the end of the war, either in the camps or in hiding.

SOURCES There is a short article on the Jewish community of Pajęczno in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 181–184. The Pajęczno ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979), p. 378; and in Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Stein & Day, 1977), p. 464.

There are only a few archival sources describing the ghetto and also the collection center that existed in Pajęczno. These include: BA-L (B 162/V 203 AR-Z 109/71); IPN (ASG, sygn. 151, p. 186; and Ankieta GKBZHWP, getta, woj. Łódzkie); OKBZN-R (sygn. 109, k. 55; and kolekcja "ob," sygn. 177); USHMM (RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie]); VHF (# 45083 and 51731); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1913; O-3/2023 and 2329).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 45083, interview with Avraham Weiss: "In 1940, they took us out of our house and forced us into a ghetto. It wasn't a closed ghetto." Also # 51731, interview with Hayim Yehezkel Shvarts: "We escaped to the ghetto in Pajęczno. . . . We got there in March, 1940."

2. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 182.

3. Ibid.; see also Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 378.

4. USHMM, RG-15.042M, witness statement of Milewski.

5. VHF, # 51731, interview with H. Shvarts.

6. Frank Golczewski, "Polen," in Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991), pp. 411–497, here p. 450.

7. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 962. In 1921, there were 406 Jews living in Brzeźnica; see *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965), Poland, p. 121.

8. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 4.

9. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości Główna Komisja Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: województwo częstochowskie* (Warsaw, 1986), p. 68. On this incident, see also VHF, # 45083, interview with Avraham Weiss; his name was on a list prepared by the Gestapo with 11 others, but with the help of a Polish overseer, he managed to escape to Radomsko in time.

10. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 183; and VHF, # 51731, interview with H. Shvarts.

11. Excerpt from a situation report by the Grenzpolizeikommissariat in Welungen to the Head of the Gestapo in Lods, August 31, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et

al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 311.

12. USHMM, RG-15.042M, reel 4, witness statement of Milewski. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów*, p. 68, reports that 14 Jews were shot by the Gestapo at the Jewish cemetery in August 1942. VHF, # 45083, Weiss heard from others that some Jews had been killed in Pajęczno at the time of the deportations.

13. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 267.

PIĄTEK

Pre-1939: Piątek, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Piontek, Kreis Lentschütz, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Piątek, Łódź województwo, Poland



Postcard of a Jewish family carrying goods in Piątek, used as antisemitic propaganda, and bearing the German caption: "The Jews are the first to return to the completely destroyed town of Biatek [*sic*], where they descend like vultures upon the empty shops," September 1939.

USHMM WS #68731, COURTESY OF MUZEUM WOJSKA POLSKIEGO

Piątek is located 34 kilometers (21 miles) north of Łódź. Before the war, about 1,300 Jews were living in the town.

Shortly after German soldiers entered Piątek on September 9, 1939, they shot 50 people, including 7 Jews. The men had been taken for forced labor and were murdered after finishing repair work on a bridge. In the fall of 1939, a number of Jews fled Piątek; the Jewish population thus declined by roughly one third. On January 1, 1940, the Jewish population numbered 838, including 18 refugees.

According to Michael Alberti, a ghetto was erected in Piątek not later than April 1940, but there is no information as to whether the ghetto was enclosed by a fence. Apparently, the German administration established the ghetto for one main reason: they were convinced that concentrating the Jews in a certain area of the town would prevent the spread of contagious diseases.¹

Very little information is available regarding conditions in the ghetto. On January 1, 1941, there were 862 Jews residing there. In March 1942, German police murdered one Jew, and in April another two were publicly hanged.² On April 22, 1942, some of the ghetto inhabitants were selected for liquidation in the Chełmno death camp. The ghetto was completely dissolved in July 1942.³

Published in Poliakov and Wulf is a clearing bill reporting income of 5,442.63 Reichsmark (RM) received from the sale of Jewish property by the German administration after the liquidation (*Auflösung*) of the ghetto. These funds were transferred to the German Ghetto Administration (Gettoverwaltung, GV) in Łódź. Among the items listed were 167 RM received for a "damaged piano" and 120 RM for movable household items.⁴ Painstakingly, the administration also listed the expenses it had incurred between April and the end of June 1942: 480.50 RM for "cleaning Jewish laundry," 68 RM for disinfection, 323.40 RM for "disinfection (to kill bugs)," and 17.50 RM for the storage of machinery, in total expenses of 889.40 RM. The same day that the Treasury (Kasse) of Amtsbezirk Piontek prepared this bill, the Amtskommissar in Piontek charged the Nazi People's Welfare (NSV)–Kreisverwaltung Lentschütz for deliveries of former-Jewish goods in June and July 1942 including: 255 down comforters at 1.50 RM, 455 pillows at 0.50 RM, and four big baskets of "used clothes from Jewish property" for 10 RM. In total, the Amtskommissar asked the NSV-Kreisverwaltung to transfer between 550 and 650 RM to his account—resulting in more profit from the liquidated Jewish ghetto in Piątek.⁵

SOURCES The ghetto is documented in a few books, including: Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 194, 197; Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden* (Frankfurt/Main: Ullstein-Verlag, 1983), pp. 70, 72; Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 201–202; and Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), p. 87. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie*

na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), lists the ghetto on p. 382, nr. 3408.

There are not many archival documents available regarding the existence and liquidation of the Piątek ghetto, and the USHMM Survivors' Registry lists only two survivors.

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NOTES

1. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 197.
2. Isaiah Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto: A History*, trans. and ed. Robert Moses Shapiro (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), p. 447 n.114.
3. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 382, claims that the ghetto was liquidated in August, but documents quoted by Poliakov and Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich*, confirm that the ghetto had been liquidated (or at least partially liquidated) by early July 1942.
4. "Abrechnung über die Auflösung des Juden-Ghettos in Piontek," dated July 9, 1942, quoted in Poliakov and Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 70, document III.
5. Ibid., p. 72, dated July 9, 1942, document V.

PIOTRKÓW KUJAWSKI

Pre-1939: Piotrków Kujawski, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Petrikau, Kreis Nessau (Nieszawa) (from 1940, Kreis Hermannsbad), Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Piotrków Kujawski, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Piotrków Kujawski is located about 36 kilometers (22 miles) west-southwest of Włocławek. In 1921, the Jewish population was 742, constituting 82 percent of the total. On September 1, 1939, the Jewish population was 915.

German forces occupied Piotrków on September 9, 1939. Soon after the Germans' arrival, Jewish homes and stores were plundered. In the fall of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in the town. In mid-October 1939, Jews were moved into the area of Ogrodowa and Kościuszko Streets, which were separated from the rest of the town by barbed wire. The Jewish community was required to pay a war reparations fine of 30,000 złoty. In late 1939, a number of Jews and Poles were deported from the town into the Generalgouvernement. Some of these people subsequently returned with special holiday permits around the turn of 1939–1940. The German authorities were concerned that they were visiting relatives and encouraging them to resettle on their own initiative, which might enable them to take all their valuable items with them without any official control.¹

On October 26, 1939, Piotrków was officially incorporated into the Reich as part of Landkreis Nessau (later Hermannsbad) within Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza. The administrative center of Landkreis Nessau was Aleksandrów Kujawski, which on January 14, 1940, was policed by a force of 45 Gendarmes assisted by 60 auxiliary policemen (Hilfspolizisten), who were probably local ethnic Germans.²

In 1940, with the support of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), Jewish welfare services in Piotrków were provided to 106 needy Jews. Gendarmerie reports in April and July 1940 noted that the Jews were dissatisfied, as they were still being used for forced labor without any pay to clean the streets in the town and also to perform agricultural work on the estates of "Petrikau, Swiecz, and Kischkowitz." In the winter of 1940–1941, there were 615 Jews living in Piotrków, including more than 80 refugees, presumably resettled there from elsewhere in Kreis Hermannsbad, as Piotrków was reportedly the only location where Jews still resided. The Gendarmerie reports indicate that no formal ghetto was established, but as far as conditions permitted, the Jews were concentrated together in the "Sack-und Wiesenstrasse," separated from the non-Jewish population (i.e., in a Jewish residential area), away from the main streets. Jews were only permitted to use the Adolf-Hitler Street for urgent reasons and generally were not permitted to enter other parts of the town. Those over the age of 10 were required to wear Stars of David 15 centimeters (6 inches) in diameter. Male Jews were subjected to unpaid forced labor until December 1940, when an hourly payment of 15 pfennigs was introduced. About 40 Jews were working for the Wehrmacht, preparing a military firing range. Others were engaged in clearing snow, cleaning the streets, and doing road construction. The curfew for the Jews and the prohibition on their using the sidewalks were observed in sullen silence.³ One secondary source indicates that in the spring of 1940, all of the Jews were ordered to move to the outskirts of the town to Piotrków Poduchowy. Each Jew could take with them only up to 150 kilograms (331 pounds) of luggage.⁴

Of the 631 Jews then registered in Piotrków, 80 men capable of work were sent on June 24, 1941, to Mogilno on a labor deployment (*Arbeitseinsatz*). The remaining Jews were mostly living still concentrated together and separated from the non-Jewish population. Most of the men still there and the 60 Jewish girls and women were employed in agriculture. A subsequent transport of men to labor camps near Hohensalza had been implemented by September 1941. Some Jewish artisans were still employed in Piotrków, as they could not be replaced.⁵

Around the middle of April 1942, the remaining Jews in Piotrków were ordered to assemble on the school square and were then deported to the Chełmno extermination center to be gassed. On April 23, 1942, the Gendarmerie in Kreis Hermannsbad reported that all the Jews of the Kreis had been "evacuated," including 544 people from Piotrków. The deportation Aktion in Piotrków was conducted by the available Gendarmerie forces of the Kreis. The Jews were deported using trucks belonging to Einsatzkommando Wartbrücken.⁶ The Gendarmerie section in Piotrków confirmed in September 1942 that no Jews remained within its area of jurisdiction.⁷

SOURCES Published sources on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Piotrków Kujawski under German occupation include: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 347–348. Additional information

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can also be found on the Web site of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews at www.sztetl.org.pl. The existence of a “ghetto” in Piotrków Kujawski is mentioned in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 994.

Much of the information for this entry has been extracted from the Gendarmerie reports for Kreis Hermannsbad held at IPN (fond 71) and USHMM (RG-15.013M).

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NOTES

1. “Piotrków Kujawski,” at www.sztetl.org.pl; USHMM, RG-15.013M (records of the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad), reel 1, file 4, p. 19, Gendarmerie Kreis Alexandrow report, January 14, 1940.
2. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 1, file 4, p. 19, Gend. Kreis Alexandrow, January 14, 1940.
3. Ibid., p. 41, Gend. Kreis Alexandrow, April 23, 1940; reel 2, file 5, p. 20, Gend.-Abteilung Petrikau report, December 27, 1940; reel 2, file 7, Gend. Kreis Hermannsbad, May 30, 1941.
4. “Piotrków Kujawski.”
5. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 1, file 6, p. 41, Gend.-Abt. Petrikau, June 24, 1941.
6. Ibid., reel 2, file 7, Gend. Kreis Hermannsbad, April 23, 1942.
7. Ibid., reel 2, file 6, p. 104, Gend.-Abt. Petrikau, April 23, 1942.

PODDĘBICE

Pre-1939: Poddebice, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Poddembice (in 1943 renamed Wandalenbrück), Kreis Lentschütz (Łęczycza), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (from 1941, Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Poddebice, Łódź województwo, Poland

Poddebice is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) west-northwest of Łódź. In 1921, there were 1,333 Jews living in the town. In September 1939, the Germans, on occupying the town, requested a list of all the Jews living in the town along with their dates of birth and addresses. They appointed Jankiel Sosnowski as chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat).¹

The German authorities established an open ghetto in Poddebice on November 12, 1940. From the beginning, the town’s Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto. However, this official restriction on movement was initially not fully enforced, as both *Pinkas ha-kehillot* and survivors note that, at first, Poles could come in and Jews go out with impunity. The ghetto was never physically enclosed.

The ghetto was located in a poor, northern part of the town surrounded by fields. It included Sienkiewicz, Kiliński, and Kamienna Streets, from which Polish residents had been evicted. The ghetto had water and power. In December 1940, the Judenrat reported 1,503 Jews (350 families) living there, including 163 refugees (31 families).²



Exterior view of a church in Poddebice photographed after liberation by a war-crimes investigation team in June 1945. This church is the likely place where the ghetto’s Jews were held in April 1942, prior to their deportation to the Chelmno killing center.

USHMM WS #51706, COURTESY OF IPN

German police guarded the ghetto’s boundaries. Internal policing was left to the Jewish Police. Regarding the Jewish policemen, Mayer Zyger noted that “some were good, some bad.”³ There was also a Jewish post office run by David Adler, who survived the Shoah. Its employees had the status of Judenrat members, whom the Germans promised to exempt from resettlement.⁴

The Judenrat and the self-help committee for poor Jews opened a soup kitchen in the ghetto on December 8, 1940. It served 120 meals daily at 10 pfennigs each. By January 1941, the number of meals served had almost doubled. At this time there were no medical facilities in the ghetto, and the seriously ill were treated in Łęczycza.

In December 1940, the self-help committee determined that almost all the Jewish craftsmen had lost their income, and those who still ran their workshops were instructed to give part of their earnings to the committee to pay for their exemption from forced labor. Their money was used to support those who were conscripted.

That same month, unemployed Jews organized a demonstration in front of the Judenrat office, shouting, “Give us bread and fuel!” Most of the work came to an end with the onset of winter; up until then, 75 laborers were paid 50 pfennigs daily. The outcome of this demonstration is unknown.⁵

In January 1941, 500 or 600 Jews were resettled from Łęczyca to the Poddębice ghetto. They were allowed to take with them kitchen utensils and bedding. Due to the lack of space in the Poddębice ghetto, Jewish policemen temporarily quartered them en masse in a stable.⁶

Survivor Hershel Menche noted that there were no problems obtaining food, as Jews and Poles used the black market. Despite the ban on practicing religion and the flight of their rabbis (including Y.Y. Rothfeld [Rotfeld]), ghetto residents continued with their religious services and ritual slaughter. Menche's family was apprehended when praying at home. The Germans confiscated all their religious artifacts. However, they were returned to the family on the orders of the Poddębice authorities the next day.⁷

The German who governed Poddębice from 1941 (identified by Michael Alberti as Franz Heinrich Bock) kept a secret diary, which he published in Germany after the war under the pseudonym Alexander Hohenstein. Historian Isaiah Trunk wrote of Bock: "He made sharply critical remarks about the inhuman acts of German officials of all ranks towards the Polish, and particularly the Jewish population . . . and tried to help as much as he could. He befriended the local council chairman (a dentist who treated him in secret) and his wife."⁸

In October 1941, two Germans, members of a crew that came from Poznań to show a film in a German club, attempted to rape two Jewish women. They selected them from a group that the Judenrat had provided on their orders, apparently for a work assignment in Germany. Tried by a special court in Łódź, one was rebuked and the other sentenced to a year and a half in prison, presumably for racial dishonor (*Rassenschande*).

On March 10 or 16, 1942, the Gestapo arranged the public hanging of five Jews in Poddębice. All the Jews of the ghetto were assembled to witness the event. The Judenrat and Jewish Police were ordered to assist. Three of the victims were brought from the Gendarmerie jail and the remaining two arrived from the direction of Łęczyca. The victims were: Abba Grinbaum, Avraham Scheibe, Avraham Koplowicz (Jankiel Kopel), Schmuel Schija, and Wolf Stettländer. Mayor Bock, who defied the order of the Landrat by refusing to deliver an additional Jew for this execution, was severely reproached, and after he was dismissed from his office, he was subsequently sent to the front.

There were at least two roundups of male Jews for labor camps. The first transport was most likely to Liebenau bei Schwiebus, near Frankfurt an der Oder; survivors are unable to date this deportation precisely.⁹ The second transport of 90 men took place on March 21–27, 1942, after the public hanging. The impact of the hanging may have encouraged some Poddębice Jews to volunteer to go to the labor camp in Konin.¹⁰

In mid-April 1942, German police forces conducted the liquidation of the Poddębice ghetto, while Mayor Bock was on leave in Germany. Bock learned about it from one of his aides, who described it as "a mass murder organized by the State."¹¹

The Aktion began when a large force of German police and Gestapo men from Łódź and Łęczyca surrounded the

ghetto. Then the 1,800 Jews were assembled on the courtyard in front of the palace before being forced into a local church. The Jews were held in the church under horrendous conditions for 10 days without blankets, cutlery, or other necessities, and at least 10 people died. Rations were provided only after the Judenrat paid a large bribe.

It appears that the elderly and sick were selected and killed on the spot a few days after being locked in the church, while skilled workers were dispatched for work, probably to the Łódź ghetto. The remaining Jews were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were murdered on arrival on April 23, 1942.

SOURCES The following publications refer to the Poddębice ghetto: Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 21, 67, 201–202, 437; Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 184–186; Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 207; Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmhof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 76, 81–82; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo sieradzkie* (Warsaw: GKBZHW, 1983), p. 40; and Franz Bock (alias Alexander Hohenstein), *Wartheländisches Tagebuch aus den Jahren 1941/42* (Stuttgart, 1961).

The following archival sources contain information regarding the ghetto in Poddębice: AŻIH (210/558 [AJDC]); BA-L (V 203 AR-Z 161/67); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 170, 949, 5416, 3657-4, 5416, 10873, 17989).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 10873, testimony of Mayer Zyger, 1996; and # 949, testimony of David Adler, 1995.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/558 (Poddębice), p. 1; VHF, # 5416, testimony of Hershel Menche, 1995; # 10873; and # 949.

3. VHF, # 10873.

4. Ibid., # 949.

5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/558, pp. 1–5.

6. Yitzhak Frenkel, ed., *Sefer Linsbitz* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Łęczyca in Israel, 1953), pp. 182–183; Avram Tsigler, *Hazak ve-balash: Sipuro shel nitsol Sho'ah* (Israel: A. Tsigler, 1987), final page.

7. VHF, # 949; and # 5416.

8. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 185, 307–308, 483.

9. VHF, # 70, testimony of Chaim Gliksman, 1994; # 3657-4, testimony of Morris Jacobs, 1996; and # 949.

10. Ibid., # 17989, testimony of Irving Mandelbaum; and # 5416.

11. As cited by Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 314.

PRASZKA

Pre-1939: Praszka, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Prasczkau, Landkreis Welungen (Wieluń), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Praszka, Łódź województwo, Poland

Praszka is located about 56 kilometers (35 miles) west-northwest of Częstochowa. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 1,663. Before World War II, the town was located close to the German-Polish border, separated from Germany only by the Prosna River.

German troops occupied Praszka on the first day of the war, September 1, 1939.¹ All Jews were gathered in the synagogue and told that they should continue their business as usual. However, the next day, the German occupying forces went into Jewish stores and took whatever they wanted without paying for it. During the initial months, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which assisted in recruiting Jews for forced labor. By the start of winter (1939–1940), Jewish forced labor was organized on a regular basis for cleaning the roads and shoveling snow. At the end of 1939, the German security forces began to arrest Jews in the town. The Jews were put on trucks and taken to an unknown destination. None of these arrested Jews ever returned.

According to one source, the ghetto in Praszka was established in the fall of 1940, after the holiday of Sukkot (October 24). Other sources, however, date its establishment and enclosure somewhat later.² The ghetto covered an area of 20,000 square meters (approximately 5 acres), comprising two streets. It was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. At first, the ghetto was not completely isolated, and Jews were able to obtain some additional food from their Polish neighbors. Over time, the area of the ghetto was reduced, and the main streets of Praszka were declared to be officially “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*). In December 1940, the Jewish population was 961, comprising 840 local Jews and 121 refugees.³



Public humiliation of Jews in Praszka, ca. 1939–1940. The policemen, trim the beards of Jewish men. The one on the left, Kulman, was tried after the war. Two Volksdeutsche women from Praszka are also pictured. USHMM WS #50434, COURTESY OF IPN

The names of some of the perpetrators responsible for establishing and overseeing the Praszka ghetto are known. The German mayor of the town was Georg Baumgart; in charge of the ghetto was a German employee of the town administration, Cebula. The local police post was under the command of Georg Weisenberg (or Waisenberg). Witnesses also give the names of several of the Gendarmes in Praszka who were notorious for their cruelty: Fuchler, Lochner, Krause, and Kulman.

At the beginning of 1941, about 500 Jews were taken from the Praszka ghetto to labor camps in the vicinity, where they lived and worked under primitive conditions. For instance, Jews from Praszka were forced to live and work in labor camps in the villages of Przedmość, Sołtysy, and other places, where they were employed breaking rocks and paving roads.⁴ These camps were closed by the summer of 1942, and most of the Jews were transferred to forced labor camps in the Poznań region. At some time before August 1942, probably following the removal of Jews to the labor camps, about 700 Jews were brought into the Praszka ghetto from the larger neighboring ghetto in Wieluń.

The Jews remaining in the ghetto were employed by the Germans cleaning the town, repairing roads, and demolishing houses. Food supplies in the ghetto were severely inadequate. The Jews suffered from terrible hunger, and many died from starvation and disease. Although two or three Jewish families already shared a single room in the ghetto, the area of the ghetto was reduced again in early 1942, to make room for ethnic Germans resettled into the town.⁵ By now, the ghetto only consisted of two barns on the outskirts of Praszka.⁶ At this time, the German police began to conduct arbitrary arrests and shootings of Jews in the ghetto. The Jewish Police assisted them with some of the arrests in the vain hope of saving themselves.

On August 12, 1942, the German authorities liquidated the Praszka ghetto.⁷ At that time, it still held several hundred inmates. The ghetto was liquidated by the Gestapo, assisted by local Gendarmes and employees of the German civilian administration in Praszka. Those Jews who were deemed to be too weak, too sick, or too old to be deported were put into a vehicle and taken to the Jewish cemetery, where they were shot by an execution squad of three German policemen (either Gestapo or Gendarmes). In total, 27 Jews were shot and buried at the Jewish cemetery.⁸

While a small number of workers (mostly craftsmen) was sent to the Łódź ghetto, the majority was sent to the Chełmno extermination camp (probably via Wieluń) and gassed on arrival. By the end of the war, the remnants of the ghetto had been completely demolished. Only about 10 Jews from the Praszka ghetto who had survived the Holocaust were living in the area in September 1945. Several of the survivors from Praszka also passed through the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁹

SOURCES Secondary sources on the Praszka ghetto include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds.,

Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 204–205; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 403; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 202–203; and *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 137, 165.

The history of the Praszka ghetto is documented in the following archival sources: BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67 and V 203 AR-Z 66/75, Bd. II); IPN (ASG, sygn. 51, p. 246; OKL/Ds 32/67 [Przedmość Camp, January–July 1942]; OKL/Ds 33/67 [Sołtysy Camp, January–August 1942]; and OKL/Ds 42/67 [Forced Labor of the Ghetto Inmates]); USHMM (RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie]; and Acc.1995.A.531 [Esther Salamonovich Fortgang memoirs]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. For details, see USHMM, Acc.1995.A.531, memoirs of Esther Salamonovich Fortgang.

2. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 205; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, Ankieta Obozy Ghetta 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 246 and reverse, however, gives the date of February 1941. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 202, citing the *Litzmannstadter Zeitung*, November 21, 1941, gives the date of August or September 1941.

3. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 205.

4. Ibid., USHMM, RG-15.042M (Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie).

5. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 202.

6. Regarding the resettlement to the barns, see the witness statements of Władysław G., Piotr Paweł N., and Stanisław Mi., in BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 6, pp. 26, 59, 63.

7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 246 and reverse.

8. Ibid.; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 205.

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 247–255, includes a list of 605 names of Jewish inmates of the ghetto. As of September 1945, only 8 were known to be living in Praszka and 1 in Rudniki. The fate of most others is listed as unknown. On the wartime locations of survivors, see *Benjamin and Vladka Meed Registry of Jewish Holocaust Survivors 2000*, vol. 4 (United States Holocaust Memorial Council, 2000).

PRZEDECZ

Pre-1939: Przedecz (Yiddish: Psheytsht), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Moosburg, Landgemeinde in Kreis Leslau, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Przedecz, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Przedecz is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) northwest of Łódź. In 1921, the town had 840 Jewish inhabitants,

which constituted about a quarter of the total population of Przedecz.

The German army occupied Przedecz in mid-September 1939. Almost immediately, the Germans requisitioned Jews for forced labor, such as chopping wood and cleaning the streets, and seized Jewish property. On the first day of the Sukkot holiday the German military commandant demanded a contribution of 20,000 złoty, issuing threats if this demand was not met. The Jews paid the contribution, but on the next day, the Germans set fire to the synagogue, and the commandant then blamed the arson on the Jews. Shortly after this, at the end of October 1939, German soldiers rounded up a number of male Jews and took them to a swampy area on the edge of town, where they beat them and forced them to roll in the mud, before sending them home drenched and besmirched.¹

On October 26, 1939, Przedecz was officially incorporated into the Reich as part of Kreis Leslau within Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza. Soon after this date, a squad of Gendarmerie replaced the military in control of the town, and a civil administrator (Amtskommissar) was appointed for Przedecz. Shortly after the arrival of the Amtskommissar, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was appointed, headed by Ziklinsky. Together with a number of assistants, Ziklinsky was made responsible for ensuring that the Jews obeyed all the new German regulations. From this time, Jewish forced laborers were assigned by the Judenrat, which brought to an end the seizure of Jews from their houses. In addition, it was now possible for those Jews who had gainful employment to pay for a replacement to perform their forced labor duties. Jews continued to perform forced labor under close guard by armed ethnic Germans, who beat them frequently.

In the fall of 1939, the German authorities and local ethnic Germans started evicting Jews from their houses, giving them only a few hours to leave and ordering them to leave behind their furniture and bedclothes—so these could be taken over by the Germans who moved in. The new Amtskommissar soon imposed a further “contribution” of 40,000 złoty on the Jewish community, which it was unable to meet in full. In response, Jewish shops and businesses in the town were plundered, such that they were effectively forced to close down. Among new regulations imposed was the wearing of yellow patches by Jews and a prohibition on their using the sidewalks.²

According to survivor Milton Daniels, those Jews who were evicted were forced to move in with other Jewish families; eventually several families were sharing each apartment. As the Jews generally lived together in the same part of town, these evictions effectively created what could be described as an open ghetto.³ While the entries in *Pinkas ha-kehillot* and the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life* use the term *ghetto* to describe living conditions for Jews in Przedecz, the detailed Holocaust account of Ley Shveytser in the *yizkor* book does not refer specifically to a ghetto in the town.

Due to the mounting persecution, a number of young Jews escaped eastward to the eastern part of Poland that was then under Soviet rule. A few other Jews returned from prisoner-of-war (POW) camps, so in 1940 there were 769 Jews living in

Przedecz. The German authorities ordered the destruction of the Jewish cemetery, which had existed for 600 years. Despite the forced conversion of prayer houses to other uses and the exclusion of Jews from schools, Jews continued to pray in groups in their houses and educate their children at home. Jewish craftsmen had their tools and machinery seized. Then they were forced to work for very low wages for ethnic Germans who took over their workshops. To survive, Jews had to sell their last possessions to buy food on the black market.⁴

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the German authorities started to send away those Jews capable of work to forced labor camps. On the first day of the holiday of Sukkot (in early October) in 1941, unmarried Jewish girls and married women without children were deported to a labor camp near Inowrocław. Several days later the Germans went from house to house and rounded up most of the remaining able-bodied men, who were sent to forced labor camps in the region of Poznań. The majority of these people did not survive the war, as conditions in the camps were very harsh.

German police forces liquidated the Jewish community of Przedecz in April 1942. First the remaining 600 or so Jews of Przedecz were assembled and confined within a local church under SS guard. Many of the Jews had brought with them packages with clothing, food, and some valuables, but these were all taken away brutally by the German police.⁵ A number of those held in the church suffocated due to the intense overcrowding. On April 24, 1942, the remaining Jews of Przedecz were deported on trucks to the death camp at Chełmno.⁶

SOURCES Published sources on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Przedecz under German occupation include: Mosheh Bilavski, ed., *Sefer yizkor li-kedoshe 'ir Pashyatsb: Korbanot ba-sho'ab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e ir Pshedets ba-Arets uva-tefutsot, 1974); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 379–380; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1032. In addition, some information on the Jews of Przedecz can be found on the Web site of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw: www.jewishinstitute.org.pl/en/gminy/miasto/210.html.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APL; and VHF (# 17657).

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NOTES

1. Ley Shveytser, “Meyne zkhrunus fun iene tseytn,” in Bilavski, *Sefer yizkor*, pp. 79–88.

2. Ibid.

3. VHF, # 17657, testimony of Milton Daniels (born 1908).

4. Ibid.; Shveytser, “Meyne zkhrunus fun iene tseytn,” pp. 79–88.

5. “Di letzte Shehn,” in Bilavski, *Sefer yizkor*, pp. 73–75.

6. APL, Gettoverwaltung 1744, Amtskommissar Moosburg an Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt, betr. Einziehung

eines Sparbuchs bei der heutigen Judenaktion, April 24, 1942, as cited by Peter Klein, *Die “Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt” 1940–1944: Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009), p. 461.

RADZIEJÓW

Pre-1939: Radziejów, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Rädichau, Kreis Hermannsbad, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Radziejów, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Radziejów is located about 34 kilometers (21 miles) west of Włocławek. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 599 out of a total population of 3,164.

German forces occupied the town in the first half of September 1939. Much of the population fled in fear on the outbreak of the war, but most people returned once the Germans had quickly overrun the region. Many Jews came back to find their homes plundered. The German authorities introduced a number of restrictions on the Jews in the fall of 1939. Jews were forbidden to use the sidewalks, and their schools were closed. The Germans burned down the synagogues and attempted to put the blame on the Jews. In November 1939, all Jewish businesses were ordered closed, and Jewish businessmen had to sell personal possessions to buy food. In addition, Jews were required to perform forced labor for the town authorities, such as sweeping the streets, initially without any payment.¹

In April 1940, the Jewish community in Radziejów prepared an official list of 630 Jewish inhabitants, which was confirmed by the mayor of the town. In June 1940, a group of Jewish workers was sent away to work in a village 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) away, and they were rotated with other workers at the end of every week.² Survivor accounts indicate that men were sent away to labor camps from early in 1940; hard labor and poor food there caused some to fall ill from malnutrition and abuse. Those who returned were literally just “skin and bones.” A group of women was sent to work in Inowrocław and demolished buildings and cleaned the bricks for reuse. Here some of the women were coerced to have sexual relations with an ethnic German foreman, as those who submitted were able to receive increased rations.³

By the summer of 1940, survivors report that all the Jews of the town had been moved into a “ghetto” on one street, “Yiddisha-gahs,” where many Jews had lived before the war. Polish families living in this area were also forced to move out. Altogether more than 200 Jewish families were crowded into the designated area. Up to 4 families (more than 20 people) had to share a typical house. According to Joyce Wagner, “[T]he overcrowding was unbelievable. We all had to share the kitchen, which was also the bedroom for one of the families.” The ghetto remained unfenced and unguarded, but there was a 5:00 P.M. curfew.⁴

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was set up in Radziejów, which acted as an intermediary with the German authorities

and attempted to ameliorate conditions for the Jews. As the roundups for the forced labor camps intensified, Jews went into hiding to avoid being caught.

In the winter of 1940–1941, the Gendarmerie reported that all male Jews were either working for the Wehrmacht or for the local mayor. Some were sent out to clear snow from the streets. At the same time, Jews were active on the black market, trading with Poles and some German soldiers.⁵ Wagner notes that due to limited supplies of food, Jews would remove their yellow Stars of David and leave the ghetto to find food. “After living in the ghetto for a few months we felt like animals locked up in a cage. Food was scant. People were on edge and on each other’s nerves, health deteriorated.”⁶

In April 1941, there were reportedly 1,376 Jews in the towns of Radziejów and Osiężyn combined. The bulk of them probably were registered in Radziejów, as in 1940 there had been only 384 Jews registered in Osiężyn.⁷ According to a Gendarmerie report of May 1941, no formal ghetto had been established in Radziejów, but all the Jews there had been concentrated on certain streets and in general were forbidden to enter the other quarters of the town.⁸

By July 1941, the Gendarmerie reported that the Labor Office in Piotrków had assigned those Jews capable of work to road and railway construction projects away from their home. Only the elderly, those unfit for work, and many women of the ghetto’s population remained in Radziejów. However, in October 1941, many of those who had been sent away to work returned home. In November there were reportedly 622 Jews residing in Radziejów. A Gendarmerie report from December 1941 indicated menacingly that it was expected that soon “all of the Jews would be deported.”⁹

On January 26, 1942, the Jews were ordered to assemble and were searched for money and gold. In the meantime, their homes were ransacked. As people expected soon to be deported, a number of Jews escaped to Częstochowa and Kłobuck, by paying bribes to obtain travel permits.¹⁰

In mid-April 1942, the remaining Jews in Radziejów were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp to be gassed. Fragmentary information about the roundup is available from Wagner, who was fortunate to survive in hiding. First the Jews were driven out of their houses by German Gendarmes shouting, “Juden raus!”—“Jews get out!” Huddled in an attic, Wagner heard shouts, screams, dogs barking, and shots being fired on the streets down below. People were calling the names of loved ones, and some who tried to flee were caught and shot. The bulk of the Jews were gathered on the market square and then placed in a local church overnight, before being sent to their deaths. Wagner’s hiding place would have been discovered, but an ethnic German policeman who recognized another girl hiding with her then decided to turn a blind eye.¹¹

On April 23, the Gendarmerie in Kreis Hermannsbad reported that all the Jews of the Kreis had been “evacuated,” including 230 people from Radziejów, who were deported using trucks belonging to Einsatzkommando Wartbrücken.¹²

Some of the Jews from Radziejów were in a labor camp at Łojewo at the time of the roundup and remained at this camp,

or at other camps nearby, for more than six months before subsequently being deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp.¹³

SOURCES Published sources on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Radziejów under German occupation include: Joyce Wagner, *A Promise Kept to Bear Witness* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007); and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 418–419. Additional information can also be found on the Web site of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews at www.sztetl.org.pl.

Relevant documentation includes: AŻIH (210/587, 301/372); IPN (fond 71); USHMM (RG-15.013M and Acc.1999.A.0154); and VHF (# 4593, 12512, 14744, 15884, 17941, 24501).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/587, AJDC Radziejów, p. 14, Jüdische Gemeinde Radziejów to AJDC Warsaw, June 5, 1940; Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, pp. 22–25; AŻIH, 301/372, testimony of Ludwik Zajf.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/587, AJDC Radziejów, pp. 2–9, 17–19.

3. Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, p. 25; VHF, # 17941, testimony of Ann Goldman, also mentions cases of rape.

4. Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, p. 29; VHF, # 24501, testimony of Jack Marcus; # 4593, testimony of George Grojnowski; # 17941; # 12512, testimony of Sally Klingbaum; AŻIH, 301/372.

5. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 5, pp. 12, 34, Gendarmerie Radziejow, December 27, 1940, and February 27, 1941.

6. Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, pp. 31–33.

7. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 5, p. 12, Gend. Radziejow, April 26, 1941.

8. Ibid., file 7, p. 43, Gend. Kreis Hermannsbad, May 30, 1941.

9. Ibid., file 6, pp. 45, 90–91, 117, Gend. Radziejow, July 26, November 22, and December 26, 1941.

10. AŻIH, 301/372; Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, pp. 33–36.

11. Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, pp. 36–39.

12. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 7, Gend. Kreis Hermannsbad, April 23, 1942.

13. Wagner, *A Promise Kept*, pp. 45–61, dates her arrival in Auschwitz in 1943.

RZGÓW

Pre-1939: Rzgów, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Roggen, Kreis Konin, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: two separate villages, Rzgów Pierwszy and Rzgów Drugi, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Rzgów is located 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) southwest of Konin. In 1921, the Jewish population of Rzgów was 111, out of a total population of 1,808. On the eve of World War II, there were probably slightly less than 100 Jews in Rzgów.

An open ghetto was set up in Rzgów in the summer of 1940, when the remaining Jews of Kreis Konin were deported

to a network of “hamlet ghettos” in the southern part of the Kreis; one of them was established in Rzgów and its 14 adjoining settlements. On July 17–18, 1940, 1,000 Jews from nearby Słupca were resettled to the Rzgów ghetto. Also a number of Jews from Konin, Kleczew, and Skulsk (Jewish population of 210 in 1939) were deported there.¹

An account from the Ringelblum Archive from an anonymous Konin Jew describes the deportation from Konin: “On July 17, the Gendarmes burst into all Jewish apartments, allowing everyone to take a small bundle and then driving them out, not even excluding the sick and paralyzed . . . to an assembly point. From there, after a nightlong march, everyone was brought to three villages: Grodziec, Zagórow, and Rzgów (later the remainder of the [Jewish] population of Kreis Konin was resettled there).” The same author adds, “One has to admit, that the inhabitants of those villages took on a more warm-hearted attitude towards us. Before the war, there were boards with inscriptions like ‘Jews out!’ or ‘Beat the Jew!’ Now the deportees were offered bread and potatoes, [the locals] refusing to accept payment for them.”²

According to Isaiah Trunk, residents of such hamlet ghettos in the Warthegau were supposed to draw their livelihood from farming. Secondary sources state that the majority of such ghettos were unfenced, unguarded, and only occasionally patrolled by the Germans. As such ghettos remained unfenced, historians suggest that it was easier for their residents to buy food and maintain contact with the outside world, as compared to the Jews in enclosed ghettos.

Very little is known about living conditions in the Rzgów hamlet ghetto, but the Jews were probably quartered with non-Jewish farmers, for whom they performed agricultural labor in return for food. In total, there were probably around 1,000 Jews quartered in Rzgów and its 14 surrounding settlements. After the harvest season, it is likely that some Jews were sent back from Rzgów to Konin and other towns for periods of forced labor, with most returning to Rzgów by February 1941.

In early March 1941, partial deportations from the rural ghettos in Kreis Konin began. These deportations occurred as part of the ongoing removal of non-Germans from the region in conjunction with the resumption of plans for the creation of a military training ground south of Konin. In March 1941, a number of Rzgów ghetto residents were sent to Krasnystaw, Izbica Lubelska, and Józefów Biłgorajski in Distrikt Lublin via the railway station in Konin and then to the Łódź ghetto. Some of the Jews from Rzgów arrived in Izbica Lubelska on March 10, 1941, as recalled by Thomas Toivi Blatt.³ A few of the able-bodied men probably were retained in Łódź to work and then sent on after about six weeks to a labor camp near Gdańsk to work on road construction.

The exact numbers of those deported from Rzgów are unknown. Those Jews who were not sent away were resettled to the nearby ghetto in Zagórow, either in March 1941 or just prior to that ghetto’s liquidation between September 24 and October 3, 1941. At that time all the remaining Jews in Kreis Konin were concentrated in Zagórow (up to 3,000 people) and

then taken away to be killed between Niesłusz and Rudzica in the “Długa Łąka” Forest—or according to other sources, in the Kazimierz Biskupi Forest. The killings were conducted by an SS-Sonderkommando, led by SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Lange of the Gestapo in Poznań. Buried in mass graves, the victims’ bodies were exhumed and burned in 1944.⁴

SOURCES The following publications contain references to the Rzgów ghetto: D. Sierpacka, “Postawy Polaków wobec ludności żydowskiej w Kraju Warty,” in A. Namysło, ed., *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy* (Warsaw: IPN Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), pp. 201–202; Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 196; Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 443; Ryszard Głoszkowski, “Zbrodnie hitlerowskie na ludności polskiej w powiecie konińskim w latach 1939–1945,” in *Eksterminacja ludności polskiej w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Wyniki badań ośrodków terenowych* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, GKBZHWP, 1979), pp. 77, 81–82; J. Gulczyński, “Konińska relacja z Archiwum Ringelbluma,” *Rocznik Koniński*, no. 14 (2003): 198–199; Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 113; Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 165 (Skulsk), pp. 235–238 (Konin); and Janina Kiełboń, “Deportacje Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939–1943),” in D. Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt: Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2004), pp. 163–164.

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. “We Remember the Extermination Pits!”—available at www.zchor.org/extermination/pits.htm.
2. USHMM, Ring I/841, Lb. 848, Mf. 0827, reel 39.
3. Thomas Toivi Blatt, *From the Ashes of Sobibor: A Story of Survival* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), p. 19.
4. “We Remember the Extermination Pits!”

SANNIKI

Pre-1939: Sanniki, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Gasten (later Walderode), Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sanniki is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) north-northeast of Łódź. In 1921, the Jewish population was 315, out of a total of 1,447 inhabitants of the village.

At the time of the German invasion in September 1939, the Luftwaffe bombed Sanniki, setting many houses on fire. Some local Jews fled towards Warsaw, but other refugees ar-

rived in the village. German forces captured Sanniki during the third week of September. In the first months of the occupation, the Jews were made to perform forced labor, and the German authorities confiscated much of their property. After the establishment of the German civil administration on October 26, 1939, the village was incorporated into the Third Reich as part of Kreis Gasten, in Regierungsbezirk Hohen-salza, Reichsgau Wartheland.

In December 1939, Sanniki had 5,382 inhabitants, of which 311 were Jewish. Before the ghetto was established, Jews from the neighboring villages of Słubice and Osmolin were resettled to Sanniki, raising the Jewish population to 351.¹ The ghetto, which was established in September 1940, was under the authority of the local representative of the civilian administration (Amtskommissar). Many Jews were forced to leave their apartments and move into a small ghetto that included just a few streets. The local Gendarmerie post in Sanniki was in charge of guarding the ghetto area.² Jews were able to leave the ghetto to get food in exchange for money or their remaining possessions. In the spring of 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews to demolish the local church. They took photographs of this and used the incident to foment antisemitism.

In early March 1942 (at the time of Purim), refugees who had escaped roundups brought news of the liquidation of neighboring communities to Sanniki. The liquidation of the Sanniki ghetto began shortly afterwards. In March 1942, the Germans deported a number of able-bodied men to the labor camp at Konin-Czarków (Gemeinschaftslager der Deutschen Arbeitsfront Nr. 23—Konin). Among them was Rabbi Yehoshua Moshe Aaronson, who wrote a detailed wartime diary while in the camp.³ Then on April 17, 1942, the remaining ghetto inmates, about 250 individuals, were all deported to the extermination camp in Chełmno, where they were killed using poison gas.⁴ Before the deportation Aktion, the Jews were forced to surrender all their valuable items, such as watches, gold, silver, and money. After the Aktion was completed, the German Amtskommissar in Sanniki took over remaining Jewish property, including sewing machines, hand luggage, and gold items, and sent them to the German Ghetto Administration (Gettoverwaltung, GV) in Łódź. On July 3, 1942, the Amtskommissar reported that the cleanup of the ghetto had been completed.⁵ There were very few survivors from the Jewish community in Sanniki.

SOURCES Information regarding the fate of the Jewish community of Sanniki during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Warsaw, 1946), pp. 126–127; and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 305–306.

The ghetto in Sanniki is also mentioned in Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 444; Martin Weinmann, ed., *Das nationalsozialistische Lager-system (CCP)* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990),

p. 706; and Nachman Blumental, ed., *Słowa niewinne* (Kraków: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce, 1947), p. 36.

Documents on the fate of the Jewish community of Sanniki during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APL; APP (sygn. 594, p. 17); BLH; IPN (sygn. Zh III/31/35/68); MMŻ; and YVA.

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trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. APP, Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Wartheland, sygn. 594, p. 17; D. Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 168, table 11.

2. IPN, Ankieta GKBZHwP, getta województwo warszawskie.

3. See J. Aaronson, *Alei Merorot* (Bnei Brak [Tel Aviv], 1996); the original manuscript is in BLH. Also see MMŻ, Wykaz imienny więźniów obozu w Koninie-Czarkowie. See also Esther Farbstein, “The Diary and Memoir of a Rabbi at the ‘Konin House of Bondage,’” *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 87–128.

4. IPN, sygn. Zh III/31/35/68, getta województwo warszawskie; Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk,” p. 168, table 11; APL, Gettoverwaltung, sygn. 29698, pp. 63–65, 110–117; Amtskommissar Sanniki an den Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Litzmannstadt, Ghettoverwaltung, July 3, 1942, published in Blumental, *Słowa niewinne*, p. 36.

5. Kermisz, *Dokumenty i materiały*, 2:126–127; Blumental, *Słowa niewinne*, p. 36.

SIERADZ

Pre-1939: Sieradz, city, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Schieratz, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Sieradz, Łódź województwo, Poland

Sieradz lies 56 kilometers (35 miles) southwest of Łódź. It was a garrison town located on the Warta River, about 50 miles east of the border with Germany in 1939.

On the eve of World War II, Jews comprised more than 3,000 of the roughly 10,000 inhabitants of the city.¹ In the fall of 1938, Sieradz was one of the main destinations for the thousands of stateless Jews expelled from Germany to Poland following the assassination by Herschel Grynszpan of Ernst vom Rath, the Third Secretary at the German Consulate in Paris. The Jewish community in Sieradz provided food and shelter for many of these expelled Jews.

German forces captured the city after some fierce Polish resistance in early September 1939. Many Jews fled before the German advance, and when they returned over the following days, some found that the Germans had plundered their homes and shops. Soon, the Germans began to round up Jews off the streets for compulsory labor. Subjected to threats and physical abuse, they were employed to clean streets, to unload railway

cars, and to perform other physically exhausting work.² On September 16, 1939 (Shabbat Tishuvah), the Germans arrested and tortured a number of Jews, accusing them of having shot at German soldiers. In total, they murdered 33 Jews during this Aktion. On November 11, 1939, German soldiers killed two Jewish medical professionals, probably as part of measures taken against the intelligentsia at this time.³ The Germans also vandalized the synagogue and destroyed the Torah scrolls. Subsequently, the synagogue was used as a barn by the German army.⁴ In December 1939, the German authorities expelled hundreds of Jews from Sieradz, forcing them into the newly formed Generalgouvernement to the east. According to the yizkor book for Sandomierz, about 1,200 Jews arrived there from Sieradz and Kalisz at this time.⁵

In the spring of 1940, a Jewish residential quarter (open ghetto) was established in Sieradz, comprising the area between Wodna, Graniczna, Żydowska, Szewska, and Sukienicza Streets. The ghetto was in the poorest part of town, and there was terrible overcrowding, with 10 or more people having to share a room.⁶ Prior to this, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) were established to supervise the Jewish population and to provide a Jewish labor force for the Germans. To establish the ghetto, extensive resettlements were necessary within the town: non-Jewish inhabitants had to leave the planned ghetto area, while Jews from all over the city and its surrounding villages were forcibly moved into the ghetto.

On average, the Sieradz ghetto held about 2,500 people. Ghetto residents worked in various craft workshops (including one for tailors) and were forced to clean streets and public places.⁷ Later, Jews also were used as laborers outside Sieradz and were kept in camps near the work sites. Only a few Jewish women were subjected to forced labor. The Sieradz ghetto was not fenced in, but all the streets leading out of the ghetto were guarded by members of the Jewish Police on the ghetto side and the German Schutzpolizei outside. Most Jews were forbidden from pursuing their former trades, and they received only meager rations of bread and a little molasses, so hunger and eventually starvation were prevalent throughout the ghetto. Some Jews continued to trade with local peasants despite the risks, exchanging their remaining clothes and other possessions for a little extra food.⁸

Some members of the Schutzpolizei were ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) who also spoke Polish and now found an opportunity to vent their antisemitism. The town mayor of Sieradz was an ethnic German named Alfred (or Adolf) Dressler; in charge of economic affairs was a man named Fuchs; in charge of the ghetto was E. Garnies from Berlin; and the head of the local Gestapo was a man named Abramowski.⁹

At some point in 1941, about 1,000 Jews were expelled from Sieradz and transferred to the ghetto in Zduńska Wola.¹⁰ In the summer of 1941, about 200 able-bodied men from Sieradz were sent to labor camps near Poznań (and more were sent from the region in the spring of 1942).¹¹ Following these departures, the number of Jews remaining in the ghetto was probably reduced to about 1,300.¹² By the spring of 1942, however,

the Germans had enforced a very rigid regime within the ghetto. Twice daily all inhabitants had to participate in a roll call. If someone was missing, the Jewish Police—on orders of the German Schutzpolizei—beat the residents until such time as the missing person was found.¹³

On August 24–27, 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. The ghetto residents were ordered to gather at 8:00 A.M. at the site of a school within the ghetto area. From there, they were taken to the Sieradz monastery, where they were crowded into a small space in a church building and left without food or water. About 20 women and children were killed during the evacuation and were buried at the Jewish cemetery in nearby Dzigorzew.¹⁴ The next day, about 184 skilled craftsmen and women were selected and taken to the Łódź ghetto.¹⁵ The Germans deported all remaining ghetto residents to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were murdered with poison gas. The Gestapo in Sieradz reported at the end of August 1942 that all the Jews had been “evacuated” from Kreis Schieratz during that month without any particular difficulties being encountered and that the Kreis was now “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*).¹⁶ Soon the ghetto area was repopulated by Polish inhabitants of the city.¹⁷

SOURCES Published sources on the Sieradz ghetto include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 263–265; *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 162; Danuta Dabrowska and Lucjan Dobroszycki, eds., *Kronika getta łódzkiego* (Łódź: Wydawn. Łódzkie, 1966), 2:226, 229, 237; and Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 451. Arek Hersh, a survivor of the Sieradz ghetto, has published his memoirs under the title *A Detail of History* (Newark, NJ: Quill Press, 2002); and the story of Mayer Hersh, another survivor of the Sieradz ghetto, has been told by Colin Rushton in the book *Beyond the Gates of Hell* (Leeds: Mediaworld PR, 2003), which also contains several rare photographs taken in the Sieradz ghetto.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Sieradz can be found in the following archives: BA-L (203 AR 420/74, pp. 8–40); IPN (ASG, sygn. 51, p. 217; Zh III/31/35/68, getta, woj. Łódzkie); USHMM (RG-50.106*0023 [Oral History with Benjamin Hildesheim]; RG-15.019M [Court Inquiries]; RG-15.015M [Records of Chef der Sipo and UWZ]; RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie], reel 38; and RG-15.083M [Jewish Council of the Łódź ghetto], reel 316); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.106-0023, Hildesheim interview. Hirsh, *A Detail of History*, p. 1, gives a Jewish population of about 5,000, but this is probably too high.

2. Hersh, *A Detail of History*, pp. 38–39; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 264.

3. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 264.

4. Rushton, *Beyond the Gates of Hell*, p. 24.
5. Evah Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, ed., *Et ezkerab: Sefer kehilat Tsoizmir (Sandomierz)* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Tsoizmir be-Yisrael: Moreshet, bet'edut "a. Sh. Mordekhai Anilevits," 1993), pp. 562–565; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 264.
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. Łódzkie, vol. 50, pp. 217 and reverse. Rushton, *Beyond the Gates of Hell*, p. 30, dates the establishment of the Sieradz ghetto in or around January 1940. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 264–265, date the establishment of the ghetto in March 1940.
7. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 451.
8. Rushton, *Beyond the Gates of Hell*, pp. 34–35; Hersh, *A Detail of History*, pp. 71–72.
9. USHMM, RG-15.042M (Sprawozdanie).
10. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 114–116.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 264, notes that there were several such transports starting from June 1941. However, Hersh, *A Detail of History*, p. 49, puts this event in the context of the early days of occupation.
12. Some sources, however, put the number of ghetto inmates in the ghetto at that time as well over 2,000; see USHMM, RG-15.042M, statements of Stanisław Jasiewicz and Stanisław Jańczak.
13. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2006), p. 212. Rushton, *Beyond the Gates of Hell*, p. 37, also mentions the twice daily roll call.
14. USHMM, RG-15.042M, witness statement of Stanisław Jasiewicz.
15. *Ibid.*, RG-15.083M (Jewish Council of the Łódź ghetto), reel 316, list of the names of 184 Jewish craftsmen and women transferred from Sieradz to the Łódź ghetto on August 25, 1942.
16. Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 313, extract from a situation report by the Gestapo in Sieradz, August 31, 1942.
17. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. Łódzkie, vol. 50, pp. 217 and reverse.

SŁUŻEWO

Pre-1939: Służewo, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Służewo, Landgemeinde, Kreis Hermannsbad, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Służewo, powiat Aleksandrowski, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Służewo is located about 34 kilometers (21 miles) northwest of Włocławek. In 1921, 259 Jews were living in Służewo. In 1939, there were probably about 450 Jews living in the Służewo gmina.¹

German forces occupied Służewo in mid-September 1939. On October 26, 1939, Służewo was officially incorporated into the Reich as part of Landkreis Nessau (later Hermanns-

bad) within Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza. The administrative center of Landkreis Nessau was Aleksandrów Kujawski, which on January 14, 1940, was policed by a force of 45 Gendarmes assisted by 60 auxiliary policemen (Hilfspolizisten), who were probably local ethnic Germans.² During the first months of the occupation, Jews were required to perform unpaid forced labor, and the wearing of distinctive markings by the Jews was introduced. On January 12, 1940, 25 Jewish families were deported from Służewo to Wodzisław in Distrikt Radom in the Generalgouvernement.³

There are conflicting reports regarding the existence of a separate "Jewish residential area" (open ghetto) in Służewo. Whereas German Gendarmerie reports for Kreis Hermannsbad repeatedly state that no formal ghettos had been established in the Kreis,⁴ some secondary sources, including Czesław Pilichowski et al. (*Obozy hitlerowskie*), *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, and Kawski and Opióła, report the existence of an open ghetto in Służewo, which was established in 1940. This probably reflected the eviction of Jews from certain parts of the village, which forced them to move in with other Jewish families, resulting in overcrowded conditions.

At the end of February 1941, there were more than 100 Jews living in Służewo. These Jews were being used by the local administration for demolishing buildings and cleaning streets. Some of the Jews were also employed as artisans. The Jews had to pay half of their wages to the local administration.⁵

In March 1941, or around that time, 22 Jewish youths were deported from Służewo to a labor camp in Janików.⁶ A Gendarmerie report from the end of May 1941 noted that there had been around 100 Jews residing in Służewo, but with the exception of the female Jews, those men incapable of work, and the still-needed artisans, the rest recently had been sent away for forced labor (*Arbeitseinsatz*). The female Jews were being used for cleaning and clearing up work locally. By October the number of Jews in Służewo reportedly had been reduced to only 25 or 30 people, composed of women and old men not able to work, as well as a few craftsmen.⁷ The men and women capable of work had been sent to a labor camp in Mogilno to work on road construction. The Jews were wearing the Star of David and obeying official regulations.⁸

In the first months of 1942, it appears that some of those Jews sent on work deployments may have returned to Służewo. On April 16, 1942, all the remaining Jewish inhabitants of Służewo, 78 people, were rounded up with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and held in an empty church building for several days. From here they were then deported by truck to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were all killed by asphyxiation.⁹

Only one Jew, Jozef Gut, is known to have returned to Służewo after the war.¹⁰

SOURCES The existence of an open ghetto in Służewo is mentioned in the following secondary sources: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 458; Tomasz Kawski and Monika Opióła, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza*

Wielkopolski, Mazowska, Małopolski i Śląska w latach 1918–1942 (Toruń: Wydawn. Adam Marszałek, 2008), pp. 254–255; Danuta Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955):167; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), p. 333; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1203.

Primary sources regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews in Służewo include: BA-L (Polen Ordner 358, p. 38); IPN (kolekcja “ob,” sygn. 177, and library, sygn. 6582); and USHMM (RG-15.013M).

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NOTES

1. BA-L, Polen Ordner 358, p. 38.
2. USHMM, RG-15.013M (Records of the Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad), reel 1, file 4, p. 19, Gend. Kreis Alexandrow, January 14, 1940.
3. BA-L, Polen Ordner 358, p. 38; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1115 (Wodzisław), p. 1, and 211/1117, p. 7.
4. See, e.g., USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 6, p. 11, Gendarmeriekreis Hermannsbad report, January 5, 1941, and pp. 95–96, Gend.-Abt. Alexandrow report, November 24, 1941.
5. Ibid., reel 2, file 5, p. 42, Gend.-Abt. Alexandrow report, February 28, 1941.
6. BA-L, Polen Ordner 358, p. 38.
7. USHMM, RG-15.013M, reel 2, file 6, pp. 18, 81, Gend.-Abt. Alexandrow reports, May 28 and October 23, 1941.
8. Ibid., reel 2, file 6, pp. 95–96, Gend.-Abt. Alexandrow report, November 24, 1941.
9. Ibid., reel 2, file 7, Gendarmerie Kreis Hermannsbad an den Kommandeur der Gendarmerie bei dem Regierungspräsidenten in Hohensalza, April 23, 1942; and APŁ, Gettoverwaltung 1746, as cited by Dąbrowska, “Zagłada skupisk,” p. 167.
10. BA-L, Polen Ordner 358, p. 38.

SOMPOLNO

Pre-1939: Sompolno, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Deutschen Ecke, Kreis Wartbrücken, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Sompolno, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Sompolno is located about 27 kilometers (14.5 miles) northeast of Konin. On September 1, 1939, it is estimated that probably around 1,500 Jews were living in the town.

One week after the outbreak of war on September 1, German troops entered Sompolno. The persecution of the Jews began immediately, with random beatings at the hands of German soldiers and local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). On the first day of the occupation, Jews over the age of 15 were ordered to assemble in the town square. A Gestapo officer proclaimed: “Accursed Jews, your days of glory are over!” He warned that the punishment for disobedience of

any German order would be death. The officer told the Jews to run home, which gave the soldiers an excuse to beat them for “trying to escape.” Each day brought new decrees. The synagogue and prayer halls were turned into warehouses. Children were forbidden to go to school. Within a short time, most Jewish shops were looted and shut down. Germans and local criminals entered private homes and stole whatever they liked. Life came to a standstill as the Jews huddled in their apartments.¹

After recovering from the initial shock, many Jews hid whatever was left of their goods and valuables within their homes. The Germans conducted periodic searches, sometimes tearing out the walls to find hidden articles. The “criminals” who concealed them were sent to Gestapo headquarters, where they were lashed 20 to 100 times on their bare backs.²

The Germans appointed a three-man committee (Judenrat) to convey their orders and decrees to the Jewish population. From time to time a collective “fine” was imposed on the community, which the Judenrat was forced to extort from the Jews. Everyone was required to wear the yellow patch with a Jewish Star on the chest and back. Jews were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks and were confined to their homes after 8:00 p.m. The Judenrat had to provide a daily quota of 50 people for harsh and filthy forced labor. Some were sent to work in the



Jewish men in Sompolno wearing identification tags await removal from the town, July 1941.

USHMM WS #77547, COURTESY OF LEE BERENDT, YAFFA ELIACH COLLECTION MJH/CHS

homes of ethnic Germans or to sweep courtyards, clean toilets, or chop wood—always with the intent of abusing the Jews and amusing the local population. Sometimes Jews were ordered to bring Jewish books to the town square and burn them. On one occasion the Germans organized a “party” at which Jews were forced to spread Torah scrolls on the ground and dance on them.

Sometimes Gestapo men from other places came to organize a local pogrom. On one such occasion, remembered as “Black Wednesday,” there was a full day of incitement, cruelty, and abuse. People were dragged out of their apartments to “entertain” the local populace. One man was forced to run a gauntlet by turning somersaults through the mud. Another was caught hiding three eggs in his house; they were thrown in his face and splattered on his body. Still another was forced to lean out of a window and bark like a dog for over an hour. The local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), who seemingly had good relations with Jews before the war, were among the chief instigators of this abuse.³

The Germans may have intended to make life so unbearable that Jews would break down and take their own lives. Nevertheless, there was not a single instance of suicide during the occupation. The death rate among the elderly rose significantly, but the desire to live persisted, and the hopes for a miracle never ceased. There were occasional reports of German military defeats, but at this time most proved unfortunately to be false. The Jewish community in Sompolno had almost no contacts with neighboring towns.

Personal possessions large and small were sold to local ethnic Germans to get money to buy food from farmers—potatoes, dairy products, and grain to grind for bread. Jews who engaged in such transactions did so at the risk of severe punishment. Tailors, shoemakers, and other artisans were allowed to make and sell their products.⁴

A sealed-off area of settlement did not exist in Sompolno. But in 1940 most of the Jews were ordered to leave their apartments and crowd together, with two to three other families per apartment, on specific streets on the edge of town. The Judenrat oversaw these arrangements, and their decisions could not be appealed. As noted above, the movement of the Jews was limited to certain hours of the day. These oppressive living conditions have been viewed by some historians as establishing a form of open ghetto.⁵

The children suffered a harsh fate, their lives disrupted by malnutrition, overcrowding, and closed schools. It was dangerous even to take a child for a walk. During the 2.5 years under occupation, there were no reports of births among the Jews of Sompolno. For over 18 months, an underground school operated for children aged 7 to 11. Three groups of 10 slipped into a private home three times a week for instruction. The classes continued until just before the expulsion in February 1942. Only one child (the teacher’s daughter) survived the war.⁶

Soon after the start of the occupation, the Germans demanded a population count of the Jewish community, which then numbered about 1,200. There were, in addition, a few

refugee families who arrived from the vicinity of Poznań. Five young people are known to have slipped across the border to the Soviet zone of occupation. In 1941, on three occasions, the Germans demanded young men and women for transport to labor camps in Germany. About 150 men and 50 women were sent away. After considering these figures and the high mortality rate, probably about 1,000 people remained in Sompolno at the time of the expulsion.

There were no partial evacuations from Sompolno to ghettos in the large cities. Despite the deteriorating conditions, families were able to stay together and maintain a semblance of community. There were occasionally secret Saturday morning Sabbath services. Some people found solace in the quiet study of traditional Jewish texts. For months on end, people slept in their clothes with a small bundle at their side, based on the assumption that they could be removed from the town at a moment’s notice. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, there was a flickering spark of optimism that this might mean a turn for the better, but the dispiriting news of the rapid German advance soon extinguished these hopes.⁷

The liquidation of the Jews in the Koło region stretched out over two months, in which the Jews of Sompolno awaited their fate with dread and uncertainty. According to one account, the Sompolno Jewish community sent out spies to find out what had happened to the Jews of neighboring towns, which were deported successively from the middle of December 1941.⁸ There was almost no place to hide in the area around the town, but a few Jews managed to find their way to other towns, usually by paying a Pole who was willing to risk taking them in a hay wagon for an overnight journey across dark roads.⁹

On February 1, 1942, the town was suddenly swarming with German police. Shortly after midnight, in the early hours of February 2, the Gestapo and policemen broke into Jewish dwellings. They ordered the inhabitants to dress quickly and hurried them onto trucks, which took them to a large wooden garage next to the train station. Over 1,000 people were pushed into the unheated building. A few slipped through the dragnet and found shelter with Polish neighbors, but only a handful survived the war.¹⁰

The people at the train station were sent to the extermination camp in Chełmno. Those Jews who were used to clean out the property from the area where the Jews had been living were transferred to the Łódź ghetto in June 1942.¹¹

SOURCES Published sources on the fate of the Jews of Sompolno under German occupation include the following: Yitzhak Kominkovski, ed., *Dapei ed shel sarid ba-ayarah Sompolno* (Tel Aviv: 1981); Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 161–162; and Tomasz Kawski and Monika Opiola, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza Wielkopolski, Mazowsza, Małopolski i Śląska w latach 1918–1942* (Toruń: Wydawn. Adam Marszałek, 2008), pp. 254–255.

Relevant documentation includes: AŻIH (Ring I/473).

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NOTES

1. Kominkovski, *Dapei ed shel sarid ha-ayarah Sompolno*, pp. 28–29.
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Ibid., p. 30.
4. Ibid., pp. 32–33.
5. Ibid.; Kowski and Opiola, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza*, pp. 254–255; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Poland, vol. 1, Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 161–162.
6. Kominkovski, *Dapei ed shel sarid ha-ayarah Sompolno*, p. 32.
7. Ibid., pp. 32–34.
8. Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993), p. 186.
9. Kominkovski, *Dapei ed shel sarid ha-ayarah Sompolno*, pp. 36–37.
10. Ibid., pp. 39–41.
11. Kowski and Opiola, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza*, p. 258.

STRYKÓW

Pre-1939: Stryków, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Strykow, Kreis Brzeziny, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Stryków, Łódź województwo, Poland

Stryków is located about 26 kilometers (16 miles) north-northeast of Łódź.

Just prior to World War II, about 2,000 Jews were living in the town. In September 1939, the German army entered Stryków, and 2 Jews were killed. On December 29, 1939, about 1,600 Jews from Stryków were resettled to Główno. Initially, the authorities in Główno did not want to accept them and tried to send them back to Stryków, but the mayor denied them entry so they remained in Główno. In Stryków itself, only 378 Jews remained, composed of laborers employed in



The rabbi of Stryków, wrapped in a tallit, is forced to ride on a wooden cart carrying a sign that reads, "We wanted war." The cart also has a sign, bearing the antisemitic slogan, "The Jews are our misfortune." USHMM WS #24374, COURTESY OF ŻIH

the leather factory and some indispensable craftsmen, together with family members who were permitted to stay with them.¹

The Stryków ghetto was established in the spring of 1940. It was located along Kościuszko Street (37–61) and on Browarowa Street. In the north, the ghetto bordered on the Moszczenica River; its entrance was on the south side, on what is now Kościuszko Street. There was also a synagogue in the area of the ghetto. In the fall of 1940, the Germans enclosed the ghetto, surrounding it with wire mesh topped with barbed wire.²

Five to seven policemen (Gendarmes) were in charge of guarding the ghetto. They were recruited from among local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and were under the command of the ethnic German Oskar Knappe (or Knapczyński), who was a local from Główno and is described by ghetto survivors as a brutal sadist. He frequently entered the ghetto and stole items or beat people. In charge of the civil administration in Stryków was Amtskommissar Steineck, who also was responsible for establishing and equipping the police. Internally, the ghetto was run by a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which consisted of a small number of officials under the Jewish elder Moses Blusztajn. Among the Jewish Police were people named Chmieński and Żużko.³

The ghetto initially held fewer than 400 Jews from Stryków; but the number rose to around 650 due to the arrival of refugees, including some from Zgierz and Łódź. Living conditions in the ghetto were very primitive, and extreme hunger could only be alleviated a little by black market trading with the surrounding Polish population. The ghetto consisted of 12 to 14 wooden or brick single-story buildings. Living and sanitary conditions were horrendous. People were extremely poor, and up to 8 people had to share one room. There was no sewage system in the ghetto; the only water supply was groundwater taken from flat ditches crossing the ghetto area. Due to the poor sanitation and overcrowding, outbreaks of typhus were a common occurrence; one building in the ghetto was reserved for the isolation of inmates suffering from typhus. A Polish physician, Boguchwał Panaś, treated patients in the ghetto. According to his personal recollection, many ghetto residents suffered from typhus, but none of them died.⁴ Witnesses state that a number of people died from starvation, especially children and the elderly. At least 1 Jew, David Majzels, died a violent death: he was shot in December 1941.

Inhabitants of the ghetto were forced to perform various work tasks inside and outside the ghetto. Once the leather factory was closed down, men over the age of 15 were taken out daily by Knappe to dig fish ponds in and around Stryków for 10 hours a day. Knappe would pick on educated Jews by selecting them for manual labor, and he often beat Jews at work until they were bloody. Other inmates worked repairing streets or tearing down old wooden houses to reduce the risk of fire in the town. Twice daily, ghetto residents had to participate in a roll call to ensure that nobody had escaped. One Jew who escaped and was recaptured was shot by Knappe in front of the others as an example.⁵

In April or May 1942, the Germans liquidated the Stryków ghetto. The roughly 300 remaining residents were ordered to gather at a collection point. They were only allowed to take with them what they could carry in their hands. The Germans marched the Jews from Stryków to Brzeziny, killing a number of the weaker Jews on the way. In Brzeziny, they shared the fate of the Jews of that ghetto, which was liquidated on May 19–21, 1942. Most were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp, while those capable of work were transferred to the Łódź ghetto.⁶ Presumably, the ghetto area in Stryków existed until 1943, then the buildings were torn down.

SOURCES Secondary sources include: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), which lists the Stryków ghetto on p. 474; and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 163–164.

The Stryków ghetto is documented in the following archival sources: BA-L (B 162/7774); IPN (collection “Bd,” sygn. 1175, k. 20–11; collection “Ob,” sygn. 177; and Zh. III/31/35/68, getta, województwo Łódzkie); USHMM (RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnie hitlerowskie]); VHF; and YVA. Additional primary sources are cited in *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 158.

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NOTES

1. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 164.

2. See a number of witness statements in USHMM, RG-15.042M; and also BA-L, B 162/7774 (Investigation of Oskar Knappe).

3. USHMM, RG-15.042M; and BA-L 162/7774.

4. Witness statement of Panaś Boguchwał, USHMM, RG-15.042M.

5. BA-L, B 162/7774 (Investigation of Oskar Knappe), pp. 50–53, statement of Moses Blusztajn, July 17, 1949.

6. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 119; and Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 189, 191, 236.

SZADEK

Pre-1939: Szadek, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Schadek, Landkreis Schieratz, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Szadek, Łódź województwo, Poland

The town of Szadek is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) west-southwest of Łódź. There were 523 Jews living there in 1921.

Following Szadek’s occupation in September 1939, the Germans set up a Judenrat and a Jewish police force. According to survivor Abraham Pick, the Germans dismissed the pre-war Jewish Council and constituted a new one with “tough guys,” who obeyed their orders.

At the end of 1939, the Germans gave permission for Szadek’s Jews to remain in the town conditional on the payment of a massive contribution that had to be delivered within three weeks. This sum was so great that many Jews were preparing for their deportation, and some even left before the deadline. In the end, however, the ransom was paid, and those who had left were instructed to return to Szadek.

From the very beginning of the occupation, Jews were forbidden to engage in commerce. The Judenrat conscripted Jews for forced labor, which consisted of cleaning for various German units and offices, manual gravel production for road repairs, and work in agriculture. Some young Jews were also sent to labor camps; name lists were prepared by the Judenrat.¹

In May or June 1940, the German authorities established a ghetto in Szadek for the 410 Jews still living in the town.

Szadek’s mayor, Otto Briese of Berlin, was in charge of ghetto affairs. The ghetto was located on two streets (including Wilanów) in the town center. It encompassed approximately 4,000 square meters (almost 1 acre). Poles living on those streets were evicted from their houses.²

The community was given two to three hours to relocate and allowed to take only portable items. Most Jews took straw mattresses and kitchen equipment. According to Pick, the ghetto was initially open and then sealed in the summer of 1940. Survivor Joel Opatut states that the ghetto was fenced and gated.³

Chaim Most chaired a self-help committee established in the ghetto. In July 1940, he issued an urgent appeal to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw for assistance, as the establishment of the ghetto had cut off all contacts with the surrounding villages, from which previously the Jews had earned their income and obtained food. There were 110 Jewish families living in the ghetto, many of which had no further means of subsistence. The Judenrat operated a soup kitchen but needed financial aid to keep it running.⁴

Despite the absence of medical assistance and terrible hygienic conditions, there were no reports of deaths due to contagious diseases. All forced labor was performed outside of the ghetto.⁵

At some time, probably in the summer of 1941, the Judenrat was ordered to deliver 50 young Jews, who were then sent to a labor camp at Rawicz.⁶

In January 1942, Ewa Smietanska managed to escape from the enclosed ghetto and entreated Małgorzata Podeszwa, who knew her parents, to take her in and give her shelter and food. As she could not obtain Aryan papers, Smietanska remained hidden in Podeszwa’s house for no remuneration for the remainder of the occupation. Małgorzata was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

The Szadek ghetto was liquidated on August 14, 1942. All the inhabitants were deported to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were gassed on arrival.⁷

SOURCES The ghetto in Szadek is mentioned by Aleksander Pakentregier, “Polityka władz niemieckich tzw. Kraju Warty

wobec Żydów,” *BŻIH*, no. 4 (1977): 39; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 482–483; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1274; and Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), 2:623.

Archival information on the Szadek ghetto includes: AŻIH (210/669 [AJDC]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 8829, 23970, 32394).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 32394, testimony of Max Blum, 1997; and # 23970, testimony of Abraham Pick, 1996.

2. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 218 (Kwestionariusz o obozach, Szadek).

3. VHF, # 8829, testimony of Joel Opatut, 1996; # 32394; and # 23970.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/669 (Szadek), p. 2. A list of 53 heads of families inhabiting the Szadek ghetto is available in RG-15.019M (ASG), file 218.

5. VHF, # 23970; USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 218.

6. VHF, # 32394; # 23970.

7. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 218.

TULISZKÓW

Pre-1939: Tuliszków, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Liebstaadt, Kreis Turek, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998:

Tuliszków, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Tuliszków is located 88 kilometers (55 miles) west-northwest of Łódź. In 1921, the Jewish population numbered 260 out of a total population of 2,358, comprised mostly of Poles and Germans.

Within two weeks after the outbreak of the war on September 1, 1939, the German army had occupied Tuliszków. On the first day of the occupation, the Germans forced the Jews to stand in the marketplace with their hands in the air, while they searched the houses for weapons. Some Jews were abused and had their beards torn out. A number of people decided to flee the town, but most returned shortly afterwards. Poles offering resistance shot a group of 35 Germans from the Poznań region, and Jews from Tuliszków were forced to bury the bodies. However, thanks to the intervention of the ethnic German mayor Wilhelm Ants, no reprisals were taken against the Jews.¹

Soon Jews over the age of 10 were rounded up for forced labor, repairing the roads and pulling out grass by hand. The Jews had to endure abuse, forced contributions, the plunder of their property, and restrictions regarding their freedom of movement and religious life. By the end of November 1939, a German decree ordered them to wear an armband with a yellow star. The

Germans ordered that records concerning members of the Jewish community be surrendered. Then at the end of December 1939, or in early January 1940, all the Jews of Tuliszków were forced to move out of the main streets and into the back alleys formerly occupied mainly by non-Jews, establishing a Jewish quarter or open ghetto. The Jews were given less than an hour to move into their new quarter and were unable to take with them more valuable items, including most of their furniture. The non-Jews who moved out of the area were resettled into the vacated Jewish houses. The Tuliszków ghetto was one of the first to be established in Reichsgau Wartheland.²

The living conditions in the ghetto were harsh. The German administration cut off the electricity supply, and the Jewish families were crowded into a very small area. Shortly after the resettlement into the ghetto, a small Judenrat consisting of Aliezer Hertshik, Jakob Kopolski, and two members of the Jewish Police was established. Personal property such as furniture, furs, and new clothes had to be handed over to the Germans, who distributed these items among the local non-Jewish population.³

In the spring of 1940, a group of more than 50 men was sent without guards to perform forced labor in Rawicz. The men received 900 grams (32 ounces) of bread per week with some sugar and jam. Only once did they receive a small daily payment of 1.5 złoty directly.⁴

The Tuliszków ghetto was in existence for less than 22 months. Around the time of Yom Kippur (October 1, 1941), the majority of the Jews of the Turek Landkreis—including the Jews of Brudzew, Dobra, Turek, Uniejów, Władysławów, and Tuliszków—were resettled into the rural ghetto of Kowale Pańskie (aka Czachulec Nowy).⁵ In total, around 4,000 Jews were moved into this rural ghetto. Only very few skilled workers were excluded from the resettlement and remained in the town of Turek. Subsequently, some Jewish women with their children fled from Kowale Pańskie back to Tuliszków, following the registration of all Jews unfit for work in the fall of 1941. Here they went into hiding with local non-Jewish acquaintances, but most did not survive the war.⁶

The majority of Jews in the Kowale Pańskie ghetto were deported in two transports in December 1941 and July 1942 to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were gassed on arrival. About 200 of those able to work were sent to forced labor camps in the Poznań area in May 1942, and another 112 skilled workers were sent to the Łódź ghetto at the time of the liquidation of the Kowale Pańskie ghetto at the end of July 1942.⁷ Only one survivor from Tuliszków has been registered by the Survivors' Registry of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. As he was also in the Łódź ghetto, he was probably among the skilled workers transferred from Kowale Pańskie. After World War II, only the remnants of the Jewish cemetery in Tuliszków served as a sorry reminder of former Jewish life in the town.

SOURCES A brief outline history of the Jewish community of Tuliszków can be found in: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communi-*

ties: *Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 123. The transfer of the Jews from Tuliszków to the Kowale Pańskie ghetto is mentioned in *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek veli-kedoshbeha* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Turek be-Yisrael, 1982), pp. 350–351.

Among very few archival records with information relevant to the Tuliszków ghetto, see AŻIH (301/2516; and Ring I/585).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2516, testimony of Nachum Zajf.
2. Ibid.; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 123.
3. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 123.
4. AŻIH, 301/2516.
5. Ibid.; and *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek*, pp. 350–351—both give the date as Yom Kippur 1940. AŻIH, 301/2243, testimony of Dawid Jakubowicz, dates the establishment of the ghetto on October 20, 1940, stating there were about 4,250 residents. Most other sources—e.g., USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, woj. poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 432 and reverse; and Czesław Kazimierz Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek District during the Time of Nazi Occupation,” part of his master’s thesis titled “Nazi Occupation in the Turek District during the Years 1939–1945” (Gdańsk University, 1972)—date the establishment in August to October 1941.
6. AŻIH, 301/2516.
7. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 233. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 446, gives the figure of 89 Jews sent to the Łódź ghetto from Kowale Pańskie.

TUREK

Pre-1939: Turek, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: center of Kreis Turek, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Turek is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) west-northwest of Łódź. The Jewish population of Turek was 2,678 people in 1921, comprising more than 25 percent of the town’s total population, which then exceeded 8,000 people. By the outbreak of World War II, there were about 2,700 Jews living in Turek.

Immediately after German occupation, the maltreatment of Jews began: the Germans confiscated Jewish property, and they seized Jews off the streets for forced labor, especially to clean the streets, to clear rubble, and to repair wartime damage to roads and bridges. Sometimes the Jews were beaten and humiliated during this work. In the first months of the occupation, the synagogue was set on fire and partially destroyed. Probably in October 1939, German security forces shot 15 Jewish men for unknown reasons.¹ In November 1939, about

600 men from Turek were gathered in the synagogue and then forcibly deported to Bochnia near Kraków. In January or February 1940, the first local resettlement of the Jews took place when most were concentrated in one of their traditional areas, along the “Breite Gas” and “Schmaler Gas.” Because of the worsening situation, a number of Jews left Turek, seeking shelter in Warsaw, and some even went to the Soviet-occupied zone in eastern Poland. In 1940, there were only about 1,750 Jews remaining in Turek.²

According to Michael Alberti, the process of creating a ghetto in Turek stretched over several months, beginning in the spring of 1940. One of the main problems was a lack of sufficient space. Many buildings had become uninhabitable due to the war, and initially there was nowhere for the authorities to relocate about 150 Polish families who still lived in the designated ghetto area. As a result, not all the Jews could be moved into the ghetto at once, and therefore the Germans considered even resettling the remaining Jews into the countryside. As Turek was the seat of the Landratsamt and other regional authorities, all available living space in the town was taken up by the demands of newly arriving German administrative personnel.³ One solution to the shortage of space was the resettlement of Jews and Poles, but this proceeded only very slowly. The establishment of the Turek ghetto, according to Alberti, was completed only in the fall of 1940 (October). But according to other sources the ghetto may have been fenced in with barbed wire earlier. Despite the enclosure of the ghetto, inmates were still able to enter and leave it, enabling them to sell property in exchange for food.⁴ Alberti, however, states that the ghetto was never completely sealed and that the Schutzpolizei only patrolled around the perimeter of the ghetto. There was insufficient personnel to guard the ghetto continually. Alberti also states that the German administration in Reichsgau Wartheland never issued a clear order to shoot Jews found outside the ghetto. Nevertheless, the standard “response” in such cases generally was to shoot any Jews who attempted to leave the ghetto.⁵

Jews leaving the ghetto were not the only problem the German authorities faced. One of their main concerns was those Jews in the ghetto who were incapable of work. Constantly, able-bodied Jews were rounded up and taken to forced labor camps, with the result that increasingly only elderly and sick Jews remained behind in the Turek ghetto. The German authorities became concerned that they would have to support these Jews using public funds—something they wanted to avoid if at all possible.⁶

Living conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded and unsanitary, with only limited supplies of food. Most probably, the head of the Gestapo post (Aussendienststelle) for the Turek Kreis, Kurt Dörfel, and an unnamed employee of the local German labor office were in charge of the ghetto.⁷ According to official records collected by the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes, the ghetto held about 5,000 people from the town of Turek and the neighboring villages,⁸ but probably the actual number of ghetto inmates was less. Many Jews suffered from malnutrition, and therefore the

Judenrat, headed by Herszel Żymanowoda and his assistants Abram Bikowski and Haim Leib Eliaz, set up a soup kitchen and other institutions of self-help. The Germans also initiated the creation of a Jewish police force, under the command of Mordechai Strykowski.⁹

The situation deteriorated in the summer and fall of 1941, following the German invasion of the Soviet Union. More and more men were rounded up during raids on the ghetto and sent to forced labor camps in the Poznań area. By the end of September or in early October 1941, the Jews of the Turek ghetto were resettled into the rural ghetto in the Kowale Pańskie (Czachulec Nowy) region, just south of Turek. About 4,000 Jews from towns and villages in the Turek region—Brudzew, Dobra, Turek, Tuliszków, Uniejów, and Władysławów—were concentrated here in about 16 hamlets in the countryside. In Turek itself, there remained only a few skilled workers needed by the German authorities. Most probably, these Jews were finally deported to Łódź in the summer of 1942, when the Turek ghetto ceased to exist.

A few Jews from Turek managed to survive in the labor and concentration camps, in the Łódź ghetto, or in hiding. One official estimate put the figure at only 26 for the entire Turek powiat. This estimate is probably too low, but the number of survivors was probably still less than 1 percent in total.¹⁰

SOURCES The Turek ghetto is mentioned in a number of publications, including the following: *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 163; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 531; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 130–131. Key information on the establishment of the ghetto can be found in Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 195–197. More information on Turek, its Jewish community, and the ghetto can be found in Eliezer Esterin, ed., *Turek Sefer Zikaron le-kehillat Turek ve-li-kedoshaba* (Tel Aviv: The Turek Organization in Israel, 1982), especially the articles by J. Seiffe, “The History of Turek,” Shmuel Glubah, “Yidn in Turek in der Tseyt fun der Nazisher Okupatsie,” and Eliezer Orbach and Iccak Orbach, “In Those Dreadful Days”; see also Sz. Gilboa, “Di Din Torah,” *Fun Letstn Hurbn* 6 (1947). Additional information can be found in: Czesław Kazimierz Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek District during the Time of Nazi Occupation,” part of his master’s thesis titled “Nazi Occupation in the Turek District during the Years 1939–1945” (Gdańsk University, 1972).

Information on the Turek ghetto is located in the following archives: BA-BL (N 2323/19); CAHJP (HM 7526, HM 8120, and HM 8200); CZA (S.5-1707, S.5-1796, and S.5-1801); IPN (70/710 [SDHAK], file 36; kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; Zh III/31/35/68, getta, woj. poznańskie; and OKŁ, Ds 438/67, p. 13); USHMM (RG-15.019M, RG-15.015M, and RG-15.040M); VHF (# 7067, 9518, 19603, 21725, 23903); and YVA (M-1/E/759 and O-3/3507).

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NOTES

1. Orbach and Orbach, “In Those Dreadful Days,” p. 316; Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek,” p. 10.
2. Glubah, “Yidn in Turek,” pp. 343–344; Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, pp. 130–131.
3. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, pp. 195–197. The author cites a situation report by the SD-Hauptausenstelle Kalisch, dated May 1940, located in IPN, 70/710 (Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers-SS, SD-Abschnitt Litzmannstadt, Hauptausenstelle Kalisch [SDHAK]), file 36, pp. 107–125, here p. 109. Glubah, “Yidn in Turek,” p. 344, notes that shortly after Pesach 1940, German Gendarmes marked the word “Jew” with chalk on those Jewish houses outside the ghetto.
4. Orbach and Orbach, “In Those Dreadful Days,” p. 318. Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek,” p. 10, dates the establishment of the ghetto as late as December 1940. VHF, # 21725, testimony of Jacob Fogel, and # 7067, testimony of Bronai Rosławowski, both mention the existence of a barbed-wire fence. Rosławowski also describes leaving the ghetto to barter for food.
5. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 209.
6. Ibid., p. 380, quoting Landrat Turek to Reichstatthalter Posen, Übersicht über die Struktur des Kreises, dated September 9, 1941, in BA-BL, N 2323/19, pp. 73–113, here pp. 111–112.
7. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 211. Glubah, “Yidn in Turek,” p. 348, notes that Dörfel used to check the accounts of the Jewish Council.
8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 531.
9. Glubah, “Yidn in Turek,” p. 342.
10. Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek,” p. 15.

UNIEJÓW

Pre-1939: Uniejów, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Uniejow, Kreis Turek, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Uniejów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Uniejów was an agricultural center not far from Turek, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) west-northwest of Łódź, situated on the Warta River. In 1921 there were 1,100 Jews living there, out of a total population of 3,657.

Following an aerial bombardment by the Luftwaffe at the time of the German invasion on September 1, 1939, German forces captured Uniejów about one week later. In the first days of the occupation, German forces shot a number of Poles in the town.¹ The temporary German military administration soon introduced discriminatory decrees against the Jewish population. Jews were kidnapped off the streets for forced labor, which involved road construction and repairing bridges. As they performed this physically demanding labor, they were also cruelly beaten. Jewish shops were robbed, and many Jewish families were thrown out of their apartments in order to make way for German soldiers and local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). In December 1939, the Jews were ordered to wear a yellow patch. Around this time the German authorities

established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to act as an intermediary for them with the Jewish population.²

In 1940, the Jewish community was forcibly moved into a single neighborhood on a side street in the old part of town. The Jews were able to take most of their property with them, but they had to live in very cramped and squalid conditions.³ Although this remained an open ghetto until June 1941,⁴ there was a strict curfew, and Jews were forbidden to leave the area after a certain hour. After this date, the area of the ghetto was reduced, enclosed by a fence, and guarded by ethnic Germans.⁵ The Germans crammed 491 Jews into four buildings under very poor sanitary conditions.⁶ The ghetto inmates suffered from hunger and disease, and there was no school for the children. After the initial establishment of the open ghetto in 1940, able-bodied Jewish men and youths were rounded up and sent to labor camps in the area of Poznań, leaving mainly women, children, and the elderly behind in Uniejów. At first the families were able to send food parcels to the men in the labor camps, but soon all contact with them became impossible. Some of the forced laborers were subsequently transferred to the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁷

The Uniejów ghetto existed only for a few months. On October 10, 1941, all the Jews of the Uniejów ghetto—together with Jews from other towns in Kreis Turek—were resettled into the rural ghetto of Kowale Pańskie (Czachulec Nowy). The Jews from Uniejów were mostly housed in the village of Dzierzbotki, which was 1 of 16 hamlets in the rural ghetto. Only six cottages were allotted to them, which provided shelter for only a few families. Most of the others had to camp out in the open fields. Among the 10 Jews who were hanged in the Kowale Pańskie ghetto on June 23, 1942, were 2 men from Uniejów.⁸

At the time of the liquidation of the Kowale Pańskie ghetto on July 20, 1942, a few Jews from Uniejów were among approximately 100 skilled workers selected to be sent to the Łódź ghetto.⁹ The majority of Jews from Uniejów were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp in December 1941 or July 1942, where they were gassed on arrival. During the liquidation Aktion in July, one man from Uniejów, Lenczicki, was forced to dig his own grave and was then shot along with his child. Another man from Uniejów, Yaakov Waldman, managed to flee. He escaped into the forest and joined the partisans. On September 1, 1945, he was killed in the Turek Forest by men in the Polish underground.¹⁰

SOURCES The Uniejów ghetto is mentioned in *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 1631; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska Polityka zagłady Żydów* (Warsaw, 1961), p. 226; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 535. For further information, see also Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 202–203, 205, 210; Zbigniew Piechota, “Likwidacja skupisk Żydowskich w byłych powiatach tureckim i kolskim” (a MSS prepared for the conference “W 45 rocznicę zagłady skupisk żydowskich w Kraju

Warty,” Zduńska Wola, October 23, 1987), p. 9; Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 45–47; and Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 113, 429.

There are only a few archival records available concerning the Uniejów ghetto. These include: AŻIH (210/700; Ring I/585); IPN (kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177); VHF (# 9416 and 32551); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo konińskie* (Warsaw, 1981), pp. 59–61.

2. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 45–47.

3. VHF, # 32551, testimony of Rachelle Nelkin; and # 9416, testimony of Josef Kiersz.

4. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 202.

5. Ibid., pp. 205, 210.

6. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 535.

7. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 45–47; VHF, # 32551; and # 9416.

8. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 45–47; VHF, # 32551; and Czesław Kazimierz Łuczak, “Extermination of Population of Turek District during the Time of Nazi Occupation,” part of his master’s thesis titled “Nazi Occupation in the Turek District during the Years 1939–1945” (Gdansk University, 1972), p. 11.

9. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 233, gives the figure of 112 Jews sent to the Łódź ghetto from Kowale Pańskie. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung*, p. 446, gives only 89 as the number.

10. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 45–47.

WARTA

Pre-1939: Warta (Yiddish: Dvart), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Sieradz, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Warta is located about 57 kilometers (35.5 miles) west of Łódź. In 1921, Jews numbered 2,025 out of 4,108 inhabitants of Warta, comprising almost 50 percent of the town’s population.

When the war broke out in 1939, many Jews fled from the town, which is only 60 kilometers (37 miles) from the German border. The fighting destroyed much of the town, including the synagogue and much of the rest of the Jewish quarter. Upon

returning, many Jews found their property in ruins. Moreover, the Germans soon began the typical pattern of abuse, forced labor, and expropriation, with the coerced cooperation of the Jewish Council (Judenrat).

In November or December 1939, plans were announced to evacuate all of Warta's Jews to the Lublin area. Warta was to be annexed to the Reich, and therefore the new German authorities intended to make it *judenfrei* (free of Jews). After a few days of preparation, all the Jews were taken to the train station, but they were released the next day. The initial deportation plans were not implemented.

A ghetto was established in February 1940 in the traditional Jewish area of the town. A number of Jews had to relocate into this mostly poor area, and they were unable to bring all of their possessions, especially furniture, with them. The ghetto covered four streets, in an area approximately 250 meters by 200 meters (273 yards by 219 yards). Among the ghetto inhabitants there was also a small group of Jews from Germany, about 20 people.¹ Some sources say the ghetto was enclosed; others, that it was open, with some Polish families living within its boundaries. Jewish Police guarded the ghetto internally, but entering and leaving the ghetto remained relatively easy for both Poles and Jews. This was important, since the Judenrat had negotiated with the German authorities for Jewish workshops to be set up to produce things for the Germans. Tailors, shoemakers, and furriers began to work for the Germans, probably about 250 people in total, and part of their income was used to rebuild the town of Warta. For the Jews, these workshops meant not only a small source of income, but increasingly they became a means of survival. Additional income came from Poles and their private orders, for which the Jews received payment in cash or in kind, enabling them to buy groceries.

A letter from the Warta Jewish committee addressed to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw, written at the end of December 1940, stated that there were about 1,750 Jews in the town, among them Jews who had fled or been evicted from neighboring towns, as well as some German families. (All told, as many as 2,400 Jews may have passed through the ghetto.) There was no soup kitchen or hospital to take care of Jews in need. As the Warta Jewish committee wrote, so far the Jewish owners of smaller shops had been able to make a meager living. But by January 1, 1941, the Germans planned to take away their business licenses, which would cause the economic situation of the Jewish community to deteriorate further.² The ghetto was overcrowded and had terrible hygienic conditions. As there was no pharmacy inside the ghetto, Minia Jay, who worked outside the ghetto looking after the two-year-old child of the Gendarmerie Meister, used to buy drugs regularly outside the ghetto and bring them back to the ghetto.³

Early on, the mayor of Warta employed Jewish youths from the ghetto on farms in and around Warta, where they experienced reasonable working conditions. But increasingly the young workers were sent to forced labor camps in the Poznań area. A first transport of prisoners left the town in January

1941. Due to these drafts for forced labor, the ghetto population declined significantly.

In the fall of 1941, a few Jews classified as unfit for work in the nearby rural ghetto of Kowale Pańskie fled to the Warta ghetto, where the local Jews welcomed them. However, many returned shortly afterwards, as the deportation from Kowale Pańskie to the extermination camp in Chełmno of those deemed unfit did not take place until December.⁴

During 1941, the Warta Jews had learned about the terrible conditions in the Poznań forced labor camps and tried to provide aid by sending food packages and clothing to their relatives there. It was forbidden by the Germans to send any bread, and on April 14, 1942, 10 or 11 Jews were hanged publicly by the Germans, apparently for breaking this rule. Among those executed were London, the chairman of the Judenrat, the Warta rabbi, Eliahu Laskowsky, and other members of the Judenrat. Members of the Jewish Police were forced to build the scaffold and carry out the hangings. All Jews had to attend the execution. During another incident (time and circumstances are unknown) 9 women from the Warta ghetto were taken to Włocławek and shot there.⁵

In mid-August 1942, the Central Armament Office of the Wehrmacht wrote to the Statthalter of the Wartheland, Arthur Greiser, urging him to postpone the planned "resettlement" of Jewish laborers from the C. Klose ammunition factory in Warta until substitutes had been found. Nevertheless, the German authorities proceeded with the liquidation of the ghetto on August 22–25, 1942.

First the inhabitants of the ghetto were ordered to gather at the sports field, and from there they were taken to a monastery and a church close to the ghetto, where they were held for three days with nothing to eat and very little to drink. At least 16 elderly and sick people who could not be moved were shot on the spot during the deportation Aktion and buried in a mass grave at the local cemetery. Some people also died while confined in the church. On the third day, police and SS men arrived and started to deport the Jews by truck. About 1,000 of the ghetto's inhabitants were sent to the Chełmno extermination camp, and 447 of the younger and stronger Jews were selected and sent to the Łódź ghetto, where they continued to work for the Germans. (Another source in the same collection of records states that the number of Jews taken to the Łódź ghetto was much smaller: 97 men and 60 women on August 24, 1942; and 76 men on August 25, 1942.)⁶

The Warta ghetto was dismantled after the inhabitants had been deported. Most of the furniture was given to the local population, and all other property was taken over by the Łódź Gestapo. The names of only two possible perpetrators are mentioned in the sources examined: Herbert Kühne, who was a factory manager, and Heinrich Schmieding. Their fate is unknown.

SOURCES The most comprehensive published source on Jewish life in Warta is Eliezer Astrin, ed., *Sefer d'vart* (Tel Aviv: Artzi Press, D'Vart Society, 1974). The Warta ghetto is described briefly in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein,

eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 89–92. Other publications mentioning the Warta ghetto include: Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2006), pp. 193, 207; Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung”* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 91–92; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 556–557; and *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 131, 162.

Documentation on the Warta ghetto can be found in the following archives: APL (Ds. 22/67, 1205, p. 1, I 43); BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67, SB V/I); IPN (e.g., ZH III/31/35/68 [collection Łódź województwo]; ASG, sygn. 51, vol. 2, p. 222; ASG, kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; and ASG, vol. 3, pp. 489–490); OKŚZpNPŁdz (Ds. 439/67); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/704; and RG-15.042M [Akta zakończonych śledztw w sprawach o zbrodnię hitlerowskie]); VHF (e.g., # 23350, 37820); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.042M; and VHF, # 23350, testimony of Minia Jay.

2. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154, 210/704: letter of the Warta Jewish Committee to AJDC Warsaw (most likely around December 20, 1940).

3. VHF, # 23350.

4. *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek veli-kedosbeha* (Tel Aviv: Ir-gun yots’e Turek be-Yisrael, 1982), p. 353.

5. Astrin, *Sefer d’vart*, pp. 375–376; and VHF, # 23350. On Eliahu Laskowsky, see Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbat”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 423.

6. This is according to USHMM, RG-15.042 M, referring to IPN, ASG, vol. 2, p. 222. The second source is APL, Ds. 22/67, 1205, p. 1, I 43.

WIDAWA

Pre-1939: Widawa, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Lask, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Widawa is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) southwest of Łódź near Bełchatów. In 1921, Jews numbered 773 out of a total population of 2,209, comprising 35 percent of Widawa’s population.

On the eve of war in 1939, the number of Jews living in Widawa was similar to that in 1921. To escape from the German occupation, many Jews fled Widawa, moving to other towns like Bełchatów or Zduńska Wola nearby or fleeing further to the east. At the same time, a number of Jewish refugees from other towns sought refuge in Widawa. One of the first victims of the war was the last rabbi of Widawa, Rabbi Abra-

ham Mordechaj Maroko, who in September 1939 was killed because he refused to burn the Torah scrolls of the synagogue.¹ In August 1940, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) of Widawa approached the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw for help. At that time, 90 Jewish families (430 Jews) lived in Widawa, and due to the effects of Nazi policies, they had lost almost all of their property. The scant documentation does not indicate whether any support was in fact received from the AJDC in Warsaw.² It is likely that at some time before the summer of 1942 the Germans rounded up able-bodied Jews from Widawa and sent them to the Poznań region for forced labor.

According to a report by the Office of Information and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Polish Underground Army (Armia Krajowa) dated December 1941, an open ghetto had been established in Widawa by the fall of 1941, which contained about 100 Jewish families. The same report indicates that on November 14, 1941, about 25 families were transferred to the ghetto in Bełchatów.³ The article in *Pinkas ha-kehillot* also mentions the existence of an open ghetto in Widawa.⁴

In the absence of survivor testimony, it is difficult to ascertain the precise fate of the remaining Jews of Widawa. As no records have been located concerning the deportation of Jews directly from Widawa to the Chełmno extermination camp, it seems likely that the Jews were transferred first to the nearby ghettos of Łask, Żelów, or Bełchatów, where some may have been selected to work in the Łódź ghetto before the majority were sent on to Chełmno in August 1942 to be murdered by asphyxiation.⁵ In early September 1942, the Gestapo in Łódź reported that Kreis Lask had been cleared of Jews.⁶

SOURCES A brief article on the Jewish community of Widawa can be found in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 94. A brief mention of the ghetto can also be found in: Maria Tyszkowa, “Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941–1943. Dokumenty Biura Propagandy i Informacji KG AK w zbiorach biblioteki uniwersytetu warszawskiego, część 1,” *BŻIH*, nos. 2–3 (1992): 35–61.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Widawa during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/711 and Ring I/120); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC] 210/711; Ring I/120); and YVA.

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1. See AŻIH, Ring I/120.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/711 (Widawa), letter of the Jewish community of Widawa to AJDC Warsaw, August 8, 1940.

3. Tyszkowa, “Eksterminacja żydów w latach 1941–1943,” p. 44.

4. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 94.

5. Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 207.

6. Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), p. 96.

WIELUŃ

Pre-1939: Wieluń, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Welungen, center of Kreis Welungen, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Wieluń, Łódź województwo, Poland

Wieluń is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) northwest of Częstochowa in southern Poland, close to the historic border with Silesia. Around the time of Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, there were about 4,200 Jews residing in Wieluń.

Wieluń was among the first Polish towns attacked in the predawn hours of September 1, 1939. The concentrated German aerial bombardment and artillery attack destroyed three quarters of the town, including a synagogue. Thousands were injured and killed; most of the houses were burned down; and masses of people fled, including virtually all the Jews. About half of the Jewish population eventually returned to the town, settling in the rubble of their former homes or on the outskirts of town. Remaining Jewish businesses were taken over by German-appointed trustees (*Treuhänder*), who managed them until their eventual sale to non-Jews. Wieluń was soon annexed to the German Reich. Many Polish citizens were expelled, and ethnic Germans from the Baltic countries were brought in.

From the start of the German occupation, Jewish men were subject to kidnapping for forced labor. They were put to work salvaging the remains of bombed-out houses. The laborers received only a token wage for their work. In the first years of the occupation, hunger was not a factor, since food could be purchased, legally or otherwise, by cash or barter



Group portrait of the male members of the Jakubowicz family wearing yellow stars in the Wieluń ghetto. Pictured are Mr. Jakubowicz (second from right) with his three sons (left to right) Jakub, Mojsze (the photo's donor, now Morris Jacobs), and Henry. All four survived the war. USHMM WS #14296, COURTESY OF MORRIS JACOBS

from the local farmers. In December 1940, there were 4,053 Jews living in Wieluń, including 450 refugees from other places. In March 1941, the authorities in Wieluń established a Jewish residential area (open ghetto) for the Jews around the marketplace, where the Jews lived mainly in derelict old houses and wooden shacks.¹ The area was commonly referred to as the ghetto, but it was not fenced in. Jews were still permitted to move about the entire town with the exception of market days—on Tuesdays, on Fridays, and later, on Sundays as well.² On August 9, 1941, the Germans rounded up a group of Jews in Wieluń and sent them to the Poznań region for forced labor.³ According to one source, several hundred Jews from Wieluń were transferred to the nearby ghetto in the town of Praszka.

In early 1942 (probably on January 12), the German authorities publicly hanged 10 Jews, including 1 woman, allegedly for the illegal slaughter of cattle. This was a traumatic experience that made a deep impression on the Jewish population. Survivor accounts of the incident describe it as a collective punishment, imposed on the entire community. One survivor, Moshe Prager (who dates the event on the holiday of Purim), states that he was among the 10 Jews selected for hanging by lot. He was spared, however, when an elder of the community offered to take his place. This saved Prager's life, but the manner of his survival also caused him lasting anguish and guilt.⁴ Among the victims of German terror during the first half of 1942 was the chairman of the Judenrat, named Lipszyc, and his deputy, who were punished for their refusal to carry out German orders. One source indicates that Lipszyc was among the people hanged, but another report indicates that he was murdered in June 1942 in the office of the Gestapo.

Further forced labor deportations to the area around Poznań took place in the spring of 1942; about 2,000 Jews were sent away. The liquidation of the Wieluń ghetto took place on August 16–22, 1942.⁵ German SS and police forces surrounded the ghetto and drove all the Jews out onto the streets.⁶ A number of Jews were also brought to Wieluń from nearby towns, including Bolesławiec.⁷ About 5,000 Jews were confined together under horrendous conditions in the church building without food or water. A number of Jews, especially the elderly and sick, died of exhaustion in the church or were murdered by the SS in Wieluń. After a week, representatives of the Gestapo and the German Ghetto Administration (*Gettoverwaltung, GV*) in Łódź selected about 900 people (of which about 250 were from Wieluń) for physical labor in the Łódź ghetto. Among them was Szmuel Hecht, who worked in the Łódź ghetto archive prior to his death in 1943. The rest were escorted away by members of the SS-Sonderkommando Kulmbhof (Chełmno), assisted by local detachments of the Order Police, and were transported in trucks to the extermination camp in Chełmno, where they were killed using poison gas.⁸

The German Border Police Office (*Grenzpolizeikommissariat*) in Wieluń reported to the head of the Gestapo in Łódź: "[A]t the beginning of August an Aktion against the Jews of Welungen Kreis was started suddenly with the aim of resettling

all of them. Due to the suddenness of the operation, the Jews were rounded up almost without exception, and only a few Jews were able to flee. On completion of the Aktion on August 22, 1942, Kreis Welungen was free of Jews [*judenfrei*].⁹ Following the deportation Aktion, the German police continued to search for Jews in hiding in Wieluń and the surrounding area. Those who were captured were brought back to Wieluń and murdered there.¹⁰ Income from the sale of remaining Jewish property in Kreis Welungen was collected by local officials and paid to the GV in Łódź.¹¹ Subsequently the GV paid for the repair of window panes in the Wieluń church that were damaged during the deportation Aktion.¹²

A few Jewish survivors returned to Wieluń after the war, but most left following the murder of the son of a former Jewish landowner in the nearby village of Wolków, who had tried to claim his inheritance.

SOURCES In preparing this article, reference was made to Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 94–98; and also to the yizkor book edited by Moshe Mendelevitz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Wieluń* (Tel Aviv: Wielun Organization in Israel and the Memorial Book Committee in USA, 1971). Several key German documents are published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961). The ghetto in Wieluń is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 561.

Documents and survivor testimonies on the fate of the Jews of Wieluń can be found in the following archives: APL; BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 11); FVA (# 1400); IPN (ASG, sygn. 22, p. 593); USHMM (RG-02.064*01; and RG-50.002*0011); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStL, 203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 11, p. 3, statement of Franz Eb., June 28, 1971.

2. Mendelevitz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Wieluń*, p. 341.

3. USHMM, RG-50.002*0011, Oral History Interview with David Kempinski, March 9, 1987.

4. See Fritz Bauer Institut Archive, “Das Ghetto in Brzeziny” (8mm film copied from Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, which includes scenes of the execution of 10 ghetto inhabitants in Wieluń on January 12, 1942); Mendelevitz, *Sefer Zikaron le-kehillat Wieluń*, p. 352.

5. Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and District Museum in Konin, 2004), p. 207.

6. Mendelevitz, *Sefer Zikaron le-kehillat Wieluń*, p. 345.

7. USHMM, RG-02.064*01, Louis Brandsdorfer, “The Bleeding Sky—My Mother’s Journey through the Fire,” chap. 3.

8. Mendelevitz, *Sefer Zikaron le-kehillat Wieluń*, pp. 345–346.

9. Excerpt from a situation report by the Grenzpolizeikommissariat in Welungen to the Head of the Gestapo in

Lodsch, August 31, 1942, published in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 311.

10. USHMM, RG-02.064*01, Brandsdorfer, “The Bleeding Sky,” chap. 3.

11. Ibid.; Amstkommissar Landstett, Kreis Welungen, report dated August 21, 1942, published in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 400.

12. APL, GV, 139/29445, p. 419, GV Litzmannstadt, gez. Biebow, an Luchterhand im Hause, October 20, 1942, as cited by Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 437.

WIERUSZÓW

Pre-1939: Wieruszów, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Weruschau, Kreis Welungen (Wieluń), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Wieruszów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Wieruszów lies on the Prosna River, 88 kilometers (55 miles) west-northwest of Częstochowa, on the east-west road from Wrocław to Łódź. On the eve of World War II, approximately 2,400 Jews lived in Wieruszów.

In the predawn hours of September 1, 1939, the citizens of Wieruszów were woken by the thunderous sound of bombing and artillery fire that hit nearby Wieluń.¹ Wieruszów also came under heavy fire. Shortly afterwards the bridge over the Prosna River was blown up, and the townspeople were ordered to leave. Many Jews fled, passing through Zduńska Wola (where local Poles denied them entry to the public bomb shelter) and heading towards Łódź and points east. The German army arrived in Wieruszów on September 2 and began their assault on the town, which was set on fire, and on the Jews who remained. Some 24 Jews, whose only mistake was being out on the streets, were shot dead. Shopkeepers were ordered to open their stores, which were plundered by the occupiers as well as by local Poles and ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). Other Jews were rounded up and taken to the railway station. There they witnessed a bonfire of Jewish religious items—prayer shawls, tefillin, and holy books. Then 19 men were taken away to bury the victims of the street murders.² Another 82 men, all dressed in religious garb, were loaded onto trucks and photographed with a sign: “These are the Jews who shot our soldiers.” The Germans held them and others for two months before releasing them.³

The German army ordered all refugees to return to their hometowns. The Jewish population of Wieruszów grew to about 1,700 by the end of 1939. As the refugees trickled back into town, they were appalled by the scene. Most of their homes had been destroyed, and the remaining population was huddled in the ruins. The persecution of the Jews grew increasingly oppressive. They were permitted to be on the streets only between 6:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. On Sundays they were restricted to the morning hours. They were forbidden to walk



View of a street in the Wieruszów ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #33539, COURTESY OF GFH



Two sisters, Hinda and Leah Szilit, pose with Leah's daughter in the Wieruszów ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #33540, COURTESY OF GFH

on the sidewalks. They were ordered to doff their hats and bow to any German they encountered, even a child. Their possessions were the objects of looting and confiscation.⁴ Jews were forbidden to engage in any form of commerce, and their shops were handed over to local Poles and *Volksdeutsche*. From November 1939, the Regierungspräsident in Kalisz, Friedrich Übelhör, ordered Jews to wear distinguishing yellow patches. Later they had to wear a yellow Star of David on their chests and backs.⁵

The Germans sought to impose an orderly and strict regime on the Jews by creating a Judenrat. They offered the chairmanship to Mordechai Shmuel Zelikovitch, head of the Jewish Community Council, but he refused to serve. For this insubordination he was sent to a prison camp in Łódź. The position was given to Yossel Yedwab.⁶ The other members included Icha Pankovsky and Chaim Schwarzbart (who survived and contributed a memoir to the yizkor book). The Judenrat's first "assignment" was to register the Jews. As in Germany after August 1938, the name "Israel" was attached to every male and "Sara" to every female on the list. Then the Judenrat was given only 24 hours to collect and deliver a

"fine" of 25,000 Reichsmark (RM) to German headquarters. After feverish efforts, the committee of three (Yedwab, Pankovsky, and Schwarzbart) delivered the money. The commander accepted it and then, "with a satanic grin," ordered the Judenrat to collect another 25,000 RM within 48 hours. The effort failed. With heavy hearts the committee delivered only 15,000 RM, not knowing if they would return alive from German headquarters. The commander gave them a beating.⁷ During the entire occupation there was a relentless search for valuables (money, jewelry, furs, and watches) that the Jews might have hidden away—as was indeed the case.

In September or October 1941, the senior German official (Amtskommissar) in Wieruszów established an overcrowded ghetto in the poorest part of town. It was surrounded by barbed wire, and the Jews were forbidden to leave. The Jewish Police enforced the ban. The Jews were ordered to evacuate the former Jewish quarter, and their homes were turned over to Poles. A possible reason for the establishment of the ghetto was the expected arrival of a number of ethnic Germans from Bukovina a few weeks later.

All Jews between 6 and 60—men, women, and children—were ordered to report daily at 6:00 A.M. for forced labor. Some worked for army units stationed in the area, carrying water, shining shoes, and sweeping streets. Others were assigned the task of cleaning up the rubble of destroyed buildings. The salvaged bricks were carefully cleaned, sorted, and packed for shipping to Germany.⁸ The workers were supposed to receive 50 pfennigs a day, but the wages were usually paid by the Judenrat. Yedwab personally oversaw the work assignments to minimize the random kidnappings that had been used to press people into forced labor. The Germans ordered the Jews to destroy Christian religious statues in the town, probably with the intention of further inciting antisemitic sentiment among the local population.

At the beginning of 1941, as the cleanup of the ruins came to an end, the Germans began to send able-bodied men and women to work camps in the region of Poznań. These Jews worked in factories, in agriculture, and also on construction of the main highway from Berlin to Łódź.⁹ Yedwab reportedly warned young people of impending roundups, urging them to hide or flee. The Judenrat sent food parcels (through Polish intermediaries) to the people in the work camps. By the end of 1941 the Jews left in Wieruszów were primarily the sick, the elderly, or the very young. Only a few workers whose skills were deemed essential by the local authorities remained.¹⁰

The liquidation of the ghetto took place between August 11 and August 23, 1942. Military trucks escorted by SS men arrived at the ghetto, which was surrounded by armed troops. The officer in charge was named Schwind. The Jews were marched some 200 meters (219 yards) to the grounds of a local monastery, accompanied by beatings and harassments to hurry them along. A committee of young people was sent back to the ghetto to bring bread and other food. A kitchen was set up in the courtyard of the monastery to prepare and dispense the meals. On the first evening a squad of Germans entered the ghetto and murdered 80 old and sick people who could not make it to the monastery. Over the next two days 104 men were “selected” from the assembly at the monastery and sent for forced labor in the Łódź ghetto. The remaining 800 to 900 people were taken by train to the extermination camp at Chełmno.¹¹

A work crew of Jews from Łódź was sent to collect whatever possessions were left in the Wieruszów ghetto and deliver them to the Germans. The income received from the sale of these items in Kreis Welungen was subsequently credited to the Ghetto Administration (Gettoverwaltung) in Łódź.¹² Then the Germans ordered local Poles to turn over their own apartments and move into the empty Jewish houses.

At the end of the war a few survivors, including some of those sent to Łódź or who had fled to the Soviet Union, returned to Wieruszów. As word reached them about the murder of Jewish returnees by bands of Polish partisans, they left for larger cities or quit Poland altogether.

SOURCES Important for the history of the Jewish community in Wieruszów is the article in Danuta Dabrowska and

Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 98–102; additional information can be found in the personal accounts in the yizkor book, edited by Yehoshua Aybeshits, Avraham Kloshiner, and Yosef Zerkovits, *Wieruszów: Sefer Yizkor* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Wieruszów Book Committee, 1970). The ghetto in Wieruszów is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 561.

Documentation and testimonies regarding the fate of the Jews of Wieruszów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1317); BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67); IPN (ASG, sygn. 51, p. 263); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Aybeshits, Kloshiner, and Zerkovits, *Wieruszów: Sefer Yizkor*, p. 298.
2. Ibid., pp. 279–280.
3. Ibid., pp. 281–283; AŻIH, 301/1317, testimony of Lejb Bornsztajn.
4. Aybeshits, Kloshiner, and Zerkovits, *Wieruszów: Sefer Yizkor*, p. 298.
5. Ibid., p. 335; *Łódźer Zeitung*, November 16, 1939, published in Isaiah Trunk, *Łódźer Ghetto: A History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006), p. 18.
6. Aybeshits, Kloshiner, and Zerkovits, *Wieruszów: Sefer Yizkor*, p. 335.
7. Ibid., p. 315.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 335.
10. Ibid., pp. 302, 315.
11. Ibid., pp. 309–311.
12. Amstkommissar Landstett, Kreis Welungen, report dated August 21, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 400.

WŁADYSŁAWÓW

Pre-1939: Władysławów, village, Łódź województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Rosterschütz, Kreis Turek, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch
(later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland;
post-1998: Władysławów, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Władysławów is located about 82 kilometers (51 miles) west-northwest of Łódź. In 1921, there were 293 Jews living in the village (out of 960 inhabitants in total). Since many Jews from the village tried to move to larger towns or abroad, by 1939 the number of Jews in Władysławów had declined to 115.

Władysławów was occupied by German forces in the first half of September 1939. German soldiers were assisted and supported by the local population in their Aktions against the

Jews: Jewish property was plundered, and Jews were taken for forced labor in the village. Orthodox Jews were assaulted and had their beards forcibly shaven. By the end of 1939, Jews were forced to wear yellow armbands identifying them as Jews, and they were no longer permitted to leave the village.

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, a ghetto was established in Władysławów in 1940. Food was scarce, so the ghetto inhabitants were forced to leave the ghetto illegally at night to obtain food in nearby villages. On October 20, 1941, on the eve of Yom Kippur, the Jews of Władysławów were deported to the “rural ghetto” (*Dorfghetto*) in the vicinity of Kowale Pańskie. In total, about 4,000 Jews from the Turek area were assembled there.¹

SOURCES Only a few sources exist describing the fate of the Jews of Władysławów. A brief history of the community is available in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 103. Other sources mentioning the fate of the Jewish community in Władysławów include: Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat. The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Stein & Day, 1977), pp. 113, 429; and Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 203.

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NOTE

1. AŻIH, 301/2516, testimony of Nachum Zajf; *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Turek veli-kedosheba* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Turek be-Yisrael, 1982), pp. 315–319, 350–351; and USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, (ASG) 1939–1945, województwo poznańskie, vol. 54, pp. 432 and verso.

WŁOCŁAWEK

Pre-1939: Włocławek, city, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Leslau, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Włocławek, województwo kujawsko-pomorskie, Poland

Włocławek is located about 107 kilometers (66.5 miles) north-northwest of Łódź. The Jewish population just before World War II numbered between 10,000 and 14,000 people. Altogether there were some 56,000 residents in Włocławek; therefore, Jews comprised about 20 percent of the total population. The town lies on both banks of the Vistula River, with the majority of Jews residing on the western side where the town center was located.

On September 14, 1939, the German army occupied the town. SA-Sturmabführer Hans Kramer was appointed as the mayor, and Elliot Hessemayer was his deputy. The ethnic German Max Dunkhorst became “adviser for Jewish affairs,” having been a sports teacher at the Jewish High School and at the Jewish Sports Club in Włocławek before the war. These three men were those most responsible for



A group of four Jews, wearing triangles on their backs, walk along a street in Włocławek, ca. November 1939.
USHMM WS #50402, COURTESY OF IPN

all the Aktions carried out against the Jewish population of the town.¹

The first anti-Jewish measures were introduced shortly after the occupation of the town. On September 24, the Germans burned down both synagogues and arrested 10 Jews who lived nearby as suspected arsonists. At the same time, Jews who had illegally gathered for prayer were shot by the SS. (Among the perpetrators were SS-Standartenführer Paul Nostitz and other members of the 2nd SS-Totenkopfstandarte. The case was tried at Nürnberg after the war.) More than 800 Jews were taken as hostages and were first jailed in the town but were later imprisoned in a local barracks, where they had to perform various work tasks. On September 29, mayor (Stadtkommissar) Kramer published an order that the Jewish community had to pay a ransom of 100,000 złoty for the release of the hostages.² Shortly afterwards, he demanded 200,000 and then an additional 250,000 złoty, which the Jewish community was unable to raise. After eight weeks the hostages were released, but they still had to report daily for forced labor.

On October 25, 1939, the German town administration ordered all Jews to wear a triangle made of yellow cloth on the back of their clothes.³ At the end of 1939, the Germans started an initial wave of roundups and deportations. First, in November on the instructions of Dunkhorst, Jewish teachers and intellectuals were arrested. This was followed by the deportation of poor Jews who were receiving social assistance. On December 1, 1939, the first group of about 400 impoverished Jews was sent to Ożarów in Distrikt Radom; a second group was sent on December 15, 1939, to Włoszów-Zamość in Distrikt Lublin; and then, on February 15, 1940, a third group to Tarnów in Distrikt Krakau. These Jews were given up by the Jewish authorities in the vain hope that this would relieve the pressure on the rest of the community. All of the deportations

took place at night, and those affected could only take a small amount of luggage with them.⁴

By 1940, the Germans had appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by Yitzhak Kowalsky. In the summer of 1940, there were some 4,000 Jews remaining in the town, who were concentrated on the Łęska, Kowalska, Królewicka, and Targowa Streets, as well as the vegetable market. At the end of October or the beginning of November 1940, the Germans established a ghetto in an impoverished section of town near the Jewish cemetery, where the streets were unpaved and there was no electricity. The Jews were housed in old, dilapidated wooden houses, and several families were forced to live in a single room. The German authorities instructed the Jews to maintain a watch at night to ensure that no fires broke out in the ghetto.⁵ Around 1,000 Poles, who originally lived in this part of town, were evacuated and resettled into former Jewish apartments in the town. On November 9, 1940, Kramer, Hessemeyer, and Dunkhorst organized a pogrom against those Jews that had not yet moved into the ghetto and declared Leslau (the new German name for Włocławek) to have been cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*). The resettlement operations against the Jews were probably connected to the need for housing to accommodate ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) arriving from Volhynia, whose resettlement was about to be completed.

A police sergeant (Polizeimeister) Irme was installed as commandant of the ghetto, where he spread fear and terror among the Jews with his draconian orders and trained dogs. On November 9, 1940, the ghetto was enclosed with barbed wire. The external guarding of the ghetto was carried out by German police, and the internal guarding by Jewish Police under the notorious commander Ignacy Fenster.⁶ Initially, the Poles and Germans were still permitted to enter the ghetto, and this enabled the Jews to trade clothes and household items for food in order to stave off starvation. Following the enclosure of the ghetto with barbed wire, this source of food almost completely dried up, and soon only the few craftsmen who worked—for example, as cobblers or tailors for German companies—outside the ghetto were able to bring in some food. On their initiative, a soup kitchen was established for the poorest residents, which received some meager financial support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC).⁷ In the ghetto, cultural activities continued to take place at the ritual purification house near the Jewish cemetery. Here, the members of various political groups (Zionists, the Bund, and Communists who had already shaped political life in the town before the war) came together. The cemetery became the cultural center of the ghetto, where friends met, and social, cultural, and political events were organized. These activities did not remain concealed from the Germans; in the winter of 1941, they destroyed the Jewish cemetery in response.⁸

From the summer of 1941, conditions in the ghetto deteriorated considerably. Increasingly, Jews were sent to perform forced labor outside the ghetto, such as the excavation of ditches 10 meters (approximately 33 feet) deep. On September 26, 1941, police inspector Ott conducted a further selection



Jews are displaced from the Włocławek ghetto, in the vicinity of Wolność Street, n.d.

USHMM WS #50336, COURTESY OF IPN

in the ghetto. A number of girls and young women were sent to a camp near Poznań, known as Antonienhof; others were deported to the Łódź ghetto and subsequently from there to the extermination camp in Chełmno.⁹ After this selection, the area of the ghetto was drastically reduced, and the hygienic conditions deteriorated considerably. On the pretext of a typhus epidemic, the Germans completely isolated the ghetto on November 16, 1941. Those Jews caught trying to leave the ghetto were shot immediately. In addition, a number of Jews were hanged inside the ghetto.

The final liquidation of the Włocławek ghetto took place in April 1942. On April 24, 400 men between the ages of 14 and 50 were deported for forced labor at, for example, the camps at Września and others near Poznań or to other camps in Ojsz, Gutenbrunn, and Nekla. Many of these laborers died in the camps of exhaustion and malnutrition, and the others were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1943. Following these deportations from Włocławek, fewer than 1,000 Jews remained in the ghetto. On April 27, 1942, the remaining Jews were loaded onto trucks and taken to Chełmno, where they were murdered using poison gas. The liquidation of the ghetto lasted three days, after which a special squad of SS men, under the command of the local Gestapo, burned it to the ground.¹⁰

Elliot Hessemeyer was tried and executed by hanging in Włocławek after the war for crimes committed in the town during the German occupation.

SOURCES The ghetto is also mentioned in several academic publications, including: *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955); 135, 173; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów* (Warsaw, 1961), pp. 226, 287; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 565.

Several survivors have published their memoirs. Among the more significant is that by Zenek (Selig) Mayor, *Von Auschwitz nach Haifa. Erinnerungen eines polnischen Juden* (Bremen:



The German authorities raze the Włocławek ghetto to the ground, following the deportation of its inhabitants, April or May 1942.
USHMM WS #61359A, COURTESY OF YIVO

Donat-Verlag, 1993), which contains numerous photographs concerning Jewish life in Włocławek before and during the ghetto period. Worthy of mention are also the memoirs of Peninah Cypkewicz-Rosin, *Flight to Survival. Włocławek—Warszawa—Częstochowa . . . Eretz Yisrael, 1939–1945* (League City, TX: Jewishishgen, 2006); and the yizkor book by K.F. Thursh and M. Korzen, eds., *Votslavek veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron* (Israel: Association of Former Włocławek Jews in Israel and America, 1967), which includes much information on the ghetto.

The history of the Włocławek ghetto is documented in the following archival sources: AŻIH (e.g., 301/374); IPN (Kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177); MKW (Zb.fk., nr. 1739); SOTW (sygn. 119, pp. 17, 18, 33, 49, 53, and 58); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.004M); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Cypkewicz-Rosin, *Flight to Survival*, p. 44; Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 833.
2. This proclamation is published (in English translation) in Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 152.
3. For photographs of this and other elements of Jewish life in Włocławek, see Mayor, *Von Auschwitz nach Haifa*; see also Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 835.
4. Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 836.
5. For more details, see the memoir of Mayor, *Von Auschwitz nach Haifa*, pp. 38 ff.
6. For the notorious Jewish Police, see Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 146; and Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 215. According to sources mentioned here, Fenster was probably killed by former inmates of the ghetto.
7. Cypkewicz-Rosin, *Flight to Survival*, p. 168; Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 836.
8. Cypkewicz-Rosin, *Flight to Survival*, p. 168; Mayor, *Von Auschwitz nach Haifa*, p. 35; Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 840.
9. Thursh and Korzen, *Votslavek veba-sevivah*, p. 841.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 842.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

ZAGÓRÓW

Pre-1939: Zagórow, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Hinterberg, Kreis Konin, Regierungsbezirk Hobensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Zagórow, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland

Zagórow is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) east-southeast of Poznań and 29 kilometers (18 miles) west of Konin.

On September 1, 1939, about 630 Jews were living in Zagórow. Forces of the German army occupied the town on September 6, 1939, and anti-Jewish measures were immediately instituted. Jews were made to perform forced labor, their property was confiscated, and by the end of 1939 all Jewish inhabitants of Zagórow were forced to wear white armbands. Shortly after their arrival, the Germans humiliated the Jews by forcing them to remove the grass from between the cobblestones on the market square.

The Germans established an open ghetto in Zagórow in the spring or summer of 1940, probably by mid-July. It covered an area of about 8 to 10 square kilometers (3 or 4 square miles).¹ Around July 15, many of the Jewish inhabitants of Kreis Konin—from the towns of Kleczew, Golina, Wilczyn, and other places—were resettled to the Zagórow ghetto.² The Jewish committee of Zagórow took care of the new arrivals and did as much as it could to provide them with food, accommodation, and health care. An aid committee was established, which later was renamed by the Gendarmerie-Kreisführer of Konin as the Jewish Council of Elders (Jüdischer Ältestenrat or Judenrat) for the area.³

Due to the resettlement, there were now 2,170 Jews living in the Zagórow ghetto, of which 1,582 (almost three quarters) were refugees who had no spare clothes, no accommodation, and no means of living.⁴ The Jews had been told by the German authorities that from Zagórow they would be sent to work in the Łódź factories, but this did not occur. Accordingly, in August 1940, the Jewish Council sent a letter to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw in which it described the situation in the ghetto. The living conditions were terrible, with 10 or 15 people forced to live in one room, others had to live in a school building, and many families had no source of income. At the beginning, they had no doctor, no hospital, and no health care. The Jewish Council provided 300 lunches per day, but this was insufficient to feed all the people in need.⁵

On October 24, 1940, the Jewish Council reported to the AJDC that a soup kitchen had been established, which provided meals for 500 people daily, but that they would not be able to continue this activity, as all their financial means for food, health care, and sanitary services were exhausted. “In view of the approaching winter,” the Judenrat reported, “we are completely at a loss as to what to do.”⁶ In December 1940, the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland (Reich Union of Jews in Germany) paid 500 Reichsmark (RM) in aid to ease the situation in the Zagórow ghetto, but this money was still not nearly enough.⁷ The Jews of Zagórow were com-

pletely ruined and unable to contribute to the needs of the ghetto. Furthermore, the Jewish Council also had to pay for the 120 Zagórow Jews who had been taken to a forced labor camp in Konin and needed new wooden shoes. According to one survivor, Jews sent to Konin were used to clear remaining furniture from former Jewish houses there.⁸

As the ghetto remained open, some Jews sneaked out past the few German patrols to beg or buy food from farmers in the surrounding villages. Jews also continued to pray in the ghetto, giving those who died at least a proper Jewish burial. Due to the overcrowding, poor sanitation, cold, and hunger, some Jews fell sick, and an outbreak of typhus occurred. Those who remained healthy feared roundups for forced labor, as they believed that if they were sent away, they would not see their families again. Some Jews hid to avoid the roundups, but the Germans adopted brutal methods of coercion, searching houses with Alsatian dogs.⁹

On March 8, 1941, the Jews from the Grodziec ghetto, including many Jews from the town of Konin, were deported. Some of them were sent back to Konin and from there deported to the town of Józefów in Distrikt Lublin of the Generalgouvernement; the remainder were sent to the nearby ghetto in Zagórow.¹⁰

At the end of the summer of 1941, about 450 men from the ghetto were taken for forced labor to the salt mines of Inowrocław, but most of the Zagórow Jews either had no work at all—which meant no income and almost no food—or were employed in building and maintaining roads and railways. In late September 1941, the remaining inhabitants of the ghetto were taken to the nearby forest of Kazimierz Biskupi in trucks and murdered there.¹¹

Information about the liquidation of the Zagórow ghetto derives mainly from a letter written by Yitshak Laski, the chairman of the Jewish Council in Zagórow, to the Jews in Kłodawa. On the eve of the “Days of Awe” (late September 1941), instructions were issued that a poll tax of 4 RM would be imposed on the entire Jewish population and that an expulsion was being prepared. Reportedly, the Jews would be sent by truck to Koło and from there by train to Łódź; from Łódź they would go on a trip of several days in an unknown direction. The expulsion occurred in this manner: the population was loaded 50 people at a time onto trucks; they were allowed to take with them only 1 kilo (2.2 pounds) of hand luggage each. They were promised that their remaining baggage would be sent on afterwards by train. Each round-trip on the trucks lasted two hours. The Jews, seriously alarmed, arranged that each group that left should mark in red chalk the name of the place where they disembarked. When the truck returned, it turned out that the destination was the Kazimierz Biskupi Forest, not far from Zagórow. No further news was received about the fate of the Zagórow Jews, although the Jews in Kłodawa sent out messengers, Polish and German, in all directions. Only a few families succeeded in fleeing to Koło, but the vast majority perished.¹²

SOURCES Some information on the Jewish community of Zagórow and the ghetto can be found in the following second-

ary works: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 103; Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Stein & Day, 1977), pp. 113, 129, 417; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 580; and *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 135, 170–171.

Primary sources on the Zagórow ghetto include the following: AAN (202/II-29, p. 87); AŻIH (210/738 and Ring I/394); IPN (kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; and GK, Zh III/31/35/68 [getta, woj. poznański]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH], 210/738; and RG-15.079M, Ring I/394); VHF (e.g., # 4469, 9257, 24854); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 9257, testimony of Abraham Landau, states that it was roughly 2.4 to 3.2 kilometers (1.5 or 2 miles) in width and length.
2. Ibid., # 4469, testimony of Leon Jedwab; and # 24854, testimony of Bert Gembicki.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/738, Ältestenrat Hinterberg to AJDC, December 12, 1940.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., Ältestenrat Hinterberg to AJDC, August 27, 1940.
6. Ibid., Ältestenrat Hinterberg to AJDC, October 24, 1940.
7. Ibid., Ältestenrat Hinterberg to AJDC, December 12, 1940.
8. VHF, # 24854.
9. Ibid., # 4469; # 24854; and # 9257.
10. M. Gelbart, ed., *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatah uve-burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Konin be-Yisrael, 1968), p. 559.
11. VHF, # 4469, Leon Jedwab, dates the Aktion on the second day of Rosh Hashanah (September 23, 1941). USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/394, dates it as the “Days of Awe” (the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). See also Theo Richmond, *Konin: A Quest* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), p. 83; and Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, p. 559.
12. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/394, “After January 1942”—protocol about the events in the Koło region.

ZDUŃSKA WOLA

Pre-1939: Zduńska Wola, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zdunska Wola, Kreis Schieratz, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Zduńska Wola, powiat center, Łódź województwo, Poland

Zduńska Wola is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) west-southwest of Łódź.

In August 1939, immediately before the beginning of World War II, Zduńska Wola had about 27,000 inhabitants, including 13,190 Poles (48.9 percent), 9,330 Jews (34.6 percent), and 4,480 Germans (16.6 percent). The town was captured by

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Public humiliation of Jews in the Zduńska Wola ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #18858, COURTESY OF IPN

the German army on September 6–7, 1939, and the persecution of the Jews began immediately, as ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and local Poles looted Jewish stores and houses. The synagogue was destroyed, and a few Jews were shot by the Germans. In December 1939, the Germans ordered the Jewish community to prepare for expulsion and demanded a list of 400 families that were to be driven out of town. Apparently, by paying a fee of 50,000 złoty, the Jewish Council was able to prevent this. Instead, about 100 Jewish families that lived outside the main Jewish residential area were resettled into the Jewish area, and their property was confiscated. Some sources claim that at this time the Jews had to pay an additional fee of 250,000 złoty.

A separate Jewish area of settlement had been in existence in Zduńska Wola before the start of World War II. In early 1940, it was converted into an “open ghetto.” Pillars at the corner of one street marked with a yellow Star of David indicated the borders of the ghetto. Most Jews were only allowed to leave the ghetto between 10:00 A.M. and noon, but those employed by the Germans could do so freely during the day. Thus Jews were still able to obtain food relatively freely, although they had to pay exorbitant prices for goods obtained on the black market.

In the course of 1940, the ghetto area was fenced in with barbed wire and separated from the non-Jewish part of town. At this time, the ghetto held about 7,500 local Jews and about 800 refugees or deportees from other locations, mostly in the vicinity of Zduńska Wola.¹ In the period up to 1942, between 1,000 and 3,000 Jews from neighboring towns, including Siemradz, Pabianice, Kalisz, Poddębice, Szadek, Widawa, Burzenin, Klonowa, and Majaczewice, were resettled to Zduńska Wola. Thus the ghetto population rose to a total of between 10,000 and 12,000 people, becoming the second largest ghetto in Reichsgau Wartheland after Łódź.²

The ghetto bordered onto the following streets: 32-2 west and south of Plac Wolności, along Juliusstrasse and Bahnhofstrasse, to the intersection of Schadeckerstrasse, and Feischerstrasse. From there it stretched west along a small channel until Altstadtstrasse and through the original Jewish ghetto.

In the south it reached Grundweg and from there back to Adolf-Hitler Strasse.³ The five entrance gates were guarded by Jewish Police from the inside and German Order Police (Schutzpolizei or Schupos) from the outside.

A Judenrat had already been established by German decree at the end of November 1939.⁴ Its head was the physician Dr. Jaakov Lemberg, who spoke German fluently and was very familiar with German habits. Early in December 1939, Dr. Lemberg obtained certificates for himself and his family to travel to Palestine, but at the request of the Jewish community, they remained in Zduńska Wola. Lemberg was very well respected and appreciated by the ghetto inmates. As survivor Isaac Neumann describes it, Lemberg possessed a rare gift, “the courage to make difficult decisions in an immoral universe, and the ability to be just under almost impossible circumstances.”⁵ Other members of the Zduńska Wola Judenrat were Leib Brykman, Meir Wieruszowski, Tuvia Najdat, Aharon Pyk, Shlomo Walfisz, Berish Lipszic, Yankel Bulka, Landsberg, Avraham Grynbar, Okladek, Fiszle Lewi, M.F. Krys, and David Nuskowicz.

A Jewish police force was established and subordinated to the Judenrat. Over time, it expanded to employ 3 inspectors and 17 paid policemen. About 15 more men worked for the police without pay for three to four hours a day. The main tasks of the police were to keep order, to inspect sanitary conditions, and to arrest Jews who did not pay their taxes or refused to participate in forced labor.⁶ The commandant of the Jewish Police was Aharon Pyk, and his deputy was Wajsberg. Additionally, in September 1941, the German authorities established an office of the Criminal Police (Kriminalpolizei or Kripo) in Zduńska Wola. The Kripo frequently plundered Jewish homes in the ghetto under the pretext of looking for illegal or smuggled goods. Severe punishments were applied in the event that any illegal articles were discovered.⁷

As can be seen from the reports of the Judenrat to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw, the situation of Zduńska Wola's Jews in 1940 was dire. As early as the spring of 1940, 813 Jewish families, about 40 percent of the inhabitants of the ghetto, were considered to be in need of help.⁸ In the first half of that year, the Jewish community distributed almost 40,000 lunch meals at 5 Reichspfennig each to poor ghetto inhabitants. During that time, 870 Jewish families were resettled into the ghetto, and as a result approximately 6 to 7 people had to share each room. Up to June 1940, about 100 to 150 Jews worked for the German authorities daily without being paid, and after July, at least 250 more Jews were employed by the Germans. Most of them now received a salary of 0.10 Reichsmark (RM) per hour, with experienced workers (*Fachmänner*) getting 0.20 RM per hour.

Sanitary measures were indispensable in the overcrowded ghetto. In September 1940, a Jewish hospital with 16 beds was established, and the Jewish Police were put in charge of checking hygienic conditions in the ghetto. Everyone was allowed to use the public bath for 0.05 RM, and people without a private bathroom were obliged to do so. Nevertheless, eight cases of typhus were registered. In the second half of 1940,

250 more families arrived in the ghetto, and it became increasingly difficult to accommodate them.

The head of the German Ghetto Administration was an ethnic German from Zduńska Wola, Oskar Fercho. He was replaced in mid-1941 by Wilhelm Bittel. The Stadtkommissar was Alois Versen. The deputy chief of the Schupo in Zduńska Wola, Eichard Helmrich, was responsible for maintaining order in the ghetto. Exploitation of Jewish labor had already started in September 1939, but it was intensified considerably in 1941. In factories and workshops within the ghetto, Jews worked for the German army. About 2,000 inhabitants worked for the largest of these companies, Striegel & Wagner, whose representative within the ghetto was Herr Neubauer. The company specialized in fur clothing and knitting, as well as weaving. There were also workshops for dressmaking, hosiery, and the manufacture of gloves, boots, and straw shoes. Jews were also put to forced labor in the city, on fields and farms around Zduńska Wola, and in Krobanów, about 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Zduńska Wola, where they built homes for ethnic Germans resettled from Volhynia and Romania. Additionally, in the summer of 1941, about 1,000 able-bodied men were sent to labor camps in the Poznań region, especially in Lenzingen and Loebau.⁹

On Ogrodowa Street within the ghetto, in the spring of 1940, the Judenrat established an agricultural farm, which produced milk and vegetables for the inhabitants of the ghetto.¹⁰ The farm covered an area of about 112,000 square meters (133,951 square yards), and there were 28 goats, which provided milk for the ghetto's children. Some 30 men and 20 women



Four of 10 Jewish men publicly hanged for alleged black marketeering by the German police in the Zduńska Wola ghetto.

USHMM WS #05950, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

aged between 17 and 21, all members of Zionist youth groups, worked there and acquired experience in agriculture. They also learned Hebrew, studied Jewish and Zionist history, and conducted drill exercises. The training kibbutz was in existence until the ghetto was liquidated; then most of the youth were sent to the Łódź ghetto.

In the course of 1942, conditions in the ghetto continued to deteriorate. In March, between 80 and 90 Jews died in the ghetto—as many as had died in Zduńska Wola each year before the war. On March 3 and May 21, the German authorities conducted two public executions. In each case, 10 Jews accused of smuggling food were hanged, and Eichard Helmrich, the deputy chief of the Schupo, was in charge of both events.¹¹

Either in June or early July of 1942, the Jews in the ghetto were selected and separated into two groups: “A” and “B.” Probably as a result of this selection, by the end of June 1942, 397 Jews were transferred to the Łódź ghetto. The actual liquidation of the ghetto began in the early hours of August 24, 1942. Large numbers of SS and police were mobilized to support the local forces. Hans Biebow, the German administrator in charge of the Łódź ghetto, came to Zduńska Wola to select Jews for his ghetto. He also participated in shooting Jews on their way to the selection site. As a first measure, children, the elderly, sick, and invalid Jews, among them the 40 patients from the hospital, were separated from the others and either shot or put on trucks and taken to the Chełmno extermination camp. In a later selection, which took place at the cemetery and lasted two to three days, about 1,000 to 1,200 Jews were deemed fit for labor in the Łódź ghetto and were sent there. During the 10-hour train ride, 27 people suffocated in the overcrowded cattle cars. Neubauer, the manager in charge of the business of the Striegel & Wagner Company in the ghetto, had tried to negotiate with Hans Biebow to have his workers exempted from the deportation. But Biebow was entitled to choose the forced laborers for the Łódź ghetto, as well as to take over all the property of the Jews and the workshops within the ghetto, so Neubauer's intervention remained futile.

During the selection the Jews were kept at the cemetery, without food or water. About 550 Jews were killed on the spot.¹² Of these, 119 were uncovered during the clearing out of the ghetto. On the third day, between 6,000 and 9,000 Jews were sent to the extermination camp in Chełmno. One of these transports may have been sent to the Chiszczyca Forest near Warta, where the prisoners were shot and their bodies burned.

Dr. Lemberg, the head of the Judenrat, was also killed during the selection. Lemberg had been chosen to go to the Łódź ghetto, but he was shot instead by Biebow. In the fall of 1940, Lemberg had been invited to visit the Łódź ghetto and to meet with its Jewish leader, Rumkowski. He returned completely depressed, disagreeing with Rumkowski's close cooperation with the Germans and being shocked by Biebow's methods of managing the ghetto.¹³ He refused to cooperate with either of them. On a subsequent occasion, Lemberg had denied a demand by Biebow to select 10 Zduńska Wola Jews

for hanging in March 1942 and had offered his own family instead. Now Biebow took his revenge on him.

Some Jews succeeded in escaping from the transport to the Łódź ghetto. All the others shared the fate of the inhabitants of the Łódź ghetto. Some of them were sent to labor camps in the Poznań area, and the rest were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp in the successive deportations from the Łódź ghetto. About 60 Jews from Zduńska Wola are known to have survived.

Hans Biebow was tried in Łódź and sentenced to death in 1947, for various crimes, including his participation in the liquidation of the Zduńska Wola ghetto.

SOURCES A number of secondary sources exist describing the Jewish community and the ghetto in Zduńska Wola. Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 111–116, provide an extensive description. Additional information can be found in the yizkor book edited by Elhanan Erlikh, *Zdunskah-Volah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Zdunskah-Volah be-Yisrael va-'Amerikah, 1968). Another important source is Antoni Galiński, "Getto w Zduńskiej Woli," *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytut Pamięci Narodowej* 35 (1993): 142–156. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), mentions the Zduńska Wola ghetto on pp. 84, 185, 285, 439, and 483. One survivor of the Zduńska Wola ghetto is Isaac Neumann, whose memoirs under the title *The Narrow Bridge: Beyond the Holocaust* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000) are published with Michael Palencia-Roth. For an extensive report on the liquidation of the Zduńska Wola ghetto, see Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chelmno/Kulmbf: Der Beginn der "Endlösung"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007). Jaakov Lemberg's work as the chairman of the Judenrat and his death are described in Henokh Kazminski, "The Late Dr. Jacob Lemberg," *Landsberger-tsaytung*, no. 40, September 25, 1946.

There are a number of primary sources concerning the Zduńska Wola ghetto. A good summary can be found in the Galiński article. Important archival and survivor testimony collections include the following: APŁ; AŻIH (e.g., Ring I/220, 571, 1047, 1052, and Ring II/311; 210/747; and 301/947); FVA (# 1501); IPN (OKBZH-L, e.g., Ds 82/76, Ds 438/67, Ds 442/67); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC, 1939–1941], 210/747); VHF; and YVA (M-1/E/644/538, 778/646, 980/849, 1136/1102, 1611/1492; M-1/Q/1817/371; and O-3/1256, 1260, and 1262).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, Jewish Aid Committee Zduńska Wola to AJDC in Warsaw, December 26, 1940.
2. Neumann, *Narrow Bridge*, p. 55.
3. For more details, see Galiński, "Getto w Zduńskiej Woli," p. 145.
4. Neumann, *Narrow Bridge*, p. 96.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, Jewish Aid Committee Zduńska Wola to AJDC, December 26, 1940.

7. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 111–116.

8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC, 1939–1941), 210/747, activity report of the Jewish Aid Committee in Zduńska Wola for the period January 1 to June 30, 1940.

9. Neumann, *Narrow Bridge*, p. 69.

10. Galiński, "Getto w Zduńskiej Woli," p. 145.

11. Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S." ("Oneg Shabbath")* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 421–423, 686.

12. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo sieradzkie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Zbrodni Badania Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1983), p. 59, reports 190 Jews killed during the resettlement on August 24, 1942.

13. Neumann, *Narrow Bridge*, p. 99.

ZELÓW

Pre-1939: Zelów, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zelow, Kreis Lask, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Zelów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Zelów is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) south-southwest of Łódź. In 1921, the Jewish population of Zelów was 1,816 out of a total population of 5,326 people. German troops entered the town on September 6, 1939, and three days later they started confiscating Jewish workshops and goods. Jewish artisans were forbidden to work in their workshops. Jewish shops remained open until December 1939, but the Germans looted them repeatedly.

A Judenrat was established in the first weeks of the occupation. Naftali Mayer, a Zionist activist, was nominated as its chairman, with Mandel as his deputy. Some of the Judenrat members had formerly been members of the pre-war kehillah. Yosl (or Willek) Frenkiel from Bielsko was nominated as chief of the Jewish Police. The Jews were required to perform forced labor, which initially included cleaning the streets and collecting scrap metal. They also had to wear yellow patches in



Portrait of the Klein family in the Zelów ghetto.
USHMM WS #07263, COURTESY OF REGINA FRANT STAWSKI

the shape of the Star of David on their chests and backs and were forbidden to use the sidewalks. There was a curfew in the evening, and Jews had to doff their hats on encountering a German. Failure to obey these orders could mean the death penalty but usually resulted in a severe beating.¹

Some Jews managed to leave town in the fall of 1939, but many others arrived from other places, such as Wieluń, Widawa, Warta, and Dąbrowa Rusiecka, as well as Szczerców, which was destroyed completely.² Some of the newcomers were injured, and most of them arrived with almost nothing, so the Judenrat had to arrange for their accommodation and opened a public kitchen for them. Some of the arrivals found accommodation with local families who put them up in their homes. The continued influx raised the number of Jews in the town first to around 4,500 (including 2,300 refugees) in December 1940, increasing to some 6,000 or 7,000 by March 1941.

From 1940, the Judenrat was ordered to assist in the transport of hundreds of men to work camps in the Poznań region. From this time on, Jews able to work were kidnapped on the streets and from their homes and sent away. The kidnappers were German policemen assisted by the Jewish Police. Able-bodied Jews hid to avoid being caught. For some time the Jews in Zelów were able to send food packages to their relatives in the labor camps. Groups of Jews were also forced to work paving roads in the vicinity.³

Despite these oppressive measures, life for the Jews in Zelów was not as bad as in some other occupied towns. For example, the Jewish population received official food rations, which were supplied by the German wholesale company Karl Leib. At one point this company was sued for “breach of confidence” for having supplied overly generous rations to the Jews.

Moreover, two Jewish youngsters were included in the football team of the Zelów Hitler Youth organization, which in the summer of 1940 played a match against the Bełchatów Hitler Youth. In August 1940, the mayor of Bełchatów wrote an angry letter about this to Amtskommissar Berger in Zelów.⁴

Information about the establishment of a ghetto in Zelów is somewhat contradictory. Some witnesses, such as Noma Futerman, maintain that no ghetto was established in the town, while others like Pinchas-Menachem Feivlovicz date the existence of a Jewish residential quarter (or ghetto) from early in the occupation.⁵ According to Michael Alberti, citing a report in the *Litzmannstädter Zeitung* dated June 1940, a ghetto had not yet been established in Zelów due to the topography of the town, making it difficult to separate out the Jews, as was the case also in Bełchatów.⁶

Some sources indicate the establishment of an open (unfenced) ghetto by the second half of 1941, by which time strict punishments had been introduced for any Jew caught outside the town limits without permission. The account compiled by Andrzej Selerowicz states that the ghetto was situated in the center of the town, surrounded by the Rynek, Św. Anna, Zeromski, and Kiliński Streets. Zeev Lisner states that no fenced ghetto was created but that the Jews were

prohibited from entering many streets, including the market square.⁷

Relations between Jews and non-Jews were mixed during the occupation. Several accounts mention the brutality of local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), who beat Jews at the slightest provocation. However, some Poles, and especially local Czechs, were more sympathetic, bringing food to the Jews. Some clandestine schooling in Hebrew was provided to Jewish children in Zelów.⁸

In spite of being prohibited from work by the German authorities, Jewish tailors and cobblers continued to work for local non-Jews. At the same time, the Germans established workshops in which Jewish artisans worked for German institutions. Food, even meat and poultry, remained available and reasonably priced. Many Jews made a living by smuggling goods, mostly textiles, from Reichsgau Wartheland into the Generalgouvernement. Smuggling was carried out mainly from Zelów to the town of Piotrków Trybunalski. A few Poles and Czechs also participated in the smuggling. When caught, the smugglers were sent to court and usually sentenced to a few years in prison, but for the many Jews among them, this effectively meant a death sentence, as they were handed over to the Gestapo and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp or the Blechhammer (Blachownia Śląska) camp, where they perished. A number of Jews escaped across the border to the Piotrków ghetto, as reportedly conditions there were somewhat better.

In the spring of 1942, as in many other towns in the region, all of the ghetto residents were summoned to witness the public hanging of 10 Jews, who were possibly punished for illegal trade or other offenses. By order of the authorities, the bodies were left on the gallows for some time, to intimidate the population.⁹

The total annihilation of the Jewish population was carried out in several steps. First in June, a number of Jews were deported from Zelów to the Chełmno extermination camp, and 96 were selected for the Łódź ghetto. Of these, most were sent on the next day to labor camps in the Poznań region.¹⁰

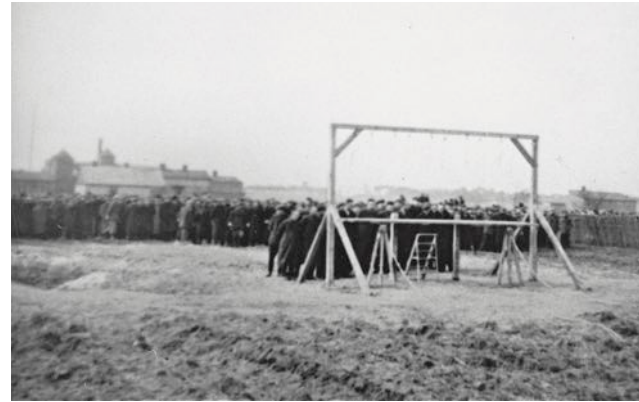
The final Aktion took place probably on August 12, 1942. A detachment of German police rounded up the Jews and concentrated them in the “Lewe” factory and in a local church, where they were held for several days. Some Jews were murdered on the spot, and 149 were selected and deported to the Łódź ghetto. The remainder was deported to the Chełmno extermination camp. A handful of Jews managed to hide in the homes of non-Jews in the vicinity, but in most cases neighbors informed the police, and they were caught and murdered too.¹¹

Pinchas-Menachem Feivlovicz, who was in a labor camp, received a last postcard from his father in Zelów at the end of 1942, which stated that “the Germans were murdering step by step the Jewish residents of Zelów, with the effective assistance of Polish collaborators.”¹² It is likely that some Jews remained behind in Zelów until December, working for the Germans to clear out the ghetto after the liquidation



German police and administrators attend the public hanging of ten Jews in Zelów, March 1942.

USHMM WS #18859, COURTESY OF IPN



The hanging of ten Jews in the Zelów ghetto, March 1942.

USHMM WS #18860, COURTESY OF IPN

Aktion. In early January 1943, Friedrich Wilhelm Ribbe, the deputy to Hans Biebow, head of the Ghettoverwaltung (Ghetto Administration) in Łódź, wrote to Amtskommissar Berger confirming the receipt on December 21, 1942, of the textiles, sewing machines, and other items recovered from the Zelów ghetto. He thanked Berger especially for his support in the resettlement of the Zelów Jews and for the diligence shown in recovering hidden valuables, which had surpassed that in many of the other ghettos that had been cleared.¹³

By 1946, about 40 Jewish survivors had returned to Zelów¹⁴ only to discover that the old wooden synagogue had been destroyed and that the new synagogue had only survived because the Nazis had used it as a storage space. Most of the survivors immigrated subsequently to Israel, the United States, and other places.

SOURCES Published sources on the fate of the Jews in Zelów during the German occupation include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 119–121; Sławomir Papuga and Andrzej Gramsz, *Zelów, wspólnota nacji, wyznania, kultur* (Łódź: Grako, 2003); Avraham Klushiner, ed., *Sefer-zikaron li-kehillat Zelov* (New York: New York Public Library, 2003); and “Zelów,” a report by Andrzej Selerowicz, February 2004, available on the Web at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Zelow/zelow-history.htm.

A relevant survivor memoir is Pinchas-Menachem Feivlovicz, *Through Seven Death-Camps: Reminiscences from the Nazi-Hell* (Haifa, 1972). The Zelów ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 589; and Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung”* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 95–96.

Documentation on the Jewish community of Zelów and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APL (278/994, pp. 166–167); AŻIH (301/3085); BA-L (203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 7; and Pol. Ordn. 358); USHMM (e.g.,

RG-15.084 [Relacje]; VHF (# 5117, 13139, 37880, 50211); and YVA (e.g., O-3/3178).

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NOTES

1. Klushiner, *Sefer-zikaron li-kehillat Zelov*, pp. 196–197; AŻIH, 301/3085, testimony of Noma Futerman; Feivlovicz, *Through Seven Death-Camps*, pp. 24–25; VHF, # 37880, testimony of Zeev Lisner.

2. BA-L, Pol. Ordn. 358, p. 833, Local Commission in Pabianice, report of January 1, 1946, states that of about 2,000 Jewish inhabitants of Szczerców almost all had fled by the end of 1939.

3. Klushiner, *Sefer-zikaron li-kehillat Zelov*, pp. 197–200.

4. *Belkhatov: Yizker-bukh: Gevidmet dem ondenk fun a farsbvundn Yidish shtetl in Poyln* (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-Farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentine tsuzamen mit der Belkhatover Landslayt-Farayn in Argentine, Brazil un Tsofen-Amerike, 1951), p. 477.

5. AŻIH, 301/3085; Feivlovicz, *Through Seven Death-Camps*, p. 24.

6. *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, June 20, 1940, p. 7, “Die Siedlung Zelów—hochinteressant,” as cited by Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 201.

7. VHF, # 37880.

8. AŻIH, 301/3085; VHF, # 37880 and 13139, testimony of Rachel Einhorn.

9. VHF, # 37880 (this witness dates the event in 1941); # 13139.

10. Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 205–206.

11. Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmbhof*, pp. 95–96, citing BA-L, 203 AR-Z 161/67, vol. 7; APL, 278/994, pp. 166–167; and VHF, # 13139.

12. Feivlovicz, *Through Seven Death-Camps*, p. 24.

13. Ribbe to Herrn Berger, Amtskommissar, January 5, 1942 [*sic* 1943], published in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf,

eds., *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), p. 73.

14. BA-L, Pol. Ordn. 358, p. 833, Local Commission in Pabianice, report of January 1, 1946.

ZGIERZ

Pre-1939: Zgierz, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Leslau (Włocławek), Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Regierungsbezirk Lititzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Słupsk powiat, Łódź województwo, Poland

Zgierz is located 19 kilometers (about 12 miles) north-northwest of Łódź. In 1931, out of the 20,232 inhabitants, 4,547 were Jews. By 1939, this number had risen to about 4,800.

The German army conquered the town on September 7, 1939. According to witnesses, on the same evening several hundred male Jews were imprisoned in a local church where they were kept for two days. Within a few days, the Germans started to organize forced labor for the Jews, which included cleaning the streets and collecting trash. The Germans also began to plunder Jewish property. Jews had to pay enormous “contributions” and “penalty fees.” An ethnic German named Strobach was appointed mayor by the Germans and was responsible for many anti-Jewish measures.¹ In November 1939, the synagogue and the Bet Midrash were set on fire, and the Germans made the Jewish community pay the cost of extinguishing the fires.² Also in November 1939, Jews were ordered to wear a yellow armband on the sleeves of their coats and jackets. In December, this order was changed: as in other places in the Warthegau, Jews were forced now to wear a yellow Star of David on the breast and back shoulder of their outer garments.³ Many Jews tried to flee the town, mainly to Łódź or to Głowno and other places in the Generalgouvernement, especially to Warsaw, but only a few succeeded.⁴ Some sources estimate that almost half of the Jewish population of Zgierz tried to flee.⁵

On December 26 or 27, 1939, the German authorities ordered the Jewish population to assemble in the early morn-

ing. They were allowed to bring over 22 kilograms (about 50 pounds) of luggage and 50 złoty with them but were deprived of these possessions immediately at the assembly point. More than 2,500 Jews were then taken to Głowno, a nearby town just across the new border in the Generalgouvernement, and resettled there. The Jewish community of Zgierz practically ceased to exist.

Only a few Jews remained in Zgierz. They were craftsmen, shoemakers, and tailors with their families, who were considered to be useful to the Germans and, according to one source, had to live in the villages around Zgierz.⁶ By September 1941, this group consisted of 22 men, 30 women, 22 children, and 7 old people. In mid-January 1942, these Jews were transferred to the Łódź ghetto—despite the resistance of the Łódź authorities, who did not want to accept any more Jews in the town. But since the group of Jews from Zgierz was so small, the Zgierz authorities finally succeeded in getting rid of their remaining Jews on January 12, 1942. That day the group—now numbering 84 or 85 people—was sent to the ghetto in Łódź, and they were even allowed to take all of their remaining belongings with them.⁷

Available sources disagree on whether conditions for these last 80 or so Jews living in or around Zgierz should be viewed as a ghetto or not. Several secondary sources refer to a ghetto in Zgierz, which was allegedly liquidated in January 1942 with the transfer of the Jews to the Łódź ghetto, but they supply no additional details.⁸ Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, however, wrote in the Zgierz yizkor book that no ghetto was created in Zgierz.⁹ A Polish Underground report on conditions in German-occupied Poland, dated January 16, 1942, refers specifically to the liquidation of the “Zgierz ghetto” at that time, without being able to specify the destination to which its inhabitants had been sent. As with the other sources, it makes no mention of residential restrictions or living conditions for these Jews prior to this date.¹⁰

About 350 Jews from Zgierz survived the war; almost all of them had left the town at the end of 1939.

SOURCES The main sources on the history of the Jewish community of Zgierz include: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 106–111; and the *Memorial Book Zgierz* (translation of D. Shtockfish, Sh. Kanc, and Z. Fisher, eds., *Sefer Zgierz: Mazkeret netsal le-kebila yehudit be-Polin* [Tel Aviv, 1975–1986]), available on the Web at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Zgierz/Zgierz.html. Danuta Dabrowska is also the author of one of the earliest descriptions of the Holocaust in Zgierz, in her article “Zagłada skupisk żydowskich ‘Kraju Warty’ w okresie okupacji,” *BŻIH*, nos. 13–14 (1955): 135, 158. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), lists Zgierz as a ghetto on p. 590, referring to the Polish Underground report from AAN. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), mentions the Zgierz Jews on p. 382 in the context of their transfer to the Łódź ghetto.



Expulsion of the Jewish population from Zgierz, n.d.
USHMM WS #91572, COURTESY OF IPN

The following archives contain information regarding the fate of the Jewish community of Zgierz under the German occupation: AAN (202/III/148, p. 41); APL (GV 172, p. 8, and AdJ 863, pp. 86–87); AŻIH (e.g., Ring I, 108/1, the unpublished essay of Rabbi Shimon Huberbrand titled “Der khurn fun shiln, bote-midroshim, un beys-hakhaims,” which contains some information regarding Zgierz); CAHJP; USHMM (RG-15.050M [AAN], reel 3); and VHF (# 48980).

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NOTES

1. Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, “Jews of Zgierz under the German Occupation of Terror,” in *Memorial Book Zgierz*.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. W.F., “In One Day (Wednesday, December 27, 1939),” in *Memorial Book Zgierz*.
5. Dabrowska and Wein, “Jews of Zgierz,” p. 548.
6. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol.1, p. 109.
7. Dabrowska and Wein, “Jews of Zgierz,” p. 548.
8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, lists Zgierz as a ghetto on p. 590; and Roman Mogilanski, *The Ghetto Anthology: A Comprehensive Chronicle of the Extermination of Jewry in Nazi Death Camps and Ghettos in Poland* (Los Angeles: American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps, 1985), p. 342. VHF, # 48980, testimony of Emil Hecht, mentions being sent to work in Zgierz from Stryków, but this probably refers to a labor camp, which has been indexed, however, as a reference to the Zgierz ghetto by VHF.
9. Shtockfish, Kanc, and Fisher, *Sefer Zgierz*, p. 547.
10. USHMM, RG-15.050M (Records of the Delegation of a Government for a Country [Poland], Department of Information and Press, Western Section, 1940–1944 [AAN]), reel 3, 202/III/148, p. 41, Litzmanstädter Zeitung, January 16, 1942.

ZŁOCZEW

Pre-1939: Złoczew, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Słotshew, Kreis Schieratz, Regierungsbezirk Kalisch (later Litzmannstadt), Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Złoczew, Łódź województwo, Poland

Złoczew is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) southwest of Łódź. In 1921, there were 1,959 Jews living in the town out of a total population of 4,904. On the eve of war in 1939, approximately 2,000 Jews were living in Złoczew.

Following the German occupation in September 1939, Jews were mistreated and used for forced public labor. At the end of 1939, the Jews of Złoczew were ordered to leave the town “voluntarily.” They were told that they could take their goods and possessions with them—but no valuables, such as gold or silver, and money was not to exceed 100 złoty. The valuables and any money exceeding this amount had to be deposited with the German police. Attempts by the Jewish community to postpone the orders due to the harsh winter were in vain. Jews were only allowed to go in three directions: either to Lublin in

eastern Poland, to Radom, or to the capital of Poland, Warsaw.¹ Among those Jews who decided to leave, most made their way to Lublin or Warsaw.

Not all Jewish families followed these directions and left the town. Some people decided to stay, while others tried to escape to the east, towards the new Soviet border, but most did not succeed and returned to Złoczew. Probably in February 1940, all remaining Jews were ordered to move into a separate area of the town, to Yetke Alley. This was an area where Jews had lived previously, but now their living quarters were reduced to one side of the street, while the other side was burned down—with the exception of one dwelling that had to house several Jewish families.² After a short time, the Jewish ghetto was fenced with barbed wire, 3 meters (9.8 feet) high, and all contact with the non-Jewish population was forbidden. German Gendarmes under the orders of the ethnic German Makowski guarded the ghetto. Not only Jews from Złoczew had to live there but also some Jews from the surrounding area, about 250 to 280 people in total. Accommodations were cramped, with every family receiving just one room for living space. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, and two people were nominated for the position of Jewish elder—Haya Faiwlowicz and Godel Gad.³

A few Jews worked outside the ghetto, cleaning the town, and as porters, stable hands, and workers performing other menial labor tasks. These people could sometimes smuggle food, wood, or coal into the ghetto to improve their situation. All other Jews had to remain inside the fences and endured a very strict regime. There was a curfew between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.; searches of property took place regularly; and food, heating material, and other supplies were scarce.

In January 1942, 50 male ghetto inhabitants were sent to Zuchinia, a forced labor camp near Poznań, where they had to work on the railway line between Warsaw and Poznań. These men never returned to the ghetto. In March 1942, another group of 40 men was selected in the ghetto, among them young boys aged 15 and older. This group was sent to Otoschno, another forced labor camp near Poznań.⁴

The ghetto was finally liquidated, probably in May or June of 1942. As there were no survivors of the deportations, only fragmentary accounts are available, picked up from local non-Jews. It appears that all the Jews were ordered by the Gestapo to assemble on the main square and then driven into a church, where they were held for several days with very little food or water. Many collapsed under these terrible circumstances. A rumor was deliberately spread that they would be sent to a new Jewish colony near Pińsk or in Galicia, to facilitate the deportation. Then they were forcibly loaded onto trucks and driven to the Chełmno extermination camp, where they were gassed.⁵

SOURCES The most extensive source on the Złoczew ghetto is a collection of memoirs of former Jews from Złoczew in *Sefer Złoczew* (Tel Aviv: Committee of Former Residents of Złoczew, 1971). For survivor reports, see especially pp. 19–21 and 288–305 (the following articles: Eisik Faiwlowicz, “Origins of Złoczew’s Jews”; Mordechai Majerowicz, “My City Złoczew”; Raphael Lechman [Kojuch], “During the Shoah

Destruction. From Złoczew to Auschwitz”; L. Wanda, “Between the Jaws of Destiny” and “In the Hands of Brutal Destiny”; and Hawa Bresler [Breslauer], “The First So-called Resettlement of the Jews of Złoczew”). Other sources on the history of the ghetto are scarce. The Złoczew ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 593; and in Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), p. 193. BŻIH, nos. 13–14 (1955), lists the Złoczew ghetto on p. 162. Regarding the liquidation of the ghetto, see Shmuel Krakowski, *Das Todeslager Chełmno/Kulmhof: Der Beginn der “Endlösung”* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), p. 87. There is also a brief article on the Jewish community of Złoczew in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 1, Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 121–122.

Primary sources on the history of the Złoczew ghetto can mainly be found in Poland, especially at IPN (Zh III/31/35/68, getta, woj. Łódzkie); and in OKBZH-Ł (Ds. 438/67).

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NOTES

1. For a number of survivor statements on this first “resettlement,” see Wanda, “Between the Jaws of Destiny” and “In the Hands of Brutal Destiny”; and Bresler (Breslauer), “The First So-called Resettlement of the Jews of Złoczew.”
2. Lechman (Kojuch), “During the Shoa Destruction. From Złoczew to Auschwitz.”
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. “In seyer letstn veg,” in *Sefer Złoczew*, pp. 409–410.

ŻYCHLIN

Pre-1939: Żychlin, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Żychlin, Kreis Kutno, Regierungsbezirk Hohensalza, Reichsgau Wartheland; post-1998: Żychlin, Łódź województwo, Poland

The town of Żychlin is located 90 kilometers (56 miles) west of Warsaw. By 1921, there were 2,702 Jews living there, in a total population of 7,098.

German forces occupied Żychlin in the early hours of September 17, 1939. Soon after their arrival, they assembled groups of young Jews and took them to a nearby village, where they held them hostage for three days. Searches of Jewish homes as well as beatings and harassment followed the release of the hostages. The Germans registered the Jews and conscripted them for forced labor, which initially consisted of cleaning the streets of the town and also German quarters. By November 1939, Jews were obliged to wear a yellow star on the front and back of their clothes, and each Jewish house had to be marked with a sign bearing the word “Jew” (*Jude*). The ritual slaughter of animals was forbidden, and the Germans imposed a curfew on the Jews between 5:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. All radios had to be surrendered.



A German soldier guards a group of Jews waiting outside in the Żychlin ghetto, ca. 1942.

USHMM WS #21727, COURTESY OF RUTH ELDAR

Many ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) arrived in the Żychlin area during the first months of the occupation. Soon the German authorities confiscated Jewish businesses and real estate, handing them over together with Polish farms mainly to the ethnic Germans. In January 1940, Żychlin became a concentration point for Jews from the surrounding area. Of 3,000 Jews registered in the town, 600 were refugees from nearby towns such as Kutno, Sanniki, and Włocławek.

In April 1940, following several acts of random violence, arrests, and roundups, the Germans arrested members of the Polish and Jewish intelligentsia in Żychlin, particularly teachers, and sent them to concentration camps inside the Reich.¹

In June 1940, the Amtskommissar in Żychlin, Karl Hempel, announced that the Jewish residents of the town would be moved into a designated area. The prime object of the resettlement for the German authorities was to prevent the spread of disease. The main ghetto, into which nearly 1,800 people were crammed, was established in Żychlin between the streets of Budzyń and Buszkowska. A smaller ghetto, in which 300 people were quartered, was also established in a brick factory in the nearby rural settlement of Pabianów. The Germans also established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Żychlin Judenrat was headed by Alter Rozenberg; and under its jurisdiction there was a Jewish police force, headed by A. Oberman, as well as an employment office (Arbeitsamt), in charge of organizing the daily forced labor details for the Germans. The residents of both ghettos were initially able to leave their ghetto areas if they possessed a valid work permit. Later on, however, they were permitted to leave the ghetto only under exceptional circumstances. The punishment for those who tried to leave was initially imprisonment; subsequently, the Germans imposed more draconian punishments, threatening Jews caught outside the ghetto with the death penalty. Only the Judenrat and members of the Jewish Police could move freely outside the ghetto (an open ghetto), which was not surrounded by a wall or fence.²

Living conditions in the ghetto were extremely hard. Contact with the surrounding villages was limited to those who

ventured out, desperately hoping to buy or barter some food from the peasants. Often both Polish residents and ethnic Germans entered the ghetto to do business with the few craftsmen who were still able to work. The poorest Jews sold their last belongings for food in an empty lot next to the Judenrat building. The overcrowded housing (two or more families sharing a single apartment), poor sanitation, and malnutrition among the Jewish population contributed to an outbreak of typhus in the ghetto. Although the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was unable to organize a public kitchen, the Judenrat, aided by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), established a substitute soup kitchen that fed the needy in both ghettos.³

Amtskommissar Hempel recruited 400 Jews for the construction of his villa. In the course of their work, he tortured the people sadistically, murdering a number of them. For example, he would force Jews to dive into a lake and shot at them if they did not dive deeply enough. If they survived the shots the Jews had to continue working in their wet clothes, which in the winter was also equivalent to a death sentence.⁴

From August 1941 until the end of that year, several transports of hundreds of Jewish workers were sent to various labor camps in the Poznań area from Żychlin. In early 1942, the Germans started to kill Jews inside the ghetto indiscriminately. Some Jews tried to escape or hide with the help of Polish acquaintances. The Judenrat and Jewish Police appear to have participated in robbing Jewish homes to meet German demands and also assisted the German “manhunts” to round up Jews capable of work for the forced labor camps.

By the last week of February 1942, the Jews in Żychlin knew that their “days were numbered.”⁵ The Germans sealed the ghetto, and then they summoned the Judenrat and Jewish Police to the main square and publicly executed them there. Their families were taken to the Jewish cemetery to be killed. The Germans murdered children, the sick, and the elderly; around 200 people perished in the Aktion.⁶

On March 3, 1942, during the Purim holiday, all the Jews, almost 3,200 people, were rounded up in the marketplace. German police savagely beat and robbed the Jews and then loaded them onto horse-drawn wagons to take them to the extermination camp in Chełmno. The German authorities then declared the town of Żychlin to be cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).

Only a few Jews from Żychlin survived the war. More than half of them were in Nazi forced labor and concentration camps; the others were in hiding, acquired fake Aryan documents, or returned after having found refuge in the Soviet interior.⁷

SOURCES Publications on the Jewish community of Żychlin and its fate during the Holocaust include the following: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 116–119; A. Shamir, ed., *Sefer Z'iblin* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Z'ihlin be-Yisrael uva-



The abandoned property of Jews deported from Żychlin to Chełmno killing center is piled in an open field, March 1942. The piles were later burned. USHMM WS #18865, COURTESY OF IPN

Amerikah, 1974); H. Bodek, *Jak tropione zwierzęta Wspomnienia* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1993); and Heinrich Bielawski, *Der Hoelle entronnen: Aufzeichnungen* (London: The World of Books, 1989).

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Żychlin during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/313, 315, and 3352); IPN; OKŚZpNPŁdz (Ds 151/67); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154); VHF; and YVA (JM 1290/1, 9PH/10-4-10, M-1/E/2529, M-1/Q/533, and PH/8-3-1).

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. Shamir, *Sefer Z'iblin*, p. 129; Bodek, *Jak Tropione Zwierzęta*, pp. 13, 15, 16, 19–20.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/321, p. 5, Jüdischer Ältestenrat Żychlin to AJDC Warsaw, June 27, 1940; Shamir, *Sefer Z'iblin*, p. 130; and Bodek, *Jak tropione zwierzęta*, pp. 32, 44, 47–49.
3. Shamir, *Sefer Z'iblin*, p. 131.
4. OKŚZpNPŁdz, Ds 151/67.
5. Letter from the Żychlin ghetto, February 24, 1942, published in Walter Zwi Bacharach, ed., *Dies sind meine letzten Worte . . . Briefe aus der Schoah* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), pp. 334–335.
6. Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod: NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen polnischen Juden, gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer. Ein historischer Essay und ausgewählte Dokumente aus dem Ringelblum-Archiv 1941–1943* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1993), p. 218.
7. Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, ed., *Chełmno Witnesses Speak* (Konin: Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom in Warsaw and the District Museum in Konin, 2004), pp. 99–208; AŻIH, 301/315, testimony of L. Jakubowicz. According to Bodek, *Jak tropione zwierzęta*, p. 65, during its final days the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire.

EASTERN UPPER SILESIA REGION



German police round up Jews on Francuska Street in the Dąbrowa Górnicza ghetto, April 4, 1942.
USHMM WS #23977, COURTESY OF SIDNEY SCHLESINGER

EASTERN UPPER SILESIA REGION (OST-OBERSCHLESILIEN)

Pre-1939: parts of the Kielce, Kraków, and Śląskie województwa, Poland; 1939–1945: Ost-Oberschlesien, parts of Regierunqsbezirke Kattowitz and Oppeln, (1939–1941: Provinz Schlesien) from 1941, Provinz Oberschlesien, Deutsches Reich; post-1998: parts of województwa śląskie, małopolskie, and opolskie

As a result of the Third Reich's invasion of Poland in September 1939, territories to the east of Provinz Schlesien were annexed and incorporated into the Third Reich. Regierungsbezirk Oppeln saw the addition of three new counties: Zawiercie, Blachownia, and Lubliniec. Furthermore, on October 8, 1939, Adolf Hitler issued a decree establishing a new administrative unit—Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz—composed of parts of the Kielce, Kraków (counties Biała and Żywiec and parts of the counties of Chrzanów and Wadowice), and Śląskie województwa. Also reassigned to Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz were the existing German counties of Zabrze, Bytom, and Gliwice. Walter Springorum became the Regierungspräsident in Kattowitz. Regierungsbezirke Kattowitz and Oppeln initially became part of Provinz Schlesien. Provinz Schlesien

was dissolved on January 4, 1941, to be replaced by two separate provinces: Provinz Oberschlesien (Regierungsbezirke Kattowitz and Oppeln) and Provinz Schlesien (Regierungsbezirke Liegnitz and Breslau). Fritz Bracht became the governor of Oberschlesien. Albrecht Schmelt was appointed in May 1941 as the Regierungspräsident in Oppeln.¹

The Jews inhabiting those parts of Provinz Oberschlesien that had belonged to the Third Reich before the war (i.e., Bytom, Zabrze, and Gliwice) were treated differently from those in the former Polish territories, often referred to as Ost-Oberschlesien (or also as the Oststreifen), where the vast majority of the Jewish population of the Provinz was concentrated systematically in 1940 and 1941.

In the pre-war German (Altreich) territories of Oberschlesien, the antisemitic policies launched in 1933 were continued after the war started. Remaining Jewish property was confiscated, and Jews were forced to emigrate. In December 1940, Regierungsbezirk Oppeln was inhabited by only 3,070 Jews; in March 1941, by 3,020. A few months later in September 1941, Hitler initiated the mass deportation of Jews from the



Portrait of Albrecht Schmelt, head of the Organisation Schmelt, taken when he was a Reichstag member for the Nazi Party, 1936. USHMM/PHOTOGRAPHED FROM ERNST KIENAST (ED.), DER DEUTSCHE REICHSTAG 1936: III. WAHLPERIODE NACH DEM 30. JANUAR 1933; MIT ZUSTIMMUNG DES HERRN REICHSTAGSPRÄSIDENTEN (BERLIN: R. V. DECKER'S VERLAG, G. SCHENCK, 1936), P. 427.



Portrait of SS-Gruppenführer Bruno Streckenbach, former commander of Einsatzgruppe Wien, n.d. USHMM WS #26621, COURTESY OF BAB/BDC

Altreich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Deportations of Jews from Provinz Oberschlesien to the death camps took place in the years 1942–1944. Full details of these transports are not known, but several transports were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp and the Theresienstadt ghetto.²

In the Alt-Reich territories of Provinz Oberschlesien, the pre-war Jewish communities (e.g., Bytom, Zabrze, and Gliwice) were subordinated to the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland. Their regional agency was based in Gliwice. Ghettos were not established in this area.

In total, around 18 ghettos or Jewish residential districts were established in Ost-Oberschlesien. When the German army conquered this region, German forces were accompanied by Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and the SD. Units active in Ost-Oberschlesien included Einsatzgruppe Wien, commanded by SS-Brigadeführer Bruno von Streckenbach, and Einsatzgruppe zbV, commanded by SS-Obergruppenführer Udo von Woyrsch. These units committed numerous atrocities against the Jewish population, including killings (e.g., on the pretext of concealing foodstuffs or raising prices), forcing Orthodox Jews to shave their beards, and seizing Jewish property. On September 4, 1939, in Żarki, near Zawiercie, Wehrmacht soldiers slaughtered 102 residents, including 90 Jews. In Sławków, German soldiers shot nearly 100 Jewish refugees from Będzin and Sosnowiec on September 5–7. On September 8, the synagogue on the Old Market Square in Będzin was razed, and a number of Jews were shot in the vicinity. In September, the Germans also burned down synagogues in Katowice, Jaworzno, Sosnowiec, and other towns in the region.³

From the start, one of the main German goals was to deport or drive out the Jewish population from those areas to be incorporated into the Reich. At the beginning of October 1939, Adolf Eichmann received instructions to prepare the deportation of 70,000 to 80,000 Jews from around Katowice. On October 20, about 1,000 Jews from Katowice, Chorzów, Bielsko-Biała, Lipiny, and Świętochłowice were assembled and designated for deportation by the communities' leadership. They were then transported to Nisko nad Sanem, where most were forced into Soviet-occupied territory. A second group of Jews, also around 1,000 people, was assembled on October 27–28 and sent to Nisko. An additional transport of approximately 1,500 people gathered in Sosnowiec, however, was aborted at the last moment.⁴

Reinhard Heydrich issued guidelines to the Einsatzgruppen on September 21, 1939, regarding the Jewish question in the occupied territories. He ordered as a preliminary measure the rapid concentration of the Jewish population in larger towns (specifically, communities numbering less than 500 were to be dissolved) and the establishment of Jewish Councils (Judenräte). As far as possible, the Jews were to be removed from territories to be annexed (including Ost-Oberschlesien) and resettled into the Generalgouvernement; but in the meantime Jews were to be concentrated in just a few towns.⁵ This plan, however, was implemented only partially. In 1940, many of the Jews in Ost-Oberschlesien were displaced from its west-

ern regions to towns closer to the Generalgouvernement. In May and June, expulsions were conducted, for example, from Bielsko, Katowice, Chorzów, and Cieszyn, as 4,500 Jews were resettled in the Kreise of Chrzanów, Olkusz, and Zawiercie.⁶

From the end of 1939 up until June 1940, the Germans established Judenräte in the remaining Jewish communities. The head of the department for Jewish matters in the Katowitz Gestapo, Hans Dreier, entrusted the organization of Jewish life in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz to Mojżesz Merin of Sosnowiec. By January 1940, he had become the head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office). The Central Office supervised all Jewish communities in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, as well as part of Regierungsbezirk Oppeln.⁷

In October 1940, 96,283 Jews, concentrated in 34 communities and their branches, were subordinated to the Central Office. This number remained largely unchanged over the following year: there were 97,925 in March 1941; and only 500 people less in July. The communities were divided among eight Kreis Inspectorates, with their own heads answerable to Merin. In October 1940, 11,976 Jews living in 20 localities were under the control of the Kreis Chrzanów Inspectorate. The other Inspectorates were, respectively: Dąbrowa Górnicza (8,883 persons), Bielsko (8,842), Zawiercie (7,494), Olkusz (6,159), Blachownia (3,280), Żywiec (560), and Cieszyn (446). Independence was granted only to the larger communities of Będzin (25,264) and Sosnowiec (23,319). The liquidated communities in Katowice, Rybnik, Chorzów, and Pszczyna were treated separately, referred to in publications of the Central Office as Alt-Oberschlesien.⁸

The German military and civil authorities issued a series of decrees in the first months of the occupation aimed at excluding the Jews from economic life and isolating them from the non-Jewish population. First, the property of displaced people (Jews and Poles) was confiscated; Jewish bank accounts were blocked; shops were marked; and Jewish warehouses and stores were subjected to requisitions and closely regulated. Trustees, supervised by the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (HTO), were assigned to take over Jewish businesses.⁹

The German authorities systematically restricted the Jews' freedom of movement in many towns, excluding them from specific streets. By November 1939, the obligation to wear a white armband with the Star of David was enforced. Other restrictions excluded Jews from markets and divided trams into two sections, one for Jews and the other for non-Jews. A curfew was enforced in most towns, generally from dusk until dawn.¹⁰

As of October 1940, those Jews living in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt. This organization was responsible for the deportation of Jews to labor camps and their assignment to factories and workshops. At least 93 forced labor camps for Jews existed in Regierungsbezirke Kattowitz and Oppeln between 1940 and 1944. Approximately 50,000 Jews were conscripted to work in them. Initially, the Jews from Ost-Oberschlesien were sent there. From 1941, some Jewish



Jewish men and women work in a sewing workshop in the Olkusz ghetto, ca. 1940.

USHMM WS #15930, COURTESY OF ROSE GRINBAUM FUTTER

laborers from the Generalgouvernement were deployed to these camps, followed from mid-1942 by Western European Jews selected from transports sent to Auschwitz.¹¹ Employment in workshops in the region, especially producing materials for the Wehrmacht, offered protection from deportation for some time.

German repressive measures intensified in 1941. From May 9, Jews were obliged to add the middle names “Israel” or “Sara” to identify themselves as Jews. Then on September 1, 1941, Jews over the age of six had to wear a patch bearing the Star of David on the left breast. Jews were also forbidden to wear honorary badges or military decorations. Police permission was required for Jews to leave their place of residence. From September 30, Jews were obliged to carry identity cards (*Lichtbildausweise*). Jews were also banned from using public transport.¹²

From early in the occupation, the German authorities evicted Jews from the main streets of several cities and towns, to make space for German officials. In Będzin, the Germans started to remove the Jews from the center early in 1940; by May 1942, a Jewish quarter (*Judenviertel*) had been demarcated. In Sosnowiec, the Jewish population was displaced from the town’s three main streets at the end of 1939. In Czeladź a quarter designated for the Jews was demarcated in June 1941. By July 1940, the Germans had created a Jewish quarter in Zawiercie. At first, a wooden fence surrounded the quarter. It is likely that by 1941 this area was partly separated with wire, mortar, and a wooden fence; Jewish Police patrolled the ghetto. There was no permanent police station in the ghetto, but the Gestapo and Orpo conducted searches there. Over time, the ghetto was reduced in size. Space became severely restricted in Zawiercie, as Jews from surrounding communities were transferred there in 1942. The ghetto was enclosed with barbed wire in the winter of 1942–1943.

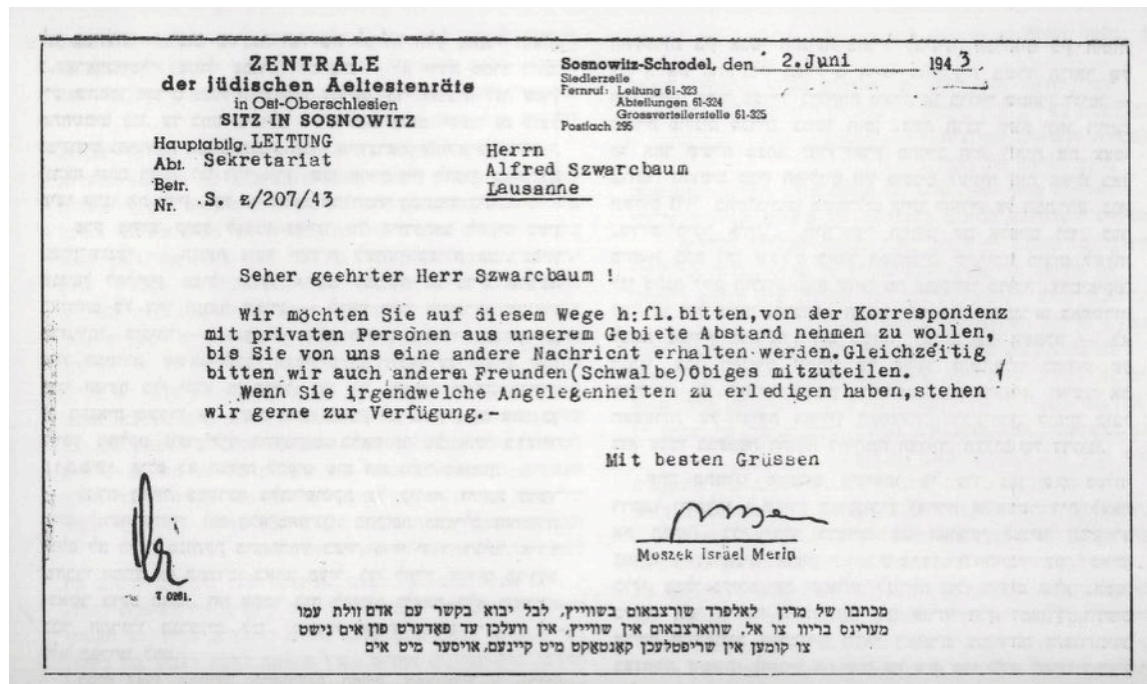
From November 1940, a ghetto was established in stages in Dąbrowa Górnicza. In February 1942, the Jewish quarter in Dąbrowa was still open—that is, unfenced. Residents of the

ghetto, however, were forbidden to leave without permission. The non-Jewish population could still enter the ghetto. The Dąbrowa ghetto was enclosed at the beginning of 1943. The Jews of Bielsko were deported from the town center to the nearby village of Lipniki in August 1941, where a ghetto comprising a few houses was established. In Andrychów, a ghetto partially surrounded by a fence was established in September 1941. At this time, an open ghetto was also set up in Olkusz. At the end of 1941, a Jewish quarter was demarcated in Chrzanów. It was not enclosed but was guarded by the Jewish Police. By the spring of 1942, small ghettos had been set up also in Szczakowa and Strzemieszyce.

As this survey demonstrates, many ghettos in Ost-Oberschlesien remained open (unfenced) until their liquidation, and the process of ghettoization in some places was spread over many months. In August 1942, 400 Jewish families still were living outside the Dąbrowa ghetto, and for some towns, such as Jaworzno, there is contradictory evidence as to whether or not an open ghetto existed. Nonetheless, the arrival of waves of Jewish refugees from other towns in 1940 and 1941 created overcrowding, even in places where no formal ghetto existed. In Oświęcim, for example, in 1940 Jews were evicted from the main street, Jagiellońskiej, and other movement restrictions were enforced. In March 1941, Jews were moved from the suburb of Zasole into the town, but preparations for the establishment of a Jewish quarter there were soon overtaken by the expulsion of all the Jews from Oświęcim in April 1941.¹³ Some



Jewish expellees from Oświęcim arrive in Będzin, April 1941. USHMM WS #08128, COURTESY OF YVA



Letter written by the chairman of the Sosnowiec Judenrat, and chief of the Zentrale der jüdischen Ältestenräte, Mojżesz [Moszek] Merin, to Alfred Szwarcbaum, June 2, 1943. The text reads: "Dear Mr. Szwarcbaum!

We would politely ask you to refrain from correspondence with private persons from our area, until you receive another message from us. At the same time we also ask other friends [Schwalbe] to be informed of the abovementioned.

If you have any concerns to be handled, we gladly stand at your disposal.

With best greetings,

Moszek Israel Merin."

USHMM WS #20737, COURTESY OF ARNOLD SHAY (ABRAM SZYJEWICZ)

ghettos, such as in Sucha, in many respects resembled labor camps, being rather remnant ghettos established only once most of the nonworkers had been deported.

The role of Mojżesz Merin remains controversial. His dynamic and autocratic leadership helped to alleviate conditions for Jews in the region, as he developed a strategy of survival through work. Food rations and living conditions for Jews in Ost-Oberschlesien generally were better than in the General-gouvernement, and tens of thousands of Jews in the larger ghettos were not deported until the summer of 1943. However, Merin's subservient compliance with German demands for forced laborers and ultimately for the sacrifice of Jewish lives earned him the bitter hostility of many Jews. The Central Office and the Jewish Police organized some of the deportations, "in order to prevent the Germans from carrying it out with their customary brutality." In June 1943, the Germans arrested Merin himself, leaving it, as he had predicted, up to history to judge his actions.¹⁴

Several hundred Jews were sent to Auschwitz from towns in the region at the beginning of 1942. On May 12, 1942, a mass deportation Aktion was carried out that included 3,600 Jews from Sosnowiec, 3,200 from Będzin, and 2,000 from Zawiercie. The June deportations also affected the Jews in Sosnowiec and Będzin, especially the poor and sick in the Jewish hospital (i.e., approximately 2,000 people). By July 1942, many of the

small centers in the region had been liquidated, namely: Olkusz, Zator, Kłobuck, Jaworzno, Ząbkowice, Grodziec, Trzebinia, and Blachownia. Approximately 15,000 Jews from communities subordinated to the Central Office were deported between May and July 1942. On August 8, 1942, the Kattowitz Gestapo and Organisation Schmelt posted announcements in several towns, ordering all Jews (employed and unemployed) to report with their families to designated places on August 12, to have their photo identity cards stamped and their employment documents verified. Some of the movement restrictions on Jews in these towns were lifted briefly for the duration of the operation. The chairmen of the Jewish Councils signed the announcements. From among the 50,000 Jews gathered in Będzin, Sosnowiec, Dąbrowa Górnicza, and Czeladź, approximately 19,000 were sent to Auschwitz within a few days.¹⁵

Efforts to fully isolate the Jews in the two largest Jewish population centers—Będzin and Sosnowiec—began in October 1942. The plan of confining the Jews to ghettos outside the town centers was developed by the Sosnowiec Polizeipräsident Alexander von Woedtke. He first proposed this to Regierungspräsident Walter Springorum in February 1942. By creating an isolated ghetto, von Woedtke intended to clamp down on smuggling and black marketeering. At that time, Springorum feared that the Jews' isolation might deprive the economy of vitally needed Jewish forced labor. In the course of numerous

meetings involving the Central Office and the Gestapo, the borders of the new Jewish quarters were established, as well as the dates for their closure. For the Jews of Sosnowiec, a quarter outside the city center was designated in the Polish working-class neighborhoods of Old Sosnowiec and Śródula. The plan was to resettle Będzin's Jews to neighborhoods bordering Kamionka and Mała Śródula. During the resettlement, the problem arose of resettling Polish workers into the former Jewish apartments in the city centers. These issues were resolved with the participation of the Central Office, and particularly of the Resettlement Office, as well as by the Sosnowiec municipal authority. Gradually, various administrative offices, the hospital, and all institutions subordinated to the Central Office were moved to Śródula.

The resettlement process progressed very slowly (e.g., several dozen families per day) until the end of 1942; starting in January 1943, the rate of transfer speeded up dramatically. The residents' placement depended on their "ability to work." Young, able-bodied Jews qualified for hard labor were settled in Kamionka (category "C") or Śródula (category "A"). Those unable to work (likely to be deported first) received categories "D" and "B" and were quartered in Mała Śródula or Old Sosnowiec.

The resettlements were completed in March 1943. The ghetto in Sosnowiec, numbering approximately 20,000 residents, was sealed on May 1, 1943. At this time, the ghettos in Będzin (in Kamionka and Mała Śródula) were also sealed. The remaining Jews from the liquidated Jewish quarter in Dąbrowa Górnicza were resettled there at the end of June. In May 1943, the Gestapo deported the Jews of Czeladź and Mordziejów, as well as approximately 1,000 people (mainly children) from Śródula to Auschwitz.

By May 1943, more than 30,000 Jews were living in the Śródula and Kamionka ghettos. On May 19, the Jews from the Sosnowiec Południowy neighborhood were resettled to the Będzin ghetto. On June 19, 1943, the Germans sent eight officials of the Central Office, including Mojżesz Merin, his brother Chaim, and Fany Czarna, to Auschwitz. Three days later, on June 22, a mass deportation from the Będzin ghetto was conducted. On that day, the Kamionka ghetto was surrounded early in the morning. All its residents were gathered on the main square. The deportations lasted for three days. Over 12,000 Jews went through the selection process; approximately 6,000 to 7,000 were deported to Auschwitz. From the Śródula ghetto, approximately 2,000 Jews were deported, including the sick from the Jewish hospital. Starting in July 1943, several thousand Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Dąbrowa Górnicza were transferred systematically to Będzin.¹⁶

The liquidations of the Będzin and Sosnowiec ghettos commenced on the night of July 31, 1943, with the participation of police units from Sosnowiec, Maczki, Katowice, Bytom, and Gliwice, as well as training, factory, and reserve police. By August 7, approximately 30,000 Jews had been deported to Auschwitz, of which 6,000 then were sent to forced labor camps. At the end of August, the Gestapo left a group of several hundred Jews to salvage Jewish property, adding also those discovered in hiding. At the beginning of January 1944, the last



Group portrait of members of the Ha-Noar Ha-Zioni Zionist youth movement in Sosnowiec, May 1939. All were active in the Zionist underground in Sosnowiec during the German occupation. Among those photographed is Józef Kożuch (second from left).

USHMM WS #06389, COURTESY OF HADASSAH BIMKO ROSENSAFT

few hundred Jews were deported into the camp system, apart from about 50 Jews that remained. These last Jews worked as furriers and tailors. In July 1944, they were sent to the Annaberg camp, then to Auschwitz in October.

The liquidation of the last ghettos took longer than the German authorities anticipated, as members of the Jewish Fighting Organization in the Kamionka and Śródula ghettos offered armed resistance. They fought from three bunkers they had prepared in advance. The following fighters of the Będzin ghetto died in the first days of August: Frumka Plotnicka (member of the Dror organization and a courier between the Będzin and Warsaw ghettos), Józef Kożuch, and Cwi Brandes.

The Jewish community in Zawiercie, numbering approximately 2,500 people sewing soldiers' uniforms in a local factory, was liquidated as the last on August 26. As a result of the August Aktion, only 350 to 400 people remained employed at the Towarzystwo Akcyjne Zawiercia (TAZ) factory. This group was deported to Auschwitz on October 17, 1943.

SOURCES The monograph of Sybille Steinbacher, *"Musterstadt" Auschwitz: Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1999), provides the most comprehensive overview of the fate of the Jews of Ost-Oberschlesien during the Holocaust. Questions regarding living conditions for the Jewish population, their economic exploitation, isolation, and extermination are examined also in several publications by Aleksandra Namysło, e.g., "Postawy mieszkańców rejencji katowickiej wobec ludności żydowskiej," in A. Żbikowski, ed., *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945: Studia i materiały* (Warsaw: IPN, 2006), pp. 763–826; or in A. Namysło, ed., *Zagłada Żydów zagłębiowskich* (Będzin: IPN, 2004). There are also several articles on the fate of the Jews in Provinz Oberschlesien in A. Namysło, ed., *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy* (Warsaw: IPN, 2008). In addition, the yizkor books of the communities of Eastern Upper Silesia (e.g., Natan Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca* [Katowice, 1946]) also contain much useful information on the ghettos of the region.

A critical assessment of the role played by Mojżesz Merin can be found in Philip Friedman, “Two ‘Saviors’ Who Failed: Moses Merin of Sosnowiec and Jacob Gens of Vilna,” which has been republished in Michael Marrus, ed., *The Nazi Holocaust: Historical Articles on the Destruction of European Jews*, vol. 6, *The Victims of the Holocaust* (Westport, CT: Meckler, 1989), pp. 488–492.

A concise overview of the fate of the Jews in Ost-Oberschlesien can be found in Fredka Mazya and Avihu Ronen, “Silesia, Eastern Upper,” in Israel Gutman, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 4:1351–1355; K. Jonca, “Zagłada niemieckich Żydów na Górnym Śląsku (1933–1945),” in *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 2 (1991): 219, deals with the fate of German Jews in Oberschlesien.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APKat (e.g., RSGŻDG, Polizeipräsident Sosnowiec, M Sosn); AŻIH (301); BA-BL; BA-L; IPN; IPN-Kat; NARA; USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

Aleksandra Namysło and Martin Dean
trans. Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Ryszard Kaczmarek, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Katowice: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1998), pp. 22–23.

2. Jonca, “Zagłada,” p. 219; and Alfred Konieczny, “Transporty Żydów z Górnego Śląska do obozu w Teresinie (1942–1944),” *Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi* (Wrocław) 24 (2001): 443.

3. Namysło, “Postawy mieszkańców,” pp. 768–769; Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski, “Prześladowania ludności żydowskiej w okresie hitlerowskiej administracji wojskowej na

okupowanych ziemiach polskich (1 IX–25 X 1939),” *BŻIH*, no. 39 (1963): 76–77.

4. Götz Aly, “*Endlösung*”: *Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1995), pp. 63–64.

5. N-Doc. 3363-PS, Heydrich Schnellbrief, September 21, 1939.

6. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 21; Peter Maser and Adelheid Weiser, *Juden in Oberschlesien: Historischer Überblick, Jüdische Gemeinden* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1992), 1:60.

7. Namysło, “Centrala Żydowskich Rad Starszych Wschodniego Górnego Śląska,” in *Zagłada Żydów zagłębiowskich*, pp. 38–46.

8. APKat, RSGŻDG, 30, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden, March 12, 1941, pp. 205–219.

9. R. Kaczmarek, “Sytuacja ludności żydowskiej na obszarach zachodnich i południowych Europy wcielonych do Rzeszy Niemieckiej a polityka antyżydowska na polskich terenach wcielonych—próba porównania,” in Namysło, *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach*, pp. 16–21.

10. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 17.

11. A. Konieczny, “Rola Organizacji Schmelt w eksploatacji żydowskiej siły roboczej na Śląsku,” in Namysło, *Zagłada Żydów zagłębiowskich*, pp. 32–37.

12. Kaczmarek, “Sytuacja ludności,” pp. 16–21.

13. AŻIH, 301/289, 2442, 2489, 2490, 3489.

14. Friedman, “Two ‘Saviors,’” pp. 490–492.

15. Avihu Ronen, “The Jews of Będzin,” in Kersten Brandt, Hanno Loewy, and Krystyna Oleksy, eds., *Before They Perished* (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 2001), pp. 22–23.

16. Namysło, “Postawy mieszkańców,” p. 783.



ANDRYCHÓW

Pre-1939: Andrychów (Yiddish: Yandrichov), town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Andrichau, Kreis Bielitz, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Andrychów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Andrychów is located about 56 kilometers (35 miles) southwest of Kraków. In 1939, the Jewish population of the town was 409 out of a total population of 4,171.¹

When the war broke out, many Jews from Andrychów fled eastward. On the occupation of the town on September 3, 1939, German soldiers and some local Poles broke into and robbed Jewish shops and apartments. After a few weeks, Jewish enterprises, factories, and stores were confiscated and turned over to local ethnic German “trustees.” Many who fled but did not make it to the Soviet-occupied zone gradually returned to Andrychów. At first the Germans denied them residence status, but Jewish leaders interceded with the town mayor, Wyceni, who agreed to register the returnees and issue them ration cards.²

On November 25, 1939, the Germans set the synagogue on fire and prevented the Jews from extinguishing it.³ As the harsh winter of 1939–1940 led to increased hardship, the Jewish inhabitants of Andrychów joined together to provide mutual assistance. Jewish doctors offered medical services. A single community shop was opened to coordinate the acquisition and distribution of food. From the start of the occupation, the Jews were required to provide groups of men for forced labor, which necessitated a survey of people fit for work. Initially Jewish youths and men were sent away to help regulate the flow of water in the river near Kęty; girls and women had to scrub the floors in German offices.⁴ To deflect the intermittent labor assignments away from the town, which were marked by endless beatings, poor conditions, and humiliation, Jewish leaders strove to find employment close to home. Permanent work appeared to offer more security.⁵

A seven-person Judenrat, including one woman (Ella Landau), was established at the end of 1939. The first chairman was Aharon (Arnold) Weinsaft. From the beginning of 1940, the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office), headquartered in Sosnowiec, sought to impose its authority over the Judenrat in Andrychów. The refusal to respond to the orders of Mojżesz Merin, chairman of the Central Office, led to increased tension. In January 1940, Merin demanded that the Judenrat submit a roster of the Jews in Andrychów. After he was ignored, he showed up in the company of a Gestapo squad from Katowice. Weinsaft had no choice but to obey instructions from the Central Office and submit to its authority.⁶

In the spring of 1940, Weinsaft was arrested for allegedly abetting the slaughter of animals for kosher meat, which was forbidden by the Germans. He was freed after two months but deposed as chairman of the Judenrat. He was replaced by Dr. Lowicz (an attorney), but Lowicz held the position for only a short time. The next chairman was Isadore Kromholz, who

was appointed on the initiative of Merin. Andrychów also had a Jewish police unit.

In October 1940, the Jewish population of Andrychów was 490 people. In late 1940, the Judenrat received a demand for the transfer of 60 men to a work camp. Kromholz sought to counter the order by arguing that the men were employed in work vital to the German war effort and received the support of local officials. Special representatives of the Central Office were sent to enforce the order, but the Judenrat chairman and the commander of the Jewish Police persisted in their refusal, advising the young men to go into hiding. Merin’s representatives returned empty-handed, but in their place came an SS squad headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Heinrich Lindner, of the Foreign Labor Office known as Organisation Schmelt, which picked up 60 men for the forced labor camp in Sosnowiec. The community sent the men packages of food and clothing until 1942.⁷

In September 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Andrychów. The Jews were put into empty Polish houses on Szewska, Brzegi, and Kośvitz Streets in a neglected neighborhood on the eastern edge of the town. The displaced Poles took over the vacated Jewish apartments. The Jews called the ghetto *na brzegach*, after one of its three streets.⁸ One former survivor describes it as being more of a Jewish quarter (*Judenviertel*) or open ghetto, rather than an enclosed ghetto. Two or three families were forced to share each house. Jews were permitted to leave the quarter to go shopping only with a pass.⁹

When Polish shopkeepers refused to sell food to the Jews, they received permission to open their own grocery store to meet the needs of the population. To help stock the store, they received a start-up loan from the Central Office, which was eventually forgiven. The Judenrat was also able to arrange for two Polish doctors to enter the ghetto to attend the sick. A small pharmacy was opened, supplied by a sympathetic friend in Bielsko. From the start of the war until July 1942, there were eight deaths in Andrychów. In each case the Jews were permitted to bury the deceased in the Jewish cemetery.¹⁰

Despite the crowding and isolation, the ghetto inhabitants organized a range of educational and cultural activities. There were Friday evening Sabbath celebrations and programs for the Jewish holidays. Young people continued their studies in clandestine locations, with the older students instructing the younger ones. There was also a day-care program for the children of mothers who worked outside the ghetto. To ease the oppressive conditions, the Judenrat sought and received permission to buy heating coal. A public kitchen was opened, and laborers working under strenuous conditions received extra food.¹¹

The main deportation Aktion against Andrychów’s Jews took place on July 2, 1942. German police surrounded the ghetto, and the inhabitants were forced into the courtyard of the “Czechowicha” factory. The initial order was to clear the town of Jews and send them to the transit camp in Sosnowiec—and from there, most of them to their deaths. However, after the Jews were assembled, there was a “selection.” A group of

100 people unfit for work was sent to Wadowice and added to a trainload of Jews destined, most likely, for the Bełżec extermination camp. Another 40 were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Over 100 others were shipped to work camps via Sosnowiec, and about 60 people, including members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police, were transferred to the Wadowice ghetto. During the selection 20 Jewish policemen from the Central Office, headed by a woman named Czarna, were present. They insisted that German orders be obeyed precisely. Two families were left at the end of the selection, and they too soon had to go to Wadowice. However, after a few weeks, everyone sent to Wadowice was brought back to Andrychów. Their return occurred because the managers of the work sites in Andrychów, in need of trained workers, asked for their return. A labor camp was established for the returnees and other Jews from the area. The Jews of Andrychów again displayed great initiative and resolve as they strove to ease the oppressive conditions. The public kitchen was reopened to provide for the prisoners.¹²

In May 1943, the camp was taken over by the SS and renamed “The Jewish Camp of the Water Management Office in Kattowitz, Branch in Bielsk, construction in Andrychów,” and conditions took a turn for the worse. Men and women were separated, and the food ration was cut off. In July all the men were shipped to other labor camps, leaving only women at the Andrychów camp. In November 1943, the remaining women were deported to Auschwitz.¹³

The men sent to the labor camps were moved from one camp to another, and most of them perished. By the end of the war there were only 25 survivors from Andrychów, mostly from the labor camps. The Jewish presence in Andrychów was not reestablished, and the survivors left Poland for Israel or other destinations.¹⁴

SOURCES Publications concerning the fate of the Jewish community of Andrychów during the Holocaust include: David Jakubowicz, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice, Andrychow, Katowaria, Myslenice, Sucha* (Ramat Gan: Former Residents of Wadowice, 1967); and Avraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 55–58. Additional information on the ghetto can be found on the Web site of the Museum of the History of the Polish Jews: www.sztetl.org.pl.

Relevant documentation includes the following: AŻIH (301/2633); IPN (ASG, sygn. 48, p. 20); and VHF (# 8894, 8966).

Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 55–56.
2. Ibid., pp. 56–57.
3. AŻIH, 301/2633, testimony of Artur Markowicz.
4. VHF, # 8894, testimony of Leo Mittler; # 8966, testimony of Ruth Kamaiko.
5. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 57.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.; AŻIH, 301/2633.

8. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice, Andrychow*, pp. 283–285; VHF, # 8894. AŻIH, 301/2633, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1940.

9. VHF, # 8966.

10. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice, Andrychow*, pp. 283–285.

11. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 57.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.; AŻIH, 301/2633.

14. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 58.

BĘDZIN

Pre-1939: Będzin (Yiddish: Bendin), city, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bendsburg, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Będzin, województwo śląskie, Poland

Będzin is located about 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) northeast of Katowice. The Jewish population of the city was 21,625 in 1931, comprising 45.4 percent of the total population.

The German army entered Będzin on September 4, 1939. Almost immediately the Germans instituted a reign of terror over the city's Jews. They burned Jewish homes and the synagogue, took hostages (some of whom they shot), drafted forced laborers, plundered Jewish property, and cut the Jews off from the city's economic life and from its non-Jewish citizens.

Klaus Udo was named Landrat of Będzin in 1940 and formally served in that position until 1945. After February 1941, his deputy Hieronymus Wolff oversaw operations. From the end of 1942, Hans Feldman, the mayor of Czeladź, served in that capacity.¹



The ruins of the Great Synagogue in Będzin, destroyed by the German police and Einsatzgruppe von Woyrsch during the opening days of war, 1939–1940.

USHMM WS #00427, COURTESY OF YIVO

In late September 1939, a Jewish Aid Committee (Jüdische Hilfskomitee) was set up to replace the pre-war Jewish communal welfare organization. Several weeks later, a Jewish representative body or Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by an engineer, Gustaw Weinzieher, and Lazar Rubinlicht, was established. The Aid Committee opened public kitchens and provided medical care and social assistance for impoverished Jews. On German instructions, a labor center for Jews was established in a local barracks.²

In November 1939, Mojżesz Merin, who was appointed head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia by Hans Dreier, the head of the department of Jewish affairs of the Kattowitz Gestapo, ordered the Jewish Council in Będzin to submit to his authority. The Będzin Judenrat refused, causing Merin to travel to Będzin accompanied by three Gestapo officers. The Judenrat, under duress, submitted to Merin, who demanded a heavy “contribution” from the Jews of Będzin. He also restructured the Jewish Council. Jakub Erlich, who had been on the old committee, became the new head.³ Chaim Merin, the brother of Mojżesz, served as administrator.

In August 1941, the Judenrat was reorganized again. Chaim Merin became the president (general affairs); the vice presidents were M. Laskier (economic affairs) and M. Manela (financial affairs). Other members were M. Gartner, N. Londner, B. Graubart, Chaim Mołczadzki, M. Lewin, Paradistal, L. Rottner, H. Sztrochlic, Wygodzki, H. Henenberg, Dr. J. Zylberszac, and Ch.M. Szpicberg.⁴ The last chairman of the Będzin Jewish Council was Chaim Mołczadzki.⁵

The Judenrat was divided into several departments, including social services, health, food supply (provisioning), economic, finance and budget, labor, forced labor, housing, and archival-statistical. A department of transport and a postal service also functioned in Będzin. The Judenrat maintained a communal kitchen (at 19 Sienkiewicz Street), a children’s home, and a home for the elderly. The latter was directed by Dr. Weinzieher, who had been a representative in the Polish Sejm. In 1942, an infirmary was established in the home for the elderly on Podzamcze Street. There was also a steam bath with a disinfection room. The Jewish Council issued free passes for haircuts to the poor. The health department exercised strict control over sanitation.⁶

The Będzin Judenrat was subordinated to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia. It constituted a separate unit—Stadtkreis Będzin, which in October 1940 numbered 25,264 people. Benjamin Graubart served as the Kreis Inspector answerable to the Central Office.⁷

On September 10, 1940, a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was set up by the Jewish Council, consisting at first of 15 officers. The first commandant was named Kaufman. He was succeeded by Julek Fersztenfeld and then Romek Goldmanc. On August 14, 1941, Chaim Mołczadzki took command.⁸ In September 1942, Wolf Izrael Buchweitz took over.⁹ The last commandant of the Jewish Police was Henryk Barenblatt.

In March 1941, there were 25,171 Jews living in Będzin. On April 5, 1941, a first group of Jews was resettled from Oświęcim

(Auschwitz) to Będzin. Initially they were housed in a Jewish orphanage. Four days later, a second transport arrived; altogether more than 1,000 people. Eventually they were dispersed to private apartments.¹⁰ Thus in July 1941, 27,001 Jews were living in Będzin.¹¹

Jews from Będzin, like all Jews of Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, were placed at the disposal of the Organisation Schmelt; Albrecht Schmelt was appointed as its head in October 1940 and entrusted with sending Jews to forced labor camps and organizing their work deployment in the towns of the region.

From November 1940, the deportation of Jews to forced labor camps started. All men between the ages of 17 and 50, and women from 16 to 45, who were not working in local workshops (shops) or for the Jewish Council, had to appear before a medical commission. Following the selections, many were sent to forced labor camps. This same process took place repeatedly until May 1943.¹²

In Będzin, Jews worked in several factories and workshops. Towards the end of 1940, Rossner established his tailoring shop, which produced clothing for the Wehrmacht. In October 1941, another firm was established—called “Galanterie und Lederwaren E. Nawrat Bendsburg”—a fancy goods and leather goods factory. In January 1942, there were 20 Jews working there; one year later, there were 400.¹³

In late 1941, on Kołłątaj Street, the Michatz shop was founded in a building that was the shirt-making factory of the brothers Faldberg before the war. Some 1,000 people worked there producing shirts, underclothes, and (later) military uniforms. Women worked in the Loytsche shop, which produced ropes and cords. In June 1942, the general textile and iron firm of Rudolf Braun was established in the area. Its first shop was opened in Dąbrowa; then others opened in Będzin and Sosnowiec. The firm produced and repaired shoes.

Several hundred Jews worked in the shop headed by Scherley, a resettled ethnic German from Romania. At several workshops in Będzin, the firm produced women’s purses from oilcloth, bags and suitcases, and parts for bicycles. Scherley took over the pre-war Jewish firms of Rosmarin (suitcase factory), Rottenberg (saddles and seats), and Warsz (bags and purses). There were also smaller businesses in which Jews worked. These included factories on Kołłątaj Street and at 22 Małachowski Street, which both made washing machines; the Gruengrass factory, which produced metal goods;¹⁴ and the shop on Modrzejów Street, which employed 700 to 800 Jews, making uniforms, military overcoats, and other clothing.

From the beginning of 1940, Jews were systematically removed from houses in the center of the city, namely, from Sączewski and Piłsudski Streets. The Jews were moved into apartments on Modrzejów Street, Stary Rynek Street, Podzamcze Street, and Czeladzka Street.¹⁵

A resettlement bureau (Umsiedlungsstab) was established in the town hall to expel Jews from certain streets and house in their place Germans from Bessarabia and Bukovina. Over time the area in which the Jews were allowed to reside or circulate was limited. In the spring of 1941, the Landrat in Będzin issued a *Judenbann* (ban of Jews), which also excluded Jews from

parks and recreational areas. The Jews were only permitted to live on Modrzejów Street, in Zawale, and near Górka and in neighboring areas. The only route of passage was Modrzejów Street.¹⁶

In May 1942, a Jewish residential quarter (open ghetto) was established. It encompassed Modrzejowska Street, Stary Rynek and the smaller streets around it, and the beginning of Kołłątaj, Czeladzka, and Podgórna Streets. Jews were not allowed to live or walk along Małachowski Street, but some lived in annexes of buildings on that street. Therefore, a passage had to be dug through the basements so they could exit onto Modrzejów Street.¹⁷

The process of resettling the Jews of Będzin from the center of the city to the quarters of Kamionka and Mała Środula, where Polish workers resided, began in October 1942. It was completed in the middle of March 1943. The ghetto was not surrounded by barbed wire and was guarded by Jewish Police. It was thus easy to enter and leave, as much of the ghetto bordered the Aryan section. The living conditions in the ghetto were very harsh, with filthy, cramped homes and lack of plumbing.¹⁸ A Jewish post office was organized in the ghetto. The Judenrat's construction department built or renovated homes. Several barracks, with plumbing and electricity, were constructed for the workers in Rossner's shop.¹⁹

Ha-Noar Ha-Zioni, a Zionist organization, remained active in Będzin during the entire occupation, even in the ghetto. The leaders of the organization in the Zagłębie Dąbrowskie region were: Józef and Bolesław Kożuchowie, Jan Cymerman, Samuel Majtlis, Israel Diamand, Lola Pomeranczenblum, Karola Bojm, and Henryk Lustiger.²⁰ Also active was the underground organization Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, led by Cwi Brandes, Chajka Klinger, Dawid Kozłowski and his sisters Idzia and Irena, Lee Peisachsohn, and Hala Katzenholz. In the spring of 1943, a Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir kibbutz was established within the ghetto on Hüttenstrasse. Its leaders were Cwi Brandes and Chajka Klinger. Some 20 people belonged to the kibbutz. They



A Jewish policeman informs a crowd of people about the order to vacate the Zederman house on Zawodzie Street, 1942–1943.
USHMM WS #20743, COURTESY OF ARNOLD SHAY (ABRAM SZYJEWICZ)

participated in various forms of organized resistance against the occupier. Gordonia, led in Będzin by Szlomo Lerner and Hanka Borensztejn, was also active.²¹

During the second half of 1942, a Jewish cell connected with the Polska Partia Robotnicza (Polish Workers' Party) was formed. Its members were Józef Lubling, Mojżesz Szejnberg, Josef Plotek, and Samuel Waldman. After the Gestapo made some arrests among leftist youth in March 1943, the group's activities came to an end.²²

The first mass deportation Aktion in Będzin was on May 12, 1942; about 3,200 Jews were deported to Auschwitz.

On August 12, 1942, the Jews of Będzin were ordered to gather at two separate points in the city—the "Hakoach" sports field on Kościuszko Street and the "Sarmacja" sports field on Małobądz—to have their papers stamped. Merin urged everyone to attend, and the Judenbann was even temporarily set aside to facilitate the operation. Some 23,000 Jews reported to these two selection points. Soon, the German Order Police surrounded the people and were joined by officials of the Security Police. The ensuing selection went on for three days. When they realized their fate, some Jews fled in panic and were shot; others committed suicide. The youth movements smuggled some children away to safety. In total around 5,000 Jews were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp, including the Jewish populations of the nearby towns of Grodziec, Wojkowice, Dobieszowice, Rogoźnik, Bobrowniki, Sączów, and Niezdary, who were brought to Będzin for deportation. Others were selected for the forced labor camps.²³

On May 19, 1943, part of the Będzin ghetto was surrounded by the German police and Gestapo. Several thousand people were rounded up and sent to Auschwitz. On June 22, 1943, at around 3:00 A.M., German police again surrounded the ghetto in Kamionka, and around 13,000 people were gathered in the town square. Of the assembled Jews, several thousand were selected under the supervision of a German officer named Dreier, who disregarded the labor permits of some, and sent them to Auschwitz, where most were gassed shortly after arrival.²⁴

Among those deported was a large group made up exclusively of workers in the Rossner shop and those who worked in the institutions of the Jewish Council. Then shortly afterwards, in July 1943, several thousand Jews from the liquidated ghetto of Dąbrowa Górnicza were resettled into the Będzin ghetto.

On August 1, 1943, the final liquidation of the ghetto took place. Several transports were sent each day for the next three or four days. Armed resistance was put up for several days by the young people in the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (Jewish Fighting Organization), which was founded in the fall of 1942 following a visit by Mordechaj Anielewicz to the region.²⁵ During the first few days of the Aktion, several hundred Jews were shot, including the resistance fighters Frumka Plotnicka, Józef Kożuch, and Cwi Brandes.

As a result of the liquidation, around 12,000 people were deported from Będzin. From the crowds gathered for deportation, the head of Rossner's shop selected 600 to 700 Jews and, with the Gestapo's permission, kept them behind. At the end of August, only 230 to 280 Jewish prisoners remained in

Będzin. At the start of January 1944, 200 more Jews were expelled from Będzin, leaving only about 50 people. They worked in the tailor and furrier shops. In July 1944, they were sent to the camp at Góra Św. Anny and from there in October 1944 to Auschwitz.²⁶

More than 200 Jewish prisoners survived the liquidation of the ghetto by hiding in bunkers and other hiding places. They were discovered by the police and Gestapo, then used for cleaning up the ghetto. They survived in this manner in Kamionka until April 1944, when they were sent to Auschwitz.²⁷ Several hundred Jews from Będzin survived the Holocaust, including a number who made it through the further selections in Auschwitz and other camps.

After the war, several German officials of Organisation Schmelt were prosecuted. The officials were held responsible for, among other things, the deportations of the Jewish population from Będzin in May and August 1942. Friedrich Karl Kuczynski was sentenced to death by the local district court in Sosnowiec (SOSn) on September 23, 1948. Another official of Organisation Schmelt, Heinrich Lindner, was arrested by American forces. He committed suicide in January 1949.

On February 7, 1950, an appellate court (Sąd Apelacyjny) sentenced Karol Jenzen to nine years in prison. Jenzen had been head of the Będzin branch of the Treuhandstelle and was involved in the deportation of the Jewish population of the city.

SOURCES Helpful in reconstructing the history of the Jews of Będzin are: J.Sh. Stein, *Pinkes Bendin* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at Irgun Yots'e Bendin be-Yisrael, 1959); J. Rapoport, *Pinkas Zagłemie* (Tel Aviv, 1972); and D. Liwer, *Ir Hametim* (Tel Aviv: N. Tverski, 1945–1946).

Among a number of published memoirs related to the Będzin ghetto are: Arnold Shay, *From Bendzin to Auschwitz: A Journey to Hell* (Hanover, MA: Christopher Publishing House, 1996); Jochanan Ranz, *In Nazi Claws: Bendzin 1939–1944* (New York, 1976); and Mirian Kipper, *My Memories: Holocaust Memoirs 1939–1945* (Tel Aviv: Kavim, 2006). The diary of a 14-year-old girl, written in the Będzin ghetto, was published in 2007: Rutka Laskier, *Rutka's Notebook: January–April 1943* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007). Among several illustrated books containing photographs of the Jews of Będzin is: Kersten Brandt, Hanno Loewy, and Krystyna Oleksy, eds, *Before They Perished* (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (e.g., Polizeipräsident Sosnowitz, 316; Regierung Kattowitz, 2785; RSGZDG, sygn. 30); AŻIH (e.g., 301/602, 1225, 2449, 2451, 2622, 2711, 2728–2729, 3479–3480, 3536, 4302, 4283, 4295, 4308); BA-BL; BA-L; IfZ; IPN; IPN-Kat; NARA; USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

Aleksandra Namysło
trans. Steven Seegel and Claire Rosenson

NOTES

1. R. Kaczmarek, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Katowice: Wydawn Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1998), pp. 73–74.

2. AŻIH, 301/1225, testimony of J. Sender; 301/2449, testimony of Samuel Półtorak.

3. Ibid., 301/1225.

4. Ibid., Centrala Żydowskich Rad Starszych Wschodniego Górnego Śląska, 212/1, p. 29, Okólnik no. 88, August 13, 1941.

5. Ibid., 301/2449.

6. Ibid., 301/2451, testimony of Abram Szeftel.

7. APKat, RSGZDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1942, p. 169.

8. AŻIH, Centrala Żydowskich Rad Starszych Wschodniego Górnego Śląska, 212/1, Okólnik no. 90, August 14, 1941.

9. Ibid., 212/4, p. 44.

10. Ibid., 301/1225.

11. APKat, RSGZDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1942, p. 169.

12. AŻIH, 301/1225.

13. Ibid., 301/4302, testimony of S. Póttorak; 301/2449.

14. Ibid., 301/4303.

15. Ibid., 301/2729, testimony of Nacha Krakowska.

16. Ibid., 301/602, testimony of Sali Kanner; see also APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2785, as cited by Sybille Steinbacher, *“Musterstadt” Auschwitz: Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1999), pp. 267–268.

17. AŻIH, 301/2449.

18. Ibid., 301/4308, testimony of Anna Lerhenfeld.

19. Ibid., 301/2449; 301/4308.

20. Ibid., 301/3536, testimony of Jadzia Szpigelman.

21. Ibid., 301/3480, testimony of Fela Katz.

22. Ibid., 301/3479, testimony of Samuel Waldman.

23. Ibid., 301/2622, testimony of Mojżesz Szwarc; 301/2711, testimony of Jakob Freiberger; APKat, Polizeipräsident Sosnowitz, 316, p. 228.

24. AŻIH, 301/1225.

25. Ibid., 301/2728, testimony of N. Krakowska.

26. Ibid., 301/4283, testimony of Chiel Gerlic.

27. Ibid., 301/4295, testimony of Hanka Szajer.

BIELSKO-BIAŁA

Pre-1939: Bielsko-Biała, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bielitz, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Bielsko-Biała, województwo śląskie, Poland

Bielsko-Biała is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Katowice. According to the 1931 census, there were 4,430 Jewish residents in Bielsko. Prior to the outbreak of World War II, there were 12,000 Jews living in the town and its vicinity; in Bielsko proper, there were approximately 4,700 Jews. According to a census conducted in December 1939, there were 7,854 Jews in Kreis Bielitz.¹

German forces entered Bielsko on September 2, 1939. The town's German residents immediately began looting apartments, shops, and workshops that had been deserted by the Jews. It was at this time that the first brutal antisemitic incidents occurred. On September 5, the Germans selected 15 able-bodied Jews and took them to Gestapo headquarters, where they were tortured.



Wartime passport of Bielsko-Biala resident and Holocaust survivor, Herta Frohlich, 1941.

USHMM WS #24092, COURTESY OF HERTA FROHLICH BRANN

They beat their victims over the head with iron chains, and when they fell down unconscious they would pour buckets of water on them, then forcing the victims to get up. Afterwards they hanged them up by their legs, while 15 Hitler Youth members danced around them singing Nazi songs. Next, they were brought down, and taken to a pit, where they were buried up to their necks. Five of them did not survive the beatings and torture—which lasted for three days. The remaining 10—half dead—were released.²

In the first days of the occupation, the Germans set on fire all of the synagogues in the town. Subsequently the Jews were also obliged to pay a large fine to cover the costs of clearing the rubble of these buildings.³

On October 19, 1939, approximately 500 of Bielsko's Jews (aged 18–50) were transported to Nisko near the San River. There, under the threat of death by firing squad, the Germans chased them across the new border with the Soviet Union. On October 28, a second group of 240 men (aged 16–60) was gathered and given the same treatment.⁴

After the chaos of the first days of occupation, the German authorities began to restrict their rights and isolate them from the non-Jewish population. Jews were required to perform forced labor, initially cleaning the barracks where the German army was garrisoned. By the end of 1940, the Ger-

man authorities had introduced a series of harsh economic measures, which first restricted and eventually excluded Jews almost entirely from the sphere of commerce. Based on decrees issued by the military and civil authorities, the property of displaced people (Jews and Poles) was confiscated; Jewish bank accounts and deposits were blocked; cash withdrawals were restricted; shops were marked; and the contents of warehouses were requisitioned. Jewish businesses were placed under the control of trustees, which was tantamount to their confiscation. In November 1939, Jews were ordered to wear white armbands, which were replaced in September 1941 by yellow patches with a Star of David emblem on the left breast.

In May 1940, approximately 1,000 Bielsko Jews were deported to the surrounding towns of Wadowice, Kęty, Oświęcim, and Andrychów. By mid-September 1940, there were only 399 Jews living in Bielsko.⁵

Siegfried Schmidt was appointed as the Landrat of Kreis Bielitz from 1940 to 1942; Bernhard Nienaber replaced him and held this post until the end of the occupation. Rolf Wiesner was the Bürgermeister of the town of Bielsko-Biala. The commander of the Bielitz Freikorps, Ernest Lanz, was nominated as the local head of the Nazi Party in the Kreis. Rudolf Christ was the commander of the Bielsko SA. Kriminalsekretär Güzschel was the first Gestapo chief; this post was filled subsequently by a local Nazi, Kurt Müller.⁶

At the end of 1939, a Judenrat, chaired by Józef Rotter, was established in Bielsko. The Judenrat was supervised by the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia, with Mojżesz Merin as its head. The Kreis Inspectorate subordinated to the Central Office—which supervised several Jewish communities—was also located in Bielsko. In October 1940, the Jewish population of the entire Kreis Bielitz Inspectorate numbered 8,718 Jews and included the following communities: Bielsko (399 people), Dziedzice (89), Kęty (325), Wadowice (1,400), Andrychów (490), Zator (415), and Oświęcim (5,600). In March 1941, there were 351 Jews living in Bielsko, with 9,186 throughout the territory of the Inspectorate. After the expulsion of the Jewish community of Oświęcim in April 1941, the number of Jews in Bielsko did not change, yet the number of Jews in the Kreis declined to 3,028.⁷

In January 1940, the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen, which according to the statistics of the Central Office was used by only six people in March 1941. An infirmary was established in June 1940. According to Arnon Rubin, survivor testimonies indicate some dissatisfaction with the Judenrat, as it remained largely submissive to the Germans and did not achieve much to alleviate living conditions for the Jews.⁸

As of October 1940, the Jews of Bielsko, like all the Jews in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt, which was responsible for the deportation of Jews to labor camps and their assignment to factories and workshops. Bielsko's Jewish youth were employed in an armaments factory in Frysztat, and some of its Jewish women worked in clothing workshops in Wadowice. According to the statistics of the Central Office, on



Wartime photograph of Gerda Weissmann, who was held in the Bielsko-Biala ghetto.

USHMM WS #ID4323, COURTESY OF GERDA WEISSMANN KLEIN

August 1, 1942, 60 Bielsko Jews were registered as workers in labor camps.⁹

According to survivor testimonies given shortly after the war, in August 1941, Bielsko's Jews were resettled from the center of Bielsko to the village of Lipniki, near Biała, where a ghetto was established. It consisted of a few houses on Zipsera Street, Lerchenfeld Street, and Listopad Street.¹⁰

The memoir of Gerda Weissmann Klein, however, dates her resettlement to the ghetto on April 19, 1942. The ghetto consisted of a number of buildings clustered together. All the Jews now remaining lived in those few houses and in a huge armory-like building with primitive plumbing, about 10 minutes' walk from the Kultusgemeinde. "More and more frequently the dreaded word *Aussiedlung* [deportation] crept into conversations. Young people, we heard, were sent to labor camps. The old ones were sent to Auschwitz. Even then we knew what kind of camp it was. Somehow we never believed what happened to Jews in other towns would happen to us."¹¹

The Central Office recorded 461 Jews registered in Bielsko-Biała on May 1, 1942.¹² At this time conditions for the remaining Jews deteriorated, as many of those capable of work, including heads of families, were sent away to labor camps. Thus mainly, women, children, and the elderly remained, who suffered from disease and the lack of food.

On June 29, 1942, all the town's Jewish residents were ordered to report to several designated locations, where selections were conducted.¹³ Of those who reported, 40 persons were sent to a labor camp, and the remaining 400 or so Jews were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. The 15 people who remained in the town, including the chairman of the

Judenrat, were left to sort Jewish belongings. They were deported to Wadowice on July 15, 1942. In October 1943, there were 35 Jews and 44 *Mischlinge* (Jews born in mixed marriages) in Bielsko. At this time, approximately 15 men were sent to work in France, only to be sent back after four months. These Jewish men were sent to Thuringia in October 1944, while 44 women continued to work in a local ammunition factory. Of Bielsko's pre-war Jewish residents, between 200 and 350 returned after the war.¹⁴

SOURCES Some information regarding the history of the Jews of Bielsko-Biała can be found in the works of Jacek Proszek, *Cmentarz żydowski w Bielsku-Białej* (Bielsko-Biała, 2002); T. Fałęcki, "Okupacja hitlerowska," in *Bielsko-Biała. Zarys rozwoju miasta i powiatu* (Katowice, 1971); and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 128–129. There is also a yizkor book for the Jewish community, edited by Elijahu Miron, *Bilits-Biala; pirke 'avar* (Israel, 1973). The memoir of Gerda Weissmann Klein, *All But My Life* (New York: Noonday, 1957), mentions the ghetto in Bielsko-Biała.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 3 and 30; Regierung Kattowitz, 2779); AŻIH (301/3966, 3968, 3970); USHMM; and YVA (O-3/1251).

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trans. Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Fałęcki, "Okupacja hitlerowska," p. 232.
2. AŻIH, 301/3966, collective testimony of Róża Reichel, Markus Szajer, Eugeniusz Reich, Rudolf Walaszek, and Adolf Rychter.
3. Ibid., 301/3970, testimony of the Jewish Committee in Bielsko.
4. Ibid.
5. APKat, RSGŻDG, 3, Bulletin no. 1, September 15, 1940, pp. 1–2.
6. Fałęcki, "Okupacja hitlerowska," p. 321.
7. APKat, RSŻGDG, 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1941, p. 128; and Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, March 12, 1941, p. 209.
8. Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, 3:129.
9. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, Statistische Angaben über den Stand der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, August 24, 1942, p. 3.
10. AŻIH, 301/3968, testimony of Franciszek Rychter. Rubin (*The Rise and Fall*, vol. 3) and *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 3:689, however, both date the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1940.
11. Klein, *All But My Life*, pp. 72–79.
12. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, Statistische Angaben, p. 3.
13. According to AŻIH, 301/3966, testimony of Róża Reichel, Markus Szajer, Eugeniusz Reich, Rudolf Walaszek, and Adolf Rychter: "On June 29, all ghetto residents were taken with their luggage to Dziedzice." Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 3, dates this Aktion as taking place on June 20, 1942.

14. AŻIH, 301/3966; J. Proszek, *Cmentarz żydowski w Bielsku-Białej* (Bielsko-Biała, 2002), p. 82.

CHRZANÓW

Pre-1939: Chrzanów (Yiddish: Kbzbanev), town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Krenau, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Chrzanów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Chrzanów is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) southeast of Katowice. In 1931, there were 7,023 Jews residing in Chrzanów, comprising 39 percent of the total population.

German troops entered Chrzanów on September 4, 1939. The occupying forces immediately began to abuse, plunder, and kill members of the Jewish population. The Germans instituted measures that isolated the Jews from the local population and excluded them from the economy.

In May 1940, a total of 6,807 Jews were residing in Chrzanów. On May 14 and 15, 1940, about 1,200 Jews from Rybnik, Pszczyna, Mikołów, Chorzów, Katowice, and Mysłowice were deported to Chrzanów and the neighboring town of Trzebinia.¹ In March 1941, 7,884 Jews were registered as living in

Chrzanów.² By June, the number had risen to 8,423,³ as in April 1941 a number of Jews arrived in Chrzanów who had been expelled from Oświęcim.

From September 7, 1939, the county official (Landrat) of the Krakau district, Dr. Zilch, was in charge of Chrzanów. A man named Nolke became the mayor of the town. Two days later Eugen Höbert took over as the commander of the military administration. At the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940, Theo Schulz was the Landrat in Chrzanów. On May 1, 1941, Dr. Walter Cantner was officially named as the Landrat, after having been the acting Landrat from February 23, 1940. When Cantner was sent to the front in 1943, a man named Groll, the Landrat in Olkusz, assumed responsibility for Chrzanów. First Lieutenant Paul Schindler became the head of the local Security Police. In May 1941, Chrzanów became one of the four police districts (Ortspolizeibezirke) under the supervision of the mayor, J. Gründler (der Bürgermeister der Ortspolizeibehörde-Kriminalpolizei). Otto Westpohl served as the head of the local Criminal Police (Kripo).⁴

The first Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established at the end of 1939. It consisted of the following individuals: Józef Umlauf (a locksmith and chairman of the organization of Jewish War Veterans), Fasek Weber, David Wachsberg, Levi Krauskopf, and Józef Shmuel Shonhertz.⁵ In January 1940, the administration of the Jewish community was reorganized by Mojżesz Merin, the head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office).⁶ His brother, Chaim Merin, who held formal authority over the local Jews, implemented the reorganization.⁷ In March 1940, the Jewish Council was reconstituted; in addition to Weber and Wachsberg, the following people joined the Judenrat: Bezalel Cuckier, Mojżesz Nagoschyner, Kalmen Teichler, Zelig Grajower, Schmuel Yosef Weiss, and Mendel Nussbaum.⁸ Cuckier (the leader of the local Mizrachi Party) became the head of the Chrzanów Jewish Council in October 1940. Some members of the Judenrat had a fairly good reputation among the Jewish population. The Gestapo deported three of them, Cuckier, Nussbaum, and Teichler, to the Auschwitz concentration camp on February 19, 1942, for alleged sabotage. The last leader of the Chrzanów Jewish Council was Dr. Władysław Boehm, sent by Merin of the Central Office to act in accordance with his strategy of cooperation with the Germans.⁹ Boehm held this position until the liquidation of the ghetto in February 1943. Chrzanów also became one of the eight district centers that were subordinated to the Central Office. In June 1941, the Jewish population of Kreis Krenau numbered 12,708. That figure included the Jewish inhabitants of neighboring villages and communities, such as Jaworzno (2,161 people), Szczakowa (530 people), and Trzebinia (1,242 people).¹⁰

The Jewish community also had its own police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) under the command of Weber, a particularly cynical and brutal plunderer. The unit consisted of 20 officers.¹¹ The Jewish community maintained two public kitchens for the poor (established in February and June 1940) and an orphanage (opened in December 1940). In March 1941, 35 percent of the Jews in Chrzanów were receiving public



Three young women from the Chrzanów ghetto, Fella Tag, Sala Rauchwenger, and Cesia Rabinowicz, pose in armbands, n.d.
USHMM WS #49316, COURTESY OF HELEN SENDYK

welfare.¹² Until 1942, Jewish children attended school; the instruction in all of the subjects was in Polish. In the 1939–1940 school year, 900 Jewish children were registered at four elementary schools in Chrzanów.¹³

The Jews of Chrzanów, like all Jews of Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, were placed at the disposal of the Organisation Schmelt; Albrecht Schmelt was appointed as its head in October 1940 and entrusted with sending Jews to forced labor camps and organizing their work deployment in the towns of the region. Jews from Chrzanów were sent to work on highway construction, at other forced labor camps at quarries, and on railway lines or were deployed locally to work in a factory producing rubber products or in a branch of Albert Rossner's clothing plant. Deportations of Jews to the forced labor camps were carried out by the Germans with the assistance of Merin and Jewish Police sent from Sosnowiec by the Central Office.

In 1940, the Germans started removing the Jews from certain streets and resettling them in predominantly Jewish areas. Then by the end of 1941, a Jewish "residential area" or open ghetto was established in Chrzanów. It was situated between the following streets: Kadłubek, Krzyska, Kraków, Garncarska, Luszowska, Balińska, and Berek Joselewicz. It was not surrounded by a wall or fence, and the Jewish Police was in charge of security inside the ghetto.¹⁴ In addition to the ghetto, some Jews also resided on Kraków Street, but exclusively in courtyard buildings (away from the street). It was forbidden for them to walk on Kraków Street.¹⁵ In March and April 1942, approximately 1,000 Jews from neighboring towns, such as Ciężkowice, Chełmek, Kwaczał, Szczakowa, Alwernia, and Łuszowice, were moved to the Chrzanów ghetto.¹⁶ In May 1942, a total of 8,631 Jews were residing in Chrzanów.¹⁷

At the end of May 1942, the German authorities conducted a large-scale deportation Aktion in the Chrzanów ghetto. The selections for these deportations lasted six days and were carried out with the participation of representatives of Merin's Central Office based on Krzyska Street. The selection was based on the Jews' ability to work. During this period, approximately 3,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz or to labor camps.

Helen Sendyk wrote of the deportation Aktions:

House raids against the Jews came with ever more frequency and malice. Families were torn apart, with mothers being taken away from small children. Fathers, sons, and daughters were shipped away to forced labor camps. The old and the feeble dared not go out in the streets. Starvation, disease, and death found them in their hiding places. Food was ever more difficult for the dwindling Jewish population to obtain.¹⁸

Jews had to appear to register in order to obtain food stamps, but this exposed them to possible deportation.

On July 8, 1942, Paul Schindler of the Gestapo issued an order calling for all of the Chrzanów Jews, with the exception of those transferred from Trzebinia and Szczakowa, to appear at the square on Kupka Street. About 2,500 people complied

with the order. The German authorities selected 1,500 people and led them under police escort to the local elementary school. The next day these people were deported to Auschwitz. From this day on, such Aktions were conducted almost every week, under Westpohl's command.¹⁹ The transports consisted of between 30 and 150 people. In August 1942, a total of 6,551 Jews remained in Chrzanów.²⁰

The workers who remained in Chrzanów by the fall of 1942 were mainly employed in a branch of the Oberschlesischen Gummiwerke GmbH or in a clothing factory making uniforms for the Wehrmacht.

The final Aktion to liquidate the Chrzanów ghetto came on February 18, 1943. The selection of the assembled victims was carried out by an official of Organisation Schmelt, Heinrich Lindner. The residents of the ghetto were divided into two groups. One was sent to Auschwitz, the other to the labor camps in Muszowice. The members of the Jewish Council were sent to Sosnowiec and from there to Auschwitz. Few Chrzanów Jews survived the Holocaust. In May 1945, only 60 Jews were living in Chrzanów.²¹

SOURCES General information on the history of Chrzanów and its Jewish community can be found in: *Chrzanów: Studia z dziejów miasta*, 2 vols. (Chrzanów, 1998–1999), which also includes articles on the German occupation. Information on the history of the Jews of Chrzanów and their fate in the Holocaust can be found in Mordecai Bochner, *Chrzanów: The Life and Destruction of a Jewish Shtetl* (Roslyn Harbor, NY: Solomon Gros, 1989), originally published as *Sefer Kbzhanew* (Munich-Regensburg, 1949); and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 152–153. A survivor memoir was published by Helen Sendyk, *The End of Days* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

Relevant documentation and the testimonies of surviving Jews from Chrzanów can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 3 and 30; Regierung Kattowitz, 2779); AŻIH (301/2718, 2720, 3016, 4915); IPN-Kat; USHMM (e.g., RG-50.002*0072 and Acc.1997.A.0235); VHF; and YVA.

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trans. Katrin Reichelt and Claire Rosenson

NOTES

1. APKat, Łagiewniki township, 260, Circular no. 3 Gestapo in Katowice, May 8, 1940, p. 10.
2. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, List of Councils of Elders of Jewish communities in Ost-Oberschlesien, March 12, 1941, p. 211.
3. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, census of the Jewish population, June 20, 1941, p. 173.
4. T. Fałęcki, and I. Sroka, "Chrzanów w latach okupacji 1939–1945," in *Chrzanów: Studia*, 15–24; R. Kaczmarek, *Pod rękami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Katowice: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1998), p. 74.
5. Bochner, *Chrzanów*.
6. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, Bulletin no. 1, September 15, 1940, p. 2.
7. AŻIH, 301/3016.

8. Bochner, *Chrzanów*.
9. *Sefer Kibzanev*, pp. 283–285, as cited by Isaiah Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution: Collective and Individual Behavior in Extremis* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), p. 331.
10. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, census of the Jewish population as of June 20, 1941, p. 173.
11. AŻIH, 301/2720.
12. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30 (Jewish Welfare in Eastern Upper Silesia), March 25, 1941, p. 242.
13. Fałęcki and Sroka, “Chrzanów w latach okupacji,” p. 37.
14. IPN-Kat, p. 1/188, investigation of the extermination of the Jews in Wadowice 1942–1943 and in other ghettos in the territories of Zagłębie, Dąbrowska, and Chrzanów, minutes of the interrogation of Stanisław P., April 20, 1989, p. 128. This source dates the ghetto’s establishment at the end of 1941. AŻIH, 301/4915, testimony of Samuel Feiler, however, dates it in February 1941, but the chronology in this account appears unreliable.
15. AŻIH, 301/2720.
16. *Ibid.*, 301/2718.
17. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, official data on the Jewish population, August 24, 1942, p. 4.
18. Sendyk, *The End of Days*, p. 129.
19. AŻIH, 301/2720.
20. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, official data on the Jewish population, August 24, 1942, p. 4.
21. AŻIH, CKŻP, Wydział Kultury i Propagandy, sygn. 129–130, Biuletyn no. 34/35, May 29, 1945.

CZELADŹ

Pre-1939: Czeladź, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Czeladz, Kreis Bendsburg, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Czeladź, województwo śląskie, Poland

Czeladź is located about 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) north-northeast of Katowice. At the time of the German invasion in 1939, the Jewish population stood at more than 1,000 people; Jews comprised about 5 percent of the town’s total population.

The Germans occupied Czeladź on September 5, 1939. On this day 20 Jews from Czeladź were taken as hostages to Będzin; after eight days of beatings and torture they were permitted to return home. When the chaos of the first days of occupation came to an end, the German authorities began removing the Jewish community from economic life in Czeladź, depriving it of certain basic rights, and isolating it from the non-Jews of the town. The Jews in Czeladź were subjected to the same restrictive measures as other Jewish communities in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, which first became part of Provinz Schlesien in 1939, then the new Provinz Oberschlesien in 1941. Among the measures introduced from the fall of 1939 were forced labor and the confiscation of Jewish property. The Jews also were forced to pay a contribution in money or gold of 10 Reichsmark (RM) per head.¹

Meanwhile, the German administration established itself in the town. Hans Felden was appointed as mayor of Czeladź. At the end of September 1939, a detachment of Order Police, subordinated to the Schutzpolizei post in Sosnowiec, was es-



Studio portrait of the Urman family, ca. 1940. The Urmans were confined to the Czeladź ghetto and murdered at Auschwitz in 1943. USHMM WS #08806, COURTESY OF SALOMON URMAN

tablished in Czeladź. From October 1940, it was subordinated to the newly created Polizeipräsidium in Sosnowiec, under the command of Alexander von Woedtke.

In June 1940, the Gestapo organized an anti-Jewish massacre in revenge for the murder of a German by an unknown person. The Jews and Poles were summoned to appear on the main square, where they were beaten and tortured by German police officers and Gestapo officials, who “jumping and dancing on the bodies, especially the Jews, beat them with sticks and iron tools. The blood flowed in streams and the victims were not even allowed to moan. The wild revel lasted until late at night, and when the Nazis finally had enough, they ordered their victims to return back to their homes.”² Some 20 Jews were detained, then transported to Będzin. They never returned.

In January 1940, a Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia was established in Sosnowiec under the leadership of Mojżesz Merin. All the Jewish inhabitants of Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz and some communities from Regierungsbezirk Oppeln were subordinated to the new Central Office. In the second half of January 1940, according to the instructions of the head of the Kattowitz Gestapo section dealing with Jewish matters (Department J), and with the personal involvement of Merin, the religious community in Czeladź was recognized. It was represented by a Jewish Council of Elders (Ältestenrat der Juden, or Judenrat),³ with Pinkus Koppel initially as its head. In September 1940, the Czeladź Jewish community numbered 1,120 people. It was directly subordinated to the Kreis Inspectorate in Dąbrowa Górnicza and thus to the Central Office.⁴ In March 1941, Szyja Goldberg was the chairman of the Judenrat in Czeladź.⁵ In August 1942, Abram Pozmantir occupied this post. The community maintained a soup kitchen (set up on October 1, 1940) and a fire department. In March 1941, 1,204 Jews were residing in Czeladź, and of these about 15 percent were receiving social welfare benefits of some kind.⁶

A separate Jewish residential district (open ghetto) was established in Czeladź in June 1941. The Jewish district covered 2,400 square meters (0.6 acre) and encompassed the following streets: Żytia, Żwirki i Wigury, Kamienna, and Spokojna.⁷ The Jewish youth in Czeladź cooperated with the resistance movement of young people, formed mainly by members of the Zionist group Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, based in Będzin and Sosnowiec.

From June 1940, the Jewish inhabitants of Czeladź, like all Jews living in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, were placed under the authority of Organisation Schmelt for the purposes of forced labor deployment. Albrecht Schmelt was the Special Representative of the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police for Employing Foreign Nationalities in Upper Silesia and was directly subordinated to Heinrich Himmler. The office of Organisation Schmelt in Czeladź, commonly called the Dienststelle (Office), had all Jewish workers at its disposal, which meant that it was responsible for deciding whether Jews would be allocated to work within the town (in the so-called shops) or whether they would be transported to other forced labor camps. In Czeladź, the Jews worked in the pottery factory "Józefów" (about 50 people), and quite a large group was also employed in Rossner's shop in Będzin, to which they were transported daily by tram. At the same time, contingents of Jews were periodically sent to labor camps. The first transport of this kind was dispatched in October 1940, when 200 people were sent away.⁸

The Germans carried out the first mass deportation Aktion in Czeladź on May 17, 1942. It lasted from 10:00 A.M. until dusk and then on the next day from 8:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. The Jews from Czeladź were gathered in collection camps in Będzin and Dąbrowa, from where some were subsequently sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁹ More than 200 people were deported on this occasion. On August 12, 1942, all Jewish inhabitants of Czeladź were summoned to appear near the barracks on Paul-Keller-Strasse 27 at 7:00 P.M., in accordance with instructions issued by the Gestapo and Stapo (State Police) in Katowice and by Organisation Schmelt. The purpose of the operation was to stamp the identity cards (the so-called *Lichtbildausweise*) of the Jews. Unlike in Sosnowiec, Będzin, and Dąbrowa Górnicza, where the gathering of the towns' Jewish inhabitants ended with their selection and the transportation of some to the Auschwitz concentration camp, in Czeladź the representatives of the Dienststelle and the Gestapo only checked and stamped the documents, and then those assembled were permitted to go home.¹⁰

By the second half of August 1942, about 1,000 Jews remained in Czeladź, following the previous deportations to labor camps.¹¹

The ghetto was enclosed in the autumn of 1942. From the beginning of 1943, German Aktions selecting Jews for transportation to the work camps increased. On May 20, 1943, the Germans liquidated the ghetto in Czeladź.¹² Only 50 Jews employed in Rossner's shop in Będzin and the 37 still working in Czeladź were exempted from the deportations. These Jews were transferred to the ghetto in Będzin, and then after this

ghetto was closed in turn on August 1, 1943, they were sent to Auschwitz.¹³

About 40 Jews from the town are known to have survived until the end of World War II.¹⁴

SOURCES No detailed publication on the fate of the Jews in Czeladź during the Holocaust has been published. A short article by A. Rejdak, "The Jews in Czeladź," is available in *Czeladź Bulletin*, no. 3 (1996). Some information on the Jewish community can be found in Wiesława Konopelska, *Szalom: Pamięci czeladzkich Żydów* (Czeladź: Urząd Miasta, 2008).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (e.g., RSGŻDG, 3 and 30; Polizeipräsident Sosnowiec, 314, 334; and M Sosn, 6368); AŻIH (301/2567); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.033M); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2567, testimony of A. Gelbard, p. 3.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Rejdak, "The Jews in Czeladź," p. 77.
4. APKat, RSGŻDG, 3, Bulletin no. 1 of October 15, 1940, p. 2.
5. Ibid., RSGŻDG, 30, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultus-Gemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden (geordnet nach Kreisinspektoraten), March 12, 1941, p. 214.
6. Ibid., 30, Jüdische Fürsorge in Ost-Oberschlesien, March 25, 1941, p. 245.
7. Rejdak, "The Jews in Czeladź," pp. 77–79.
8. AŻIH, 301/2567, testimony of A. Gelbard, p. 8.
9. APKat, Polizeipräsident Sosnowiec, 316, letter from the Kommando der Schutzpolizei, May 16, 1942, p. 204.
10. AŻIH, 301/2567, testimony of A. Gelbard, p. 8.
11. APKat, M Sosn, 6368, statistical statement concerning the conditions of the Jewish population, information of the Sosnowiec Police Department, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
12. Ibid., Polizeipräsident Sosnowitz, 334, situational report of the commandant of the 4th police precinct in Czeladź to the commandant of the 1st section of the Schutzpolizei in Sosnowiec, June 3, 1943, p. 66.
13. AŻIH, 301/2567, testimony of A. Gelbard, p. 9.
14. Ibid., p. 10.

DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA

Pre-1939: Dąbrowa Górnicza (Yiddish: Dombrowa), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Dombrowa, Kreis Bendsburg, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Dąbrowa Górnicza, województwo śląskie, Poland

Dąbrowa Górnicza is located about 14 kilometers (9 miles) northeast of Katowice. In 1931 there were 5,100 Jews living in Dąbrowa Górnicza (14 percent of the population). In 1939, there were 5,500 members of the religious community altogether in Dąbrowa and the neighboring town of Strzemieszyce.

The German army entered the town on September 4, 1939; they set the synagogue on fire, partially destroying it



Jewish children and adults pose on the streets of Dąbrowa Górnicza, ca. 1939–1940.

USHMM WS #16571, COURTESY OF ZEV AND YEHUDIT MALACH

(later it was converted into a storehouse). On November 9, 1939, 15 local Jews were arrested and sent away to a prison in Katowice. Several weeks later (probably in May 1940), about 650 Jewish refugees from Austria, Germany, and Cieszyn in Silesia arrived in Dąbrowa Górnicza. At the same time, about 800 young Jews left for the Soviet Union.¹ In September 1940, there were 5,300 Jews living in Dąbrowa Górnicza (14.32 percent of the town's population).²

At the beginning of November 1939, the Germans initiated the first systematic anti-Jewish measures, including confiscations, business closings, a curfew, and the wearing of distinguishing markings (by way of forcing Jews to wear distinctive symbols on their clothes).

In February 1940, Bruno Maier became mayor of the town (prior to this, a Pole, Teofil Trzęsimiech, had performed this function). He was in office for just a few months and was dismissed for misappropriation of property confiscated from Poles and Jews. His successor, Gollasch, was also dismissed for similar misdemeanors. In the middle of 1940, a man named Hein



An elderly Jew wearing a yellow star walks along a street in Dąbrowa Górnicza, 1939–1941.

USHMM WS #05942, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

was appointed to this position, and he remained in the post until the end of the occupation.

Up to the end of 1940, Dąbrowa Górnicza was patrolled by the Third Section of the Schutzpolizei Abschnittskommando (SAk) based in Sosnowiec. After a reorganization of the police structure, Section Headquarters VI of the SAk was established in the town. Police stations in Dąbrowa Górnicza, Zagórze (with a branch in Klimontów), Kazimierz (branch in Porąbka), Niwka (branch in Dańdówka), Strzemieszyce, and Niemce were all subordinated to it. It was in turn subordinated to the Polizeipräsidium in Sosnowiec, under the command of Alexander von Woedtke.

The first police chief in Dąbrowa Górnicza was Gronostaj, and after him (until the end of the war) Paul Baumgart. The head of the local Kripo (Criminal Police) was SA-Führer Friedrich Reese (from January 1940).

In the middle of November 1939, on the orders of the Kattowitz Gestapo (head of the department for Jewish matters, Kriminalkommissar Hans Dreier), the existing community was reorganized, and a Jewish Council (Juderat) was established. It was composed of the following departments: administration, housing, business, budget, social welfare, health, and forced labor. At first Dr. Samuel Mittelman (sent to the camp in Annaberg but returned in July 1942) was the head of the Jewish Council; from 1941, Icek Borenstein was the chairman. The Jewish Council in Dąbrowa was subordinated to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia in Sosnowiec, which was a higher-level body for the Jewish communities in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz and for some communities in Regierungsbezirk Oppeln. Icek Borenstein also performed the function of Kreis Inspector, representing the Central Office. Apart from Dąbrowa Górnicza, he also was responsible for neighboring Jewish communities and their subordinate branches in: Gołonóg (140 Jews), Zagórze (160), Czeladź (1,220), Grodziec (180), Wojkowice Komorne (75), Bobrowniki (30), Dańdówka (180), Łagisza (30), Ożarówice (50), Modrzejów (1,120), and Niwka (375). In total, he was responsible for 8,865 Jews.³

The seat of the Judenrat was located at 11 Sienkiewicz Street.⁴ A Jewish Order Police (Strassenordner) functioned within the community, headed by Abram Braunstein.⁵ The community established soup kitchens on December 10, 1939, and an orphanage on December 16, 1940, in which there were 59 children. In March 1941, 5,564 Jews were living in Dąbrowa Górnicza, and about one quarter of them were receiving social welfare benefits.⁶ On November 19, 1941, Jews from Zagórze were resettled to Dąbrowa Górnicza, and in the spring of 1942, the Jews from Gołonóg arrived.⁷ On May 18, 1942, Jews from Zabkowice (about 340 people) were brought to Dąbrowa Górnicza. They were locked in the synagogue and kept there for several days. At the same time, Jews from Strzemieszyce also arrived. As a result, by the beginning of May 1942, there were 5,802 Jews living in Dąbrowa.⁸

The Jews of Dąbrowa Górnicza, like all Jews in this region, were placed at the disposal of the Organisation Schmelt, appointed in October 1940, whose responsibilities included the



Group portrait of Jewish youth in the Dąbrowa Górnicza ghetto, ca. 1941. Top row, left to right, are Bronka Rubinsztajn, Abram Zarnowiecki, Lena Zak [Koenigstein], and Edzia Wajnsztok. Bottom row, left to right, are Sabina Szeps, Majer Rotmencz, Symka Spokojna, and Balcia Krysztal. USHMM WS #07131, COURTESY OF MORRIS ROSEN

allocation of Jews to work in forced labor camps or their employment locally near their place of residence. The first transport of Jews from Dąbrowa Górnicza to forced labor camps took place in October 1940. About 400 young Jews, aged 18 to 25, were sent to the Klein-Mangersdorf camp to work on the Reichs-Autobahn.⁹ Other groups were eventually sent to other labor camps or worked in town at the firms of Albert Rossner (clothing manufacture) and Rudolf Braun (shoe manufacture and repair). Braun's positive attitude towards his workers was widely known in the Jewish community, especially his efforts to prevent their deportation to labor camps. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1942, about 100 men from Braun's shop were deported.¹⁰

In November 1940, the German authorities established a Jewish quarter, and the Jews were removed from the center of town. The quarter covered the area of Chopin, Łukasiński, Starobędzinska, Hieronimska Dolna, Hieronimska Górna, Jaworowa, and Mirecki Streets.¹¹ The area of the ghetto consisted of 11,400 square meters (2.8 acres). In February 1942, the Jewish quarter in Dąbrowa was still open; that is, the Germans had not yet enclosed it with barbed wire or a fence. However, the inhabitants of the ghetto were not permitted to leave the ghetto without a pass. Non-Jews continued to have free access to the ghetto.¹² There were 400 Jewish families living outside the ghetto (i.e., 1,524 people).¹³ The ghetto was enclosed at the beginning of 1943.¹⁴ It was framed within Chopin, Miejska, and Polna Streets, a part of Łukasiński, and a part of Okrzeja Street.¹⁵ There were five gates to the ghetto, which were guarded by the Jewish Police.¹⁶

In May 1942, the Germans deported 630 Jews from Dąbrowa Górnicza to the Auschwitz concentration camp.¹⁷ On August 12, 1942, all the inhabitants of Dąbrowa were summoned to appear on Kreuzstrasse at 7:00 A.M., on the basis of orders issued by the Gestapo and the Stapo (State Police) from Katowice and Organisation Schmelt. The aim was to stamp their identity cards (the so-called *Lichtbildausweise*). There were be-

tween 2,500 and 3,500 Jews gathered in the yard. A witness of these events, Karol Herszkowicz, reported: "At about 10:00 A.M., Germans arrived with arms and the police with guns. There were eight of them; groups of three went to the roofs of the houses and were standing there with guns ready for use in a shooting position, while Jewish Police [Ordners] stood around the people with whips in hands."¹⁸ A commission divided the people gathered there into three groups: one group was to remain in the town to work in the workshops, the second was to remain only temporarily in Dąbrowa, and the third was to be transported to Auschwitz. As a result of the selection, about 1,500 people were deported. At first they were taken to the orphanage in Będzin, then on to Auschwitz. Friedrich Karl Kuczynski, an official of Organisation Schmelt based in Sosnowiec who was in charge of the Aktion, was assisted by Dreier, the military police, and the Jewish Police. After this deportation, according to German figures, 3,783 Jews remained in Dąbrowa; according to Jewish sources, however, the number remaining was only about 1,000 to 2,000 people.¹⁹

From March 1943, the remaining Jews were systematically resettled into the ghettos in Będzin and Sosnowiec, such that in July, the ghetto was finally liquidated. Most of the Jews from Dąbrowa were then transported to the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp at the beginning of August 1943, as these ghettos were liquidated in turn. Only about 300 Jews survived the deportations and liquidation of the ghetto in Dąbrowa (at least one on Aryan documents working in the Bankowa Steelworks, 14 in hiding, the others eventually returning from the concentration camps). After the war, 30 to 40 Jews had returned to Dąbrowa by 1946.²⁰

Only a few perpetrators were tried in the courts. The District Court in Sosnowiec (SOSn) convicted Friedrich Reese and sentenced him to death on February 3, 1948. The same sentence was given to Friedrich Kuczynski, who supervised the deportations of Jews from Dąbrowa Górnicza, working for Organisation Schmelt. The SOSn sentenced him to death on September 23, 1948.

SOURCES Relevant publications on the history of the Jews during the German occupation of Dąbrowie Górnicza include the following: Władysław Starościak, *Żydzi w Dąbrowie Górniczej* (Dąbrowa Górnicza: Kawiarnia Literacka, 1995); and M. Gelbart, ed., *Sefer Kehilat Yehude Dombrovah Gurnitshah ve-burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Dombrovah Gurnitshah be-Yisrael, 1971). Some additional information can be found in the Zagłębie yizkor book: J. Rapaport, ed., *Pinkas Zagłębie* (Tel Aviv: Zagłębie Society in Melbourne, 1972).

The main sources for the history of the Jewish population in Dąbrowa Górnicza under the Nazi occupation are the documents of the Jewish Council of Elders in Dąbrowa Górnicza (1939–1943) located in APKat (RSGŻDG). The deportations and the liquidation of the ghetto are described in the testimonies of witnesses collected in AŻIH (e.g., 301/2577, 2631, and 2705). Other key information can be found in the testimonies of witnesses located in the court files of the case against Friedrich Kuczynski (SOSn 3 and 4).

Aleksandra Namysło

VOLUME II: PART A

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2577, testimony of Samuel Mittelman and Manek Szpigielman, pp. 1–2; 301/1548, testimony of Genia Lewkowicz.
2. APKat, RSGŻDG, 3, Bulletin no. 1, October 15, 1940, p. 1.
3. Ibid., pp. 2–3. There were eight such Kreis Inspectors answering to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia.
4. AŻIH, 301/2577, pp. 1–2.
5. APKat, RSGŻDG, 21, list of officials of the Judenrat, pp. 1–2.
6. Ibid., 30, p. 130, population in the communities subordinated to the Central Office on June 20, 1940; and Jewish Welfare, March 25, 1941, p. 245.
7. APKat, Polizeipräsident Sosnowitz, 316, letter of Polizeipräsident in Sosnowiec to Schupo headquarters in Sosnowiec concerning the deportation of the Jews, p. 78; AŻIH, 301/2577, p. 5.
8. AŻIH, 301/2705, testimony of Lili Better, p. 2; APKat, M Sosn, 6368, statistical list concerning the Jewish community; report of Sosnowiec Police, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
9. AŻIH, 301/2712, testimony of Józef Stawski.
10. Ibid., 301/2577; and 301/2712.
11. Ibid., 301/2631, testimony of Samuel Mittelman.
12. AAN, Delegate Office of the Government of the Country, files no. 202/II-29 (mf 2225/6).
13. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, report on streets outside the Jewish quarter, on which Jewish people lived, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
14. Isser Slomnicki, “The 1st of September 1939, the Worst Day in My Life,” in Gelbart, *Sefer Kehilat Yehude Dombróvab Gurnitsbeł ve-hurbanah*; AŻIH, 301/1548, testimony of Genia Lewkowicz.
15. AŻIH, 301/2631.
16. Ibid., 301/3476, testimony of Karol Herszkowicz.
17. Ibid., 301/154, testimony of Izrael Rosen.
18. Ibid., 301/3476.
19. Ibid., 301/2577, p. 2; APKat, M Sosn, 6368, statistical list concerning the Jewish community; report by Police in Sosnowiec on August 24, 1942, p. 2.
20. AŻIH, 301/2577.

JAWORZNO

Pre-1939: Jaworzno, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krenau, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Jaworzno is located about 18 kilometers (11 miles) east-southeast of Katowice. The Jewish population of the town was 1,346 in 1921.

German forces captured Jaworzno on September 4, 1939. Soon after entering the town, the Germans arrested and executed 8 Jews, after alleging that they had shot at German troops from their windows. Subsequently the German authorities demanded a large contribution from the Jewish community and took 25 hostages to ensure its payment. The

Germans also burned down the synagogue and humiliated Orthodox Jews during the first months of the occupation.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Jaworzno, which in January 1940 became subordinated to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office), headed by Mojżesz Merin. The head of the Jaworzno Judenrat was H. Silberschatz. There was also a Jewish police force in the town.¹ According to statistics of the Central Office, 1,878 Jews were residing in Jaworzno in May 1940.²

Information regarding the existence of a ghetto in Jaworzno is contradictory. From early on in the occupation, Jews were forbidden to use the two main streets of the town, Jagiellońska and Mickiewiczza. The Germans confiscated the best Jewish apartments and forced the Jews to move out to poorer living quarters. Most secondary sources do not mention a ghetto, but several survivor accounts do use this term. According to Ida Ferson, the ghetto was established approximately one year after the start of the occupation. In the ghetto, her family had two rooms and a bathroom, which was more space than most families received. The ghetto was unfenced, but there was a curfew, which was enforced by the Germans and the Jewish Police. The Jews received ration cards for the distribution of food.³

According to Bernhard Bart, who was deported from Chorzów to Jaworzno in 1940, “Jaworzno already had a ghetto, which was not enclosed by a fence; the Jews were restricted to certain shops and streets.” The Jaworzno Jews had to take in the refugees and provide them with some assistance. Bart had some conflicts with his hosts who were Orthodox and kept kosher. They did not permit him to cook his meat in the house, as he obtained it from the town slaughterhouse where he worked, and it was not kosher.⁴

Bronia Brandman, who does not mention the ghetto specifically, states that the food rations consisted mainly of bread and potatoes with a little margarine and saccharine to replace sugar. Kosher chickens were available but expensive. Religious life continued in secret.⁵

The Jews in Jaworzno were subjected to forced labor from the start of the occupation. In the course of 1940, a number of Jews were moved to Jaworzno from several nearby towns, including Siemianowice and Chorzów, which increased overcrowding among the Jews. The Judenrat set up a public kitchen to assist the refugees, which served 330 hot meals per day. From the fall of 1940, the Jews were also subjected to a series of roundups for the forced labor camps. Jewish policemen sent from Sosnowiec by the Central Office also participated in the roundups, which netted hundreds of Jewish men and women. In June 1941, there were reportedly 2,161 Jews in Jaworzno.⁶

On May 30, 1942, the Germans conducted the first deportation Aktion. German SS men surrounded the town and then dragged the Jews out of their apartments in order to assemble them. The German authorities conducted a selection, dividing the Jews into three groups. The elderly, the sick, and children (around 1,000 people) were gathered in the synagogue and held there for several days, before being deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp via Chrzanów. Another group was selected

to go to the forced labor camps, and the rest were to remain in Jaworzno, including the members of the Judenrat.⁷

Several hundred Jews remained in Jaworzno after the May Aktion. The Germans left them there only for another two months. In July, the head of the Gestapo in Katowice, Hans Dreier, demanded 500,000 Reichsmark (RM) and offered to establish a ghetto in Jaworzno (as opposed to deportation) in return for this bribe. Half of this sum was raised, but then Dreier ordered all the Jews to assemble at 8:00 A.M., on July 9, 1942. As the Jews suspected they would be deported, most did not appear. The Gestapo then dragged them from their houses, and all the Jews, including the members of the Judenrat, were deported to Auschwitz.⁸

The German authorities then declared Jaworzno to have been cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*). They subsequently set up a forced labor camp in the town in 1943, but this did not contain any of the local Jews.

SOURCES Published sources on the Jewish community of Jaworzno include: Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 193–194.

Documentary sources can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 30; HTO 1397); AŻIH (e.g., 301/575, 2648); USHMM; VHF (# 1661, 4577, 40794); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/575, testimony of Eli Greenbaum.
2. APKat, HTO 1397, pp. 66 ff.
3. VHF, # 4577, testimony of Ida Ferson.
4. Ibid., # 1661, testimony of Bernhard Bart.
5. Ibid., # 40794, testimony of Bronia Brandman.
6. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, census of the Jewish population as of June 20, 1941, p. 173.
7. AŻIH, 301/575, testimony of Eli Greenbaum; 301/2648, testimony of Jakub Neufeld.
8. Ibid., 301/575; 301/2648.

KŁOBUCK

Pre-1939: Kłobuck, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kłobuzk, Kreis Blachownia (from May 1941, Blachstädt), Regierungsbezirk Oppeln, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Kłobuck, województwo śląskie, Poland

Kłobuck is located about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) northwest of Częstochowa. In 1921, there were 1,647 Jews living in Kłobuck. Between 1923 and 1939, many young Jews left for larger cities or immigrated to Palestine and other countries.

German forces captured Kłobuck on September 2, 1939, following a battle that lasted only a few hours. Many Jews



Jewish refugees and a German officer in the vicinity of Kłobuck, September 1939.
USHMM WS #50346, COURTESY OF IPN

abandoned their homes on foot. Quickly overrun by the German army, most soon returned to discover that other local inhabitants had looted Jewish stores and the Germans had set the town on fire. The Jews were assembled in the church and sent to help put out the fires. Subsequently they were assigned daily to perform various forced labor tasks. Jewish men were used as horses to move loaded wagons (10 to a wagon). Initially the Jews were ordered to wear armbands bearing a yellow Star of David with "Jude" written in black in its center. The armbands were replaced eventually by yellow stars worn on the front and back of their clothes by all Jews aged 8 and older. Communal prayer was forbidden, and the ruins of the synagogue were converted into a stable for the Germans' horses. Jewish businesses were confiscated, and Jews were excluded from many professions.¹

A few months after the start of the occupation, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) were established and made responsible for the full implementation of German regulations and demands. In 1940, the Kłobuck Judenrat was subordinated to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia, headed by Mojżesz Merin. The Central Office appointed its own "inspectors," Borek Yasne, Wiener, and Shimon Merin, to oversee the activities of the Kłobuck Judenrat. Members of the Judenrat included Benzion Shvertzevski, Yakov Bode (a pre-war Zionist activist), Israel Lefkowitz, Moishe Weissfelner, Yechiel (Fogel) Rosenthal, Abraham Diamont, Yitzchak Buchweiss, and Zisser Lapidés.²

Mojżesz Merin, chairman of the Central Office, came to Kłobuck, accompanied by Yasne, to reorganize the local Judenrat there, with Yasne becoming its chairman. Baruch Sperling, the previous leader of the Kłobuck Jewish community, had refused to work with the Central Office. Soon, however, Merin became dissatisfied with Yasne's performance, and he took over direct control of many of the activities of the Kłobuck Judenrat himself. In June 1940, the German authorities ordered the Judenrat to provide 140 men aged between 18 and 30 for work in Germany. They threatened that if this demand was not met, then all of the Kłobuck Jews would be deported to ghettos in the Generalgouvernement. The men from Kłobuck and other nearby towns were sent to various labor camps inside the Reich.³

As Kłobuck was right on the border with the Generalgouvernement, the Jews were able to smuggle goods across the border and trade with Poles to acquire food. Some Jews from nearby Częstochowa in the Generalgouvernement, who had family in Kłobuck, smuggled themselves into Kłobuck. They were considered "foreigners" and were ordered by the Judenrat, under threat of deportation, to appear for registration. Those with the financial means to pay the high registration fees were allowed to stay in Kłobuck. The others were turned over to the Germans for deportation. In 1941, the wives of three of the deported men received letters signed by officials of the SS informing them that their husbands had died in a camp. In charge of the police in Kłobuck was commandant Datchek, who did his best to make life for the Jews harder and more painful.⁴

Just outside of Kłobuck, there was a forced labor camp, which was occupied by young Jewish men used in construction by the Wehrmacht. This camp remained in existence until 1943, but the Jews there had little contact with the Jews of the town.⁵

After a few months of the occupation, the Jews were forced to vacate the central streets of town, and by late 1941 the German authorities had established a Jewish residential area (open ghetto) in Kłobuck.⁶ All the Jews had to move into the designated ghetto area, exchanging their houses with non-Jews who lived there. As Abraham Besser described it, the ghetto had "no fencing, no guards, just a curfew, but Jews had to live in a certain section of town."⁷ Living conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded, with two or three families forced to share each house. One survivor described the ghetto area as "the worst slum in town" with no running water.⁸ Loss of income led to hunger and disease in the town, and a typhus epidemic claimed many lives.⁹

According to one estimate, there were around 60 or 65 Jewish families living in the ghetto, or probably 300 to 500 people.¹⁰ In order to get by, many Jews sneaked out of the ghetto illegally, taking off their yellow stars to scavenge for food in gardens and orchards or to trade on the black market. After a time, Jews were required to cut a hole in the clothes under the patches, so they could not remove them without showing the hole. In Kłobuck, the Jews continued to conduct schooling and to celebrate Jewish holidays at home clandestinely.¹¹

The German Kreiskommissar arrived in Kłobuck on June 21, 1942, accompanied by Gestapo men and their dogs, as well as Jewish Police from Sosnowiec. They assembled all the Jews in the fire station. The Jewish Police from Sosnowiec reassured the Jews that they were only being sent to work camps. But the Germans shot some old men and set their dogs on old men and children. The Jews were then taken by wagon, under heavy guard, to the Kuźnica Synagogue, a few kilometers outside Kłobuck, which became a concentration point for Jews being deported from the area. Here Mojżesz Merin participated in a selection. Most of those capable of work were sent to labor camps inside the Reich, and those unfit were deported to their deaths.

The fate of one group selected for work is known in more detail. About 25 young females and one young male were given a medical examination in the Sosnowiec transit camp and then were sent to the Grünberg labor camp. After one year, the camp was liquidated, and its inmates sent to a camp in Neusaltz. In December 1944, they were evacuated with other prisoners as the Red Army approached. They arrived at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp after three days in sealed railroad cars without food. The survivors of this group were liberated by the British army on April 15, 1945.¹²

After the liquidation of the main ghetto in June 1942, a small ghetto, consisting of two houses opposite the synagogue, remained, which contained several craftsmen (including a painter and two goldsmiths) and their families. The men worked for the German authorities. In June 1943, all the Jews were rounded up and held in the police station for several days, before being deported by passenger train to the Blechhammer labor camp.¹³

Among the few Jewish survivors from Kłobuck was one of the members of the Judenrat.

SOURCES A key source on the Jewish community of Kłobuck under German occupation is the yizkor book edited by A. Wolf Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck* (Tel Aviv: Former Klobuck Residents in Israel, France, and Australia, 1960). The ghetto in Kłobuck is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 234.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: IPN (ASG, sygn. 47, p. 17); USHMM; VHF (# 19710, 19988, 32681); and YVA.

Samuel Schalkowsky and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck*, pp. 76–78, 209–218; VHF, # 32681, testimony of Rubin Sztajer.
2. Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck*, pp. 217–224.
3. Ibid., p. 220.
4. Ibid., pp. 223–225.
5. VHF, # 19710, testimony of Ann Cyncnatus; # 19988, testimony of Abraham Besser.
6. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 234, dates the ghetto's establishment on October 8, 1941.
7. VHF, # 19988; # 19710; Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck*, p. 219. VHF, # 32681, Rubin Sztajer, dates the establishment of the ghetto somewhat earlier, probably in 1940.
8. VHF, # 32681.
9. Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck*, pp. 76–78.
10. VHF, # 19988.
11. Ibid., # 32681; # 19988.
12. Yasni, *Sefer Klobuck*, pp. 240–244.
13. VHF, # 19710; # 19988.

MODRZEJÓW

Pre-1939: Modrzejów, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Modrzejów, Kreis Sosnowitz, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Modrzejów, województwo śląskie, Poland

Modrzejów is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) east-southeast of Katowice. In May 1939, there were 1,670 Jews living in Modrzejów. Incorporated into the Jewish community of Modrzejów during the first months of the occupation were the Jews of Modrzejów, Niwka, Dańdówka, and Klimontów. The last rabbi of Modrzejów, Szaja England, was deported to his death at the Auschwitz concentration camp from Sosnowiec in May 1942.¹

On September 4, 1939, forces of the Wehrmacht occupied Modrzejów. German soldiers plundered Jewish shops and businesses and physically humiliated some Jews. In the first days of the occupation, the Germans also vandalized the synagogues and prayer houses. One synagogue was converted into a warehouse and later into a blacksmith's forge. The Germans took 20 Jewish hostages and interned them for several days until a large ransom was paid.² At the time of the German invasion, many Jews fled Modrzejów in the direction of Sławków,



Portrait of a young Jewish woman, Dorka Moncznik (now Doris Gross), wearing the yellow star in the Modrzejów ghetto, 1940. USHMM WS #13535, COURTESY OF DORIS MONCZNIK GROSS

Olkusz, and Wolbrom, but most returned after a few days.³ In November 1939, groups of Jews who had been deported from Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia arrived in Modrzejów. These Jews were deported in connection with the “Nisko Plan,” which intended to set up a reservation for Jews on the eastern border of the Generalgouvernement.⁴

From the fall of 1939, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in the region. A wide variety of Jewish and Polish properties were confiscated. The Germans took control of Jewish retail and manufacturing businesses, blocked Jewish bank accounts, restricted payments, marked Jewish stores, and closed Jewish wholesale trade. They also established a supervisory organ (the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost) to oversee Jewish and other confiscated businesses and sell off these assets. Two Jewish bakeries in Modrzejów were designated for the Jewish population, as non-Jewish stores were not permitted to sell them food.⁵ At the end of 1939, all Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. From September 1941, Jews had to wear yellow patches in the shape of a star on their left breast.

As Modrzejów was a suburb of Sosnowiec, during the German occupation the Jews of Modrzejów came under the rule of the mayor (Oberbürgermeister) of Sosnowiec, M. Schönwalder.⁶ In November 1939, a Judenrat was formed, with Jakub

Hochcajt at its head. It was assisted by a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). In February 1940, the Judenrat was reorganized and brought under the firm control of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia, headed by Mojżesz Merin. The Judenrat in Modrzejów was placed under the jurisdiction of the regional inspectorate of Jewish Councils in Dąbrowa, headed by Icek Borenstein.⁷

In February 1940, a public kitchen was set up, which regularly served meals to 58 percent of the Jewish population. In December 1940, an orphanage was created, which housed 70 children. In addition, the community financially and materially assisted the resettled Jews and those who were impoverished in the town. Nearly 30 percent of the Judenrat's budget was assigned directly to welfare assistance.⁸

In 1940, all the Jews in Modrzejów were resettled onto one street (Henryk), establishing a Jewish residential area or open ghetto. The ghetto remained unfenced, but a curfew was enforced at night. The Jews lived in overcrowded conditions, and many of them had lost their previous employment. The Jews suffered from shortages of food, and some people attempted to alleviate conditions by cultivating home gardens.⁹ In October 1940, there were 1,126 Jews living in Modrzejów.¹⁰

The Jews of Modrzejów, like all the Jews in the Katowice region, from October 1940 came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt, which was responsible for the deportation of Jews to labor camps and their assignment to factories and workshops. The first transport of 140 Jews from Modrzejów to the labor camps took place in October 1940. In March 1941, 120 additional Jews were sent to various labor camps in Upper Silesia. These roundups were conducted with the participation of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police.¹¹ Jews from Modrzejów also worked in several shops in Sosnowiec. In addition, a small group of young Jews was sent to work in the Niwka mine. According to statistics from August 1942, there were 230 Jewish residents of Modrzejów working in the labor camps.¹²

The deportations to camps were also interspersed with the arrival of Jews from other places; the Jewish population in Modrzejów fluctuated during the occupation. By March 1941, including the surrounding settlements, there were 1,968 Jews living in and around Modrzejów.¹³ In April 1941, up to 400 Jews arrived from the town of Oświęcim (Auschwitz), which was cleared of Jews at this time. This further aggravated housing conditions in Modrzejów. Some Jews also moved to Sosnowiec and Będzin, to try to avoid roundups to the camps and arrests conducted by the Gestapo.¹⁴

In December 1941, the Jews were ordered to surrender all their furs and other items of winter clothing. On May 8, 1942, about 300 Jews were persuaded by representatives of the Central Office to report for resettlement with only 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of luggage. Some of these people were sent to Auschwitz to be killed, while others were sent to labor camps.¹⁵ In May 1942, the number of Jews in Modrzejów was 1,491. In July 1942, all residents of the ghetto had to assemble at a designated point and get their photo identity cards (*Lichtbildausweise*) stamped. After the documents were verified, the people

returned to their houses. After a selection, another deportation took place in August 1942, which left 1,236 Jews in Modrzejów at the end of August.¹⁶

Witnesses recall a German official, Mates, who always patrolled with his dog. He frequently identified Jews by their armbands and set his dog on them. As one of the witnesses recounted: "One day the dog attacked several Jews. The Jews tried to protect themselves, but then Mates pulled out his revolver. He shot three of them, and two were seriously wounded."¹⁷

As Jews came to expect further roundups for labor camps and deportations, some created concealed hiding places in the area of the ghetto. However, the German authorities and Jewish Police knew who was missing and searched for those in hiding, calling for them to come out.¹⁸

On February 27, 1943, the German police surrounded the Jewish ghetto quarter. Those selected for labor were sent to the Dulag, a transit camp in Sosnowiec, from where they were distributed to other camps in the Reich. A few hundred elderly persons then remained in Modrzejów. A small remnant ghetto was established for them on Henryk Street.

On May 19, 1943, most of the remaining Jews in Modrzejów were sent to Sosnowiec and from there deported by train to Auschwitz. Some 15 Jews remained in Modrzejów, hidden by Polish families. The Germans captured and shot 5 of them.¹⁹

Only about 60 to 80 people survived the various deportations to labor, concentration, and extermination camps.²⁰

SOURCES The only publication specifically concerned with the fate of the Jews of Modrzejów during the Holocaust is Krzysztof Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada gminy żydowskiej w Modrzejowie* (Kielce, 1998). Some information on the history of the Jews of Modrzejów can also be found in Me'ir Shymon Gashury (Brukner), ed., *Sefer Sosnowiec v'hasviva b'Zagłębie*, vol. 1 (Tel Aviv, 1973).

Relevant documentation includes the following: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 3 and 30; M Sosn, sygn. 6368; and Regierung Kattowitz, 2779); AŻIH (301/1543); VHF (# 1760, 47836); and YVA (M-49/E/1543).

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NOTES

1. Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada*, pp. 8–9.
2. YVA, M-49/E/1543 (AŻIH, 301/1543), testimony of Lejzor Herman and Alter Biber.
3. Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada*, pp. 52–53.
4. YVA, M-49/E/1543.
5. Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada*, pp. 52–53.
6. R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas II wojny światowej* (Katowice, 2006), p. 119.
7. APKat, RSGŻDG, Bulletin no. 1, September 15, 1940, p. 1. Lejzor Herman testified that the Central Office was not satisfied with Hochcajt and entrusted the supervision of the community to Schmidt (no first name), who ruled over it with an "iron hand." This, however, is not corroborated in the documents of the Central Office. Hochcajt was still officially in charge of the Modrzejów Judenrat in March 1941.

8. Ibid., RSGZDG, Jüdische Fürsorge in Ost-Oberschlesien, March 25, 1941, p. 245.

9. VHF, # 1760, testimony of Marysia Gordon (née Wę-gier); Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada*, p. 73.

10. APKat, RSGZDG, sygn. 3, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden, October 1, 1940, pp. 109–122.

11. YVA, M-49/E/1543.

12. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, Statistische Angaben über den Stand der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, August 24, 1942, p. 4.

13. Ibid., RSGZDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden (geordnet nach Kreisinspektoraten), March 12, 1941, p. 214.

14. YVA, M-49/E/1543; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), p. 267.

15. YVA, M-49/E/1543; VHF, # 47836, testimony of Regina Brecher (née Rosner).

16. See APKat, Akta Miasta Sosnowiec (M Sosn), sygn. 6368, for a statistical comparison of the Jewish community; also information from the police of Sosnowiec, August 24, 1942, p. 2.

17. YVA, M-49/E/1543.

18. VHF, # 1760.

19. YVA, M-49/E/1543.

20. Urbański, *Powstanie, rozwój i zagłada*, pp. 56–58.

OLKUSZ

Pre-1939: Olkusz, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ilkenau, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Olkusz, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Olkusz is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Katowice. In 1921, there were 2,703 Jews living in Olkusz (40.6 percent of the total population). In 1939, there were approximately 3,000 Jews living in the town.¹

The German army occupied Olkusz on September 5, 1939.² From the first days of the occupation, the Jews were required to perform forced labor. The Germans took as hostages the 15 most influential Jews of the town and tortured them for several weeks.³ The German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures, including the confiscation of businesses, the blocking of Jewish bank accounts, and the marking of Jewish stores. The Haupttreuhandstelle Ost was established to oversee Jewish and other confiscated businesses and sell off their assets. At the end of 1939, all Jews were required to wear white armbands, and as of September 1941, they had to wear yellow patches on their left breast pockets.⁴ Jews had to surrender all gold and silver items.⁵

A German policeman was murdered by an unknown assailant on July 16, 1940. In reprisal 20 Jews were publicly executed. On July 31, 1940, “Bloody Wednesday,” Jews were forced to lie on the ground for hours and were beaten. One



SD and police officers check the papers of Jews assembled on the Czarna Góra green during the “Bloody Wednesday” reprisal Aktion in Olkusz, July 31, 1940. Other hostages can be seen lying in the foreground and in the distance at left.

USHMM WS #21441, COURTESY OF ROSE GRINBAUM FUTTER

Jew who could not stand the torture was shot trying to escape. Among the victims in July was a Jew named Majer, who was a U.S. citizen.⁶

In May and June 1940, several hundred Jews from Bielsko-Biała, Dziedzice, and Chorzów were forcibly resettled in Olkusz.⁷ The number of Jews in Olkusz in June 1941 was 2,932.⁸

Heinrich Groll was the Kreiskommissar in Olkusz until May 1944. An officer named Flechner was the head of the Security Police in Olkusz from 1940 to 1943. He was replaced in 1943 by Kurt Eichert.⁹

In the middle of December 1939, a Jewish community authority (*gmina*) was established in Olkusz.¹⁰ The dentist Azryl Flaszenberg initially became its head, and the positions on the advisory council were filled by the two brothers Czarniecki and a German-Jewish woman.¹¹ She was appointed on the recommendation of Mojżesz Merin, the head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office). In January 1940, Merin named Dionizy Sobol as the head of the Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) in Olkusz.

Olkusz was 1 of 10 Kreis Inspectorates established by the Central Office. In October 1940, 6,156 Jews were counted in the entire Olkusz district (Kreis Ilkenau), and in March 1941, there were 5,940 Jews. Sobol was also head of the Kreis Inspectorate. At first, the Central Office recognized separate local branches in the towns of Olkusz (2,940 Jews), Ogrodzieniec (43), Sławków (843), Strzemieszyce (1,440), and Ząbkowice (335).¹² In July 1941, the Central Office reorganized the Kreis structure. Ogrodzieniec and Sławków were both incorporated into the Olkusz branch, bringing the total number of Jews there to 3,825.¹³ The Inspectorate also employed 100 Jewish artisans, including 39 in Olkusz.¹⁴

A Jewish police force (*Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*) was also organized. In Olkusz, a public kitchen was established in November 1939, which accommodated the needs of observant Jews. It served around 300 meals per day. A kindergarten was established in December 1940, providing care for 300 children up to age seven.¹⁵

In October 1940, Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt assumed responsibility for the labor deployment of the Jews of the region. At that time, about 140 Jews were sent on the first transport, to work on the construction of a highway in Silesia (*Reichsautobahn-Lager*). In January 1941, a second transport of 130 people was organized, and a third transport consisting of 300 women was dispatched in August 1941. From the spring of 1942, the frequency of transports to forced labor camps increased. On March 12, 1942, 117 Jewish women aged 13 to 28 were deported from Olkusz. On April 20, 1942, 140 men were sent away. One month later, on May 21–23, 1942, around 1,000 Jews were deported.¹⁶ Those Jews with some financial means could avoid the transports with bribes. By August 1942, there were 525 Jewish residents of Olkusz working at various forced labor camps.¹⁷

In Olkusz itself, Jews worked making suitcases in a workshop of the Albert Rossner Company based in Będzin.¹⁸ Around 50 people also worked in the metalworking factory of the Josef Skopek Company based in Sosnowiec.¹⁹

In September 1941, the Jews were resettled from the center of Olkusz to the northern outskirts of the town, around Parcz, Sikorki, and Słowików Streets. The resettlement was coordinated by a special commission consisting of Germans from Sosnowiec and Będzin. The Jews received a summons in their homes, indicating that they also had to pay for the costs of the resettlement. The operation was headed by an official of the Central Office, Kuba Wulkan, and by Bezalet Zucker, the chief representative of the Kreis Krenau Inspectorate. Also participating in the resettlement efforts were 15 to 20 members of the Jewish Police from Będzin and Sosnowiec, commanded by Lerhaft. Poles moved into the vacated Jewish residences in the center of town. The resettlement took 10 days to complete. The new Jewish residential area (open ghetto) in Olkusz was not surrounded by a fence or wall, but the Jewish and German police patrolled its borders, and the Jews were forbidden to leave.²⁰

The Jews suffered from overcrowded conditions, with several families sharing the same living space. Those Jews who worked in a factory to produce Wehrmacht uniforms were issued passes to leave the ghetto each day. The Jews received only meager rations and had to stand in line for soup and bread. Coal and wood for heating were also in short supply.²¹

On March 2, 1942,²² 3 Jews—Jakub Mordka Glejtman, Herze Moszka Macner, and Chaim Pinkus—were hanged publicly in Olkusz for engaging in illegal trade.²³ The executions took place in the presence of 200 Jews, who had been brought from the Jewish quarter to witness the execution.²⁴

The liquidation of the Olkusz ghetto was carried out on June 10, 1942. The Jews of Olkusz were gathered in the square of the local *gymnazium* (high school). Initially they were led into the building of the former gymnasium for boys, which had become a kitchen area for the Jews. The gymnasium was located next to the Jewish hospital, the place where the first group and some other Jews were brought the next day. In total, 3,400 Jews were assembled. There, under the supervision of SS-Obersturmbannführer Friedrich Karl Kuczynski of the Organisation Schmelt and Mojżesz Merin, accompanied by other officials of the Central Council, a selection was conducted. About 200 able-bodied Jews were sent at first to Sosnowiec; from there they were distributed among the labor and concentration camps in Annaberg, Blechhammer, Gross-Rosen, and Buchenwald. About 200 to 300 Jews remained in Olkusz. These, probably, were the workers from the shop of Albert Rossner, along with officials of the *Judenrat*, the Jewish Police, and medical personnel. The bulk of the Jews were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp in two transports on June 13 and 15, 1942. Jews from nearby communities and patients from the Jewish hospital were deported along with the Jews from Olkusz. The Jewish Police assisted with the organization of the deportation.²⁵

Efraim Parasol described the events:

On June 9, 1942, while the entire community was still asleep, the ghetto was surrounded by several hundred Gestapo officers and SS men. They fired incessantly



Jewish forced laborers sew military uniforms for the Wehrmacht at a factory in the Olkusz ghetto, 1942.
USHMM WS #10032, COURTESY OF BELLA ROTNER

and drove the entire Jewish population into the former gymnasium building. From then until June 11, it was a horrible scene. Old people, sick people, women, and children were simply crammed together, and suffocated from the heat and lack of oxygen. It was impossible to get even a drop of water, the shooting never stopped, people dropped like flies. The wagons took away around 2,000 Jews, mostly elderly people and children. The dead bodies were thrown together with the living ones into the sealed wagons, which headed off to Auschwitz, directly to the crematorium.²⁶

According to German statistics, in August 1942, there were 555 Jews remaining in Olkusz.²⁷ The last Jews likely were engaged in salvaging remaining Jewish property. In March 1944, the mayor of Olkusz transferred a net sum (after deductions for unpaid taxes and personnel costs) from the liquidation of Jewish property of 114,374 Reichsmark (RM) to the Treuhandstelle Kattowitz.²⁸

It is estimated that around 150 Jews from Olkusz survived to the end of the war, mainly in various forced labor and concentration camps.²⁹

In 1948, a Jewish Court of Honor in Munich condemned as a traitor to the Jewish people a former policeman from the Olkusz ghetto who reportedly rounded up Jews for labor, requisitioned Jewish furniture for the Germans, and exposed the bunkers where Jews were in hiding during the “resettlement.”³⁰

SOURCES The history of the Jews of Olkusz and their fate during the Holocaust are described in two books by Krzysztof Kocjan, *Olkuscy Żydzi. Szkic historyczny* (Olkusz, 1997) and *Zagłada olkuskich Żydów* (Olkusz, 2002). Sources regarding the history of the occupation, including memoirs and unique photographs, can be found in the yizkor book: Tsevi Yashiv, ed., *Olkush: Sefer zikaron li-kebilah she-bukhadah ba-Sho'ah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Olkush be-Yisrael, 1972). Also of relevance is Ireneusz Cieślak, Olgerd Dziechciarz, and Krzysztof Kocjan, eds., *Olkusz: Zagłada i pamięć: Dyskusja o ofiarach wojny i świadectwa ocalałych Żydów* (Olkusz, 2007), which includes three testimonies by Olkusz survivors.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, 23, and 30; and Regierung Kattowitz, 2779 and 3117); AŻIH (301/957, 1550-1, 2830, 3321, and 3475); VHF (e.g., # 7651, 15897, 18894); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Kocjan, *Olkuscy Żydzi*, p. 30.
2. Kocjan, *Zagłada*, p. 7.
3. AŻIH, 301/1551, testimony of Efraim Parasol.
4. Kocjan, *Zagłada*, p. 14.
5. AŻIH, 301/1550, testimony of Marian Auerhahn.
6. Kocjan, *Zagłada*, pp. 9–11. See also Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *The Good Old Days: The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1997), pp. 5–7.

7. APKat, Gmina Łagiewniki 260, Okólnik nr. 3, betr.: Umsiedlung der Juden aus dem altschlesischen Raum des Bezirks, May 10, 1940, p. 10; AŻIH, 301/1551, testimony of Efraim Parasol; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 257.

8. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl am 20. Juli in den dem Leiter der Ältestenräte in Ost-Oberschlesien unterliegenden Kultusgemeinden, p. 131.

9. R. Kaczmarek, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Katowice, 1998), p. 74; I. Sroka, *Policja hitlerowska w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Opole, 1997), pp. 150, 152.

10. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, Bulletin no. 3, September 15, 1940, p. 1.

11. AŻIH, 301/3321, testimony of Marian Auerhahn. Efraim Parasol testifies, however, that in October 1939 the Judenrat was established by the German authorities, with a man named Szwareberg as its head; see also 301/1551.

12. Ibid., 301/1551.

13. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden, March 12, 1941, p. 215.

14. Ibid., RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl am 20 Juli 1941 in den dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterliegenden Gemeinden, p. 172.

15. Ibid., RSGŻDG, sygn. 23, p. 2.

16. Ibid., RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Jüdische Fürsorge in Ost-Oberschlesien, Sosnowitz, March 25, 1941, p. 246; AŻIH, 301/3475, testimony of Maria Adlerflieger.

17. Kocjan, *Zagłada*, pp. 11–12, 16–17.

18. AŻIH, 301/3475.

19. Ibid., 301/2726, testimony of Sara Klein.

20. Ibid., 301/3475; 301/2830, testimony of Elias Lemberg.

21. VHF, # 18894, testimony of Sam Blumenfeld; # 7651, testimony of Helen Bronner (née Kolin); # 15897, testimony of Lola Zigelman.

22. In the testimonies of the witnesses, there are conflicting dates for the events. Information for the hanging of three Jews by the Gestapo in Olkusz, March 2, 1942, is given in: IPN, Katowice Branch, sygn. S.9/79.

23. Kocjan, *Olkuscy Żydzi*, pp. 30–31.

24. AŻIH, 301/3475; 301/2830; 301/1551.

25. Ibid., 301/3475; 301/2830; 301/1551; 301/3321.

26. Ibid., 301/1551. Cieślík, Dziechciarz, and Kocjan, *Olkusz: Zagłada i pamięć*, pp. 26–27, mention a list with the names of 735 Jews who were sent to Auschwitz from the Olkusz ghetto.

27. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, Staatliche Angaben über den Stand der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Sosnowitz, August 24, 1942, p. 4. Kocjan, *Olkuscy Żydzi*, pp. 30–31, however, indicates there were only 78 Jews there on August 1, 1942.

28. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 3117, p. 205.

29. AŻIH, 301/1551.

30. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 556–557.

SŁAWKÓW

Pre-1939: Sławków, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sławków, Kreis Ilkenau, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Sławków, województwo śląskie, Poland

Sławków is located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) east-northeast of Katowice. According to the 1921 census, there were 610 Jews living in Sławków, comprising 16 percent of the town's population. In 1939, on the eve of war, there were probably around 900 Jews residing in Sławków.

The Wehrmacht entered Sławków on September 4, 1939. The first reaction of the Jewish population was a mass flight towards the eastern regions of Poland. But after a few days, the majority of them returned to the town. Shortly after capturing Sławków, German soldiers shot several dozen Jews, mainly Jewish refugees from Będzin and Sosnowiec, as they tried to cross bridges in Sławków on their way back from the east. At the same time, in nearby Koźle, the Germans murdered several dozen Jews and threw their corpses into an old mining shaft. As Sara Klein recalled this event: "The Germans shot around 70 Jews in Koźle. The Aktion lasted a few days. The Germans stood on the bridge and shot every Jew who tried to cross. When the Jews turned back, they were thrown alive off the bridge, and drowned. Other SS-men drove a transport wagon around and shot those Jews they encountered."¹ After a few days, the German authorities called in Makowski, the chairman of the Jewish community, and made him sign a document reporting that the Jews had perished as a result of bombing raids.²

German soldiers also desecrated the synagogue in Sławków.³ Following the chaos of the initial days of occupation, the German authorities set about removing the Jews from their social and economic positions in the town and limiting their civil liberties. The German military and then the civil administra-



Jewish forced laborers wearing armbands are forced to shovel snow in Sławków, 1941. Chaim Szlojme Imerglik is at the far left. USHMM WS #99631, COURTESY OF DAVID AND MARIA BEITNER

tion implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Various forms of Jewish (and Polish) property were subject to confiscation. The Germans took control of Jewish retail and manufacturing shops, blocked Jewish bank accounts, restricted payments, marked Jewish stores, and closed Jewish wholesale trade. They also established a supervisory organ (the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost) to oversee Jewish and other confiscated businesses and sell off their assets.

In November 1939, all Jews had to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. In September 1941, these were exchanged for yellow patches in the shape of the Star of David on their left breasts.⁴ Jewish-owned real estate was confiscated by the German Grundstücksgesellschaft.⁵

Kreis Ilkenau was controlled until May 1944 by Kreiskommissar Heinrich Groll. Georg Willing served as the Amtskommissar in Sławków.⁶ In November 1939, local police forces were organized; Sublieutenant Strauss was in charge of patrols in the town. He was later replaced by Mischock. The police force in Sławków had 14 officers, who served under the Schutzpolizei section in Mikołów. Based in Sławków was also a Gendarmerie precinct, directed by Dahl.⁷

In November 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed, with Isidor Laks as its president.⁸ The secretary was Mendel Makowski, and the vice president was Nachman Testiler. There was also a small Jewish police force. The Judenrat was soon subordinated to Mojżesz Merin, who in January 1940 became the head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office), which oversaw the large concentration of Jews in Regierungsbezirke Kattowitz and Oppeln. The Jewish community of Sławków was also supervised by the Kreis Inspectorate in Olkusz, whose head was Dionizy Sobol. In October 1940, the Sławków Judenrat was in charge of 896 Jews, and by March 1941, after the first transport of Jews to the labor camps, 843 Jews remained.

In January 1940, the Judenrat established a public kitchen for the Jews. About half of the Jews of the town ate there. The community also had a medical office in which one doctor and two nurses worked. In 1941, the Judenrat organized locksmith courses for professionalization purposes, and 20 pupils attended.⁹

The Jews of Sławków, like all the Jews in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, in October 1940 came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt, which was entrusted with sending Jews to labor camps and regulating the available Jewish labor force in the towns.

From the first months of the occupation, the Jewish community had to supply around 300 Jews for forced labor. The labor tasks included cleaning administrative buildings and institutions, clearing snow from the streets, performing street sanitation, and maintaining the railroad tracks. The Jews returned also to the businesses that they had owned before the war, but now German commissars ran the businesses and the Jews were relegated to low-paid employees. Among the seized businesses was the wire factory of the Schein brothers, in which several dozen Jews worked.¹⁰ In the town synagogue, the au-

thorities set up a branch of the tin-making workshop of Josef Skopek, where watering cans and toys for children were made. Altogether there were around 50 Jews working in these specialty shops.¹¹

On October 28, 1940, 50 people aged 18 to 50 were deported to the labor camp in Geppersdorf. The day before the transport, Merin arrived in Sławków and persuaded some of the Jews to report for the transport. A series of further roundups of young Jews to be sent to labor camps in the Reich were conducted over the ensuing two years.¹² Official German statistics indicate that by August 1942, 122 Jews had been sent from Sławków to labor camps in the Reich.¹³

In the second half of 1941, the Germans began to create a separate Jewish residential quarter (open ghetto) in Sławków. The ghetto was established on Kiliński, Kościuszko, Kwartowska, and Podwalna Streets. The Poles residing in this area were forced to move out. According to Sara Klein, there was severe overcrowding, with several families sharing each house. These streets were among the poorest and dirtiest in the town, consisting only of one-story houses with no sidewalks. The resettlement into the ghetto was completed by March 1942.¹⁴

The borders of the ghetto were not enclosed by a fence but were guarded by German police with dogs. There was a curfew enforced in the ghetto from 8:00 P.M. until 6:00 A.M. Due to the overcrowding, sometimes four or five people had to share one bed. Food rations were small, so initially the Jews bartered items for extra food. Once the ghetto was set up, Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto area, and this made bartering more difficult. There was no electricity in the ghetto, and people had to obtain coal or wood for cooking and heating in winter.¹⁵

According to German statistics, on May 1, 1942, there were 924 Jews living in Sławków.¹⁶ On June 10, 1942, one day after the deportation Aktion in Olkusz, the resettlement of Jews from Sławków commenced. The Jewish population was driven into the square on Kiliński Street, where men armed with machine guns surrounded them. From here, the Jews were marched to the town's brewery, where Lindner, an official of Organisation Schmelt, conducted a selection. The young and physically able Jews were sent to various labor camps, including Blechhammer, while some others were transferred to the Strzemieszyce ghetto. The elderly and infirm were deported to their deaths by train from the Bukowno Station most probably to the Auschwitz concentration camp on June 12.¹⁷

By the second half of August 1942, only 122 Jews remained in the town.¹⁸ These people included members of the Judenrat and some skilled workers, who were used to salvage Jewish property. After a few months, they were then sent, along with the Jews of Strzemieszyce and Dąbrowa, to the ghetto in Sosnowiec.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Sławków during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Feliks Kiryk, ed., *Dzieje Sławkowa* (Kraków,

2001); Leszek Hońdo and Dariusz Rozmus, eds., *Cmentarze żydowskie w Sławkowie i Dąbrowie Górniczej* (Kraków, 2004); Ireneusz Cieślík, Olgerd Dziechciarz, and Krzysztof Kocjan, eds., *Olkusz: Zagłada i pamięć: Dyskusja o ofiarach wojny i świadczeń ocalałych Żydów* (Olkusz, 2007).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 30; M Sosn, sygn. 6368); AŻIH (301/2726); USHMM (Acc.1998.115); VHF (e.g., # 2601, 3381, 18732); and YVA (O-3/673).

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1. AŻIH, 301/2726, testimony of Sara Klein.
2. Datner, *55 dni Wehrmachtu w Polsce* (Warsaw, 1967), p. 276.
3. AŻIH, 301/2726.
4. Kocjan, *Zagłada olkuskich Żydów* (Olkusz, 2002), p. 14.
5. Orłowski, "W czasie drugiej wojny światowej," in Kiryk, *Dzieje Sławkowa*, pp. 412–413.
6. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas II wojny światowej* (Katowice, 2006), p. 114.
7. Orłowski, "W czasie drugiej wojny światowej," p. 407.
8. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultus-Gemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden (geordnet nach Kreisinspektoraten), March 12, 1941, p. 214.
9. Ibid., RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Jüdische Fürsorge in Ost-Oberschlesien, March 25, 1941, p. 245.
10. YVA, O-3/673, testimony of Cyrli Rakocz.
11. AŻIH, 301/2726.
12. Orłowski, "W czasie drugiej wojny światowej," p. 413.
13. APKat, Akta Miasta Sosnowiec (M Sosn), sygn. 6368, for a statistical breakdown of the Jewish community; also information from the police of Sosnowiec, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
14. AŻIH, 301/2726.
15. VHF, # 3381, testimony of Eva Jakub; # 18732, testimony of Joe Gleitman.
16. APKat, M Sosn, sygn. 6368, for a statistical breakdown of the Jewish community; also information from the police of Sosnowiec, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
17. AŻIH, 301/2726; YVA, O-3/673; VHF, # 2601, testimony of Jack Mandelbaum; # 3381.
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SOSNOWIEC

Pre-1939: Sosnowiec, city, województwo śląskie, Poland; 1939–1945: Sosnowitz, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Sosnowiec, województwo śląskie, Poland

Sosnowiec is located about 6 kilometers (4 miles) northeast of Katowice. The Jewish community of Sosnowiec also represented the Jews in the neighboring towns of Modrzejów,



Members of the German Order Police publicly humiliate a group of Jews in Sosnowiec by forcing them to do kneeling exercises, 1939–1940. USHMM WS #74401, COURTESY OF EVA BETTER-HEITNER SAK

Niwka, and Zagórze. In 1939, the Jewish population was around 28,000 (21.5 percent of the total).

German troops entered Sosnowiec on Monday, September 4, 1939, and immediately began random shootings, abductions, abuse, and destruction of property.¹ On September 9, Einsatzgruppe von Woyrsch burned down the synagogue on Dekert Street.²

After the chaos of the first days of the occupation, the German authorities began to eliminate the Jewish population from economic life, limiting their rights and isolating them from the Aryan population. By the end of 1940, the process was complete, with significant participation by the acting mayor (Schneider, the mayor of Wałbrzych). Only the "Jewish Food Distribution Office" (Jüdische Grossverteilerstelle für Lebensmittel und Gartenbauerzeugnisse für die jüdische Bevölkerung in Ost-Oberschlesien) was permitted to buy food for the Jewish population from non-Jewish wholesale shops—and

then only with official authorization. Permitted Jewish stores, bakeries, and artisans' workshops were marked with a Star of David and a sign reading: "Verkaufsstelle nur für Juden" or "Werkstätte nur für Juden" (only for Jews).

Toward the end of October 1939, the Germans sent a transport of 300 Jews from Sosnowiec to Nisko nad Sanem, where they forced the Jews to cross over into Soviet-occupied territory. Several days later (October 27–28), the Jewish communal organization summoned more than 1,000 people for the purpose of deporting them, but then suddenly the transport was canceled. Towards the end of the autumn of 1939, the Germans brought to Sosnowiec a transport of several hundred men from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. These men were housed in the Schön factory and put to work on various projects around the city. In July 1940, these Jews were sent to forced labor camps.³

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Sosnowiec on September 6, 1939, on the orders of the German authorities.⁴ Mojżesz Merin became its head. In Sosnowiec, the Gestapo appointed the local teacher, Jerzy Olszewski, as the head administrator of the city, with Milke (an ethnic German) as his deputy. After Merin was appointed as the head of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (the Central Office) in January 1940, Władysław Boehm took over as head of the Sosnowiec Judenrat. He ran the community together with David Lewartowski, Motek Birman, and David Kon. Boehm was dismissed—probably in May 1942—and was replaced by Merin's brother, Chaim.⁵

The Judenrat was made up of a number of departments, including those for social welfare, health, food supply, economic, financial, labor, forced labor, housing, and archival-statistical. In addition, in Sosnowiec there was a department of transportation and a postal service. The Jewish community operated two public kitchens for the poor (established November 27, 1939, at Sudetenstrasse 9 and October 10, 1940, at Schirkerstrasse 9), a day nursery for children (established February 17, 1940), a home for the elderly, an orphanage, and a hostel (established September 20, 1939). The community also ran a hospital, which was directed by a Dr. Libermann.⁶

The Judenrat was assisted by Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), a force established in September 1940. Its first chief, Langer, was followed by Kronenberg, then by Henryk Barenblatt.⁷ A fire brigade was also established and placed under the authority of the Judenrat.⁸ The offices of the Judenrat were located at the corner of Modrzejów and Targowska Streets.

The Sosnowiec Judenrat was directly subordinated to the Central Office. It constituted an independent unit—Stadtkreis Sosnowitz—counting 23,319 people in October 1940 and 24,149 people in March 1941. In April 1941, some 2,000 Jews from the town of Oświęcim arrived in Sosnowiec; in June 1941, the community numbered 27,420.⁹

During the period of civil government, Schneider (the mayor of Wałbrzych) initially set up the administration. Franz Josef Schönwalder, formerly the mayor of Wrocław, subsequently served as mayor of Sosnowiec.¹⁰

The Jews of Sosnowiec, like all others living in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, from October 1940 came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt, which was responsible for the deportation of Jews to labor camps and their assignment to factories and workshops. In practice, all work was directed by Oberinspektor Hentschel, whose subordinates were SS-Obersturmbannführer Heinrich Lindner, Bruno Ludwig, and Friedrich Karl Kuczynski. The Organisation Schmelt Sosnowiec headquarters were located at 6 Pieracki Street.

Hans Held of Berlin established the first workshop for Jews in the city in February 1941. The three branches of the workshop produced underclothing, military uniforms, and corsets and other items of women's clothing. Altogether, 4,000 people were employed in the workshop. In the Schwedler leather workshop at 28 Modrzejów Street, 1,200 people worked in the production of backpacks for the military, suitcases, and leather handbags. Rudolf Braun's shoemakers' workshop at 16 Modrzejów Street employed 1,400 people in the production of boots for the military. In the Dietl workshops on Żeromski Street, 3,000 people produced overcoats and fur coats. Wilhelm Goretzki's workshop at 2 Biała Street employed 2,000 Jews producing brushes, baskets, and bags from leather scraps. There were two carpentry workshops: Landa employed about 200 workers, and Skopko employed 400 Jews. In addition to these large workshops, smaller workplaces operated within the city. In all, more than 13,000 people worked in these workshops.¹¹

In the period from October 1940 to August 1942, there were periodic transports of Jews from Sosnowiec to various labor camps. Between August 1942 and March 1943, there were three major "roundups" in Sosnowiec. More than 2,000 people were rounded up and sent to labor camps as a result. According to German records, 3,033 Jews from Sosnowiec were in forced labor camps in August 1942.¹²

Towards the end of 1939, the Germans removed Jews from apartments on the city's main streets: Pieracki and Małachowski Streets and part of May Third Street. Eventually, Jews were prohibited from using those streets. In mid-1940, the exclusion of Jews was extended to Breslauerstrasse, Hauptstrasse, and Rathausstrasse, as well as all parks, sports venues, and green spaces.¹³

The process of completely isolating the Jews of Sosnowiec began in October 1942. In numerous meetings, the leadership of the Central Office and Gestapo representatives marked out the boundaries of the new Jewish residential area and set the deadline for closing the ghetto. Sections of the city outside of the center, in the working-class districts of Stary Sosnowiec and Środula, were designated for the Jews of Sosnowiec. In the course of the ongoing resettlement actions, a problem arose with the relocation of Polish workers from that area to apartments in the town center that had been vacated by Jews. The solution required effective action on the part of the Central Office, and particularly of the Resettlement Office that had been established alongside it



The resettlement of Jews into the Środula ghetto in Sosnowiec, 1942–1943.

USHMM WS #18824, COURTESY OF IPN

for this purpose, as well as by the Sosnowiec municipal authority.

The resettlement action was completed in March 1943. The Sosnowiec ghetto, which held some 20,000 people, was sealed on May 1, 1943. Initially, there were two separate ghettos: the one in Środula was for young and healthy people (closed on March 10, 1943), and the one in Stary Sosnowiec was for the elderly, the sick, and the handicapped. Towards the end of April, the residents of the Stary Sosnowiec ghetto were moved into the Środula ghetto, as were Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Dąbrowa Górnicza.¹⁴

On May 10, 1943, the Polizeipräsident in Sosnowiec issued a proclamation concerning the ghetto that precisely defined its boundaries. The decree prohibited Jews from leaving the ghetto and forbade members of the Aryan population from entering it. The Central Office was to enforce the observance of these rules; it was required to post signs in two languages barring entry to non-Jews and prohibiting Jews from leaving the ghetto. In addition, the Central Office



View of an apartment block in the Środula district in Sosnowiec, ca. 1942.

USHMM WS #28593, COURTESY OF RINA ZYLBERSZAC NADEL

was to acquaint Jews with the sanctions for violations of these regulations and particularly for maintaining contact with Poles.¹⁵

According to the records of the community, 27,456 Jews were living in Sosnowiec in May 1942. In April 1942, on the order of the Gestapo, the Judenrat prepared lists of people (more than 5,000 altogether) for transport (the elderly, homeless, unemployed, women, children, and refugees). Very few people showed up at the appointed time, so the Gestapo, together with the Jewish Police accompanied by Merin, supplemented the transport (up to a total of 1,500 people) with Jews living at 14 Dekert Street, 2 and 11 Targowa Street, and 23 Modrzejowska Street. On May 12 this transport was sent to the concentration camp in Auschwitz.¹⁶

In the second half of June 1942, the Gestapo organized a second transport, this time of about 2,000 residents of Pańska and Ostrogórska Streets (the poor, handicapped, children from the orphanage, and hospital patients).

The third and largest deportation took place on August 12, 1942. The Germans used the pretext that they needed to inspect and stamp identity papers. The so-called Stadium Aktion lasted two days. Jews were assigned to one of four groups. Families that included no children and whose members worked were released after their papers were stamped. Young people who were unemployed and who did not have a special exemption due to their family were designated for transfer to labor camps. Families in which some members worked and others were unemployed, or in which there were children, were assigned to group 3—their fate was uncertain and was to be considered again later. Elderly people and those who were unemployed or held invalid exemptions (*Sonders*) were assigned to group 4. This group was destined for transport. Of the 25,000 people gathered at the Unia Stadium, some 8,000 were selected and deported over the course of three days to Auschwitz. During this Aktion, several hundred people were shot, died from stress and exhaustion, or committed suicide.¹⁷ On August 20, 1942, there were 20,936 Jews in Sosnowiec.¹⁸

In May 1943, in order to supplement a transport to Auschwitz of Jews from the liquidated Modrzejów and Czeladź ghettos, the Gestapo added about 1,000 people (mainly children) from Sosnowiec.¹⁹ A second Aktion of this type took place in June 1943, in which 2,000 people, among them patients from the Jewish hospital, were sent to Auschwitz.²⁰

The final liquidation of the Sosnowiec ghetto began on the night of August 1, 1943. Police companies from Sosnowiec, Maczki, Katowice, Bytom, and Gliwice arrived for the Aktion, as were training, factory, and reserve police detachments, for a total force of 22 officers and 775 men, armed with machine guns and grenades. Lieutenant-Colonel Schadow, the chief of the Sosnowiec police, directed the Aktion in which about 10,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz, and some 400 people were shot when they resisted or tried to escape. On August 2, a group of 300 people—mainly officials of the Judenrat, the Central Office, and the Jewish Police—was sent to the camp at Góra Świętej Anny. The Aktion lasted until August 15.

Jewish youth movements continued to operate through the entire occupation period—even in the ghetto—especially Ha-Noar Ha-Zioni, headed by Józef and Bolesław Kożuch,²¹ and Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, which had 200 members and was directed first by Kalman Tencer and then by Cwi (Tzvi) Duński. Other youth organizations active in the region included Gordonia, Poalei Zion, and Hitachdut. In January 1943, Frumka Sultanik established a group connected to the Communist movement.²²

In June 1942, Mordechai Anielewicz traveled illegally to the Zagłębie region. As a result, a branch of the ŻOB (Jewish Fighting Organization) was established in Sosnowiec. Eliezer Geller, a representative of Gordonia, also visited Sosnowiec. Young people distributed flyers and attempted to acquire weapons. With the help of couriers Ina Gelbardt and Hela Szancer, they made contact with the ghettos in Warsaw, Będzin, and Chrzanów and obtained false documents that might prevent young Jews from being sent to labor camps. Duński organized an assassination attempt on Mojżesz Merin that ultimately failed. In February 1943, with the assistance of Merin, who relentlessly opposed the Jewish underground resistance in the region, the Germans arrested Duński and Lipek Minc, another resistance member. Both men were executed in April 1943.²³ Members of the resistance built hidden bunkers in and around the ghetto. During the ghetto's liquidation in August 1943, some members of youth movements and a few adults offered armed resistance, while many people sought to hide. As a result, the deportation Aktion lasted two weeks, instead of the two days planned by the SS. Several hundred members of the youth organizations managed to escape across the border into Slovakia and Hungary, where many of them survived the war.

During the August 1943 deportations, the Gestapo kept back several hundred Jews, including members of the Jewish Police, who were employed sorting Jewish property left behind. The Gestapo systematically added to this group Jews found in bunkers or other hiding places. Altogether more than 1,000 Jews remained in Sosnowiec. They were accommodated in a few houses of the Środula ghetto, in the so-called Liquidation Camp. In mid-December 1943, some 800 people were deported to Auschwitz, and another 600 were sent there in January 1944.²⁴

In 1946, 2,300 Jews were living in Sosnowiec, including 400 pre-war residents, but most emigrated in the following years.²⁵ After the war, several officials of the Organisation Schmelt were brought to trial for, among other things, the expulsion of the Jewish population of Będzin in May and August 1942. The District Court in Sosnowiec (SOSn) sentenced Friedrich Karl Kuczynski to death on September 23, 1948. Heinrich Lindner was arrested by the U.S. authorities and committed suicide in January 1949.

Oskar Bruno Tschammler, an official of the Organisation Schmelt who was active in roundups, selections for labor camps, and the liquidation of the ghetto, was sentenced to death by SOSn on November 5, 1948, and was hanged on April 28, 1949. Konrad Schiefele, an appraiser of property left by the Jews, was sentenced by SOSn to a life sentence on July 13, 1948.

SOURCES The main publication devoted to the fate of the Jewish residents of Sosnowiec during the occupation is Natan Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca* (Katowice, 1946). Also helpful in establishing the history of the Sosnowiec Jews are the following works: Geshuri Meir Shimon, *Sefer Sosnowiec* (Book of Sosnowiec and the surrounding region in Zagłębie), vols. 1–2 (Tel Aviv, 1973–1974); J. Rapoport, *Pinkas Zagłębie (Memorial Book)* (Tel Aviv, 1972); D. Liwer, *Ir Hametim* (City of the dead: Extermination of the Jews in the Zagłębie region) (Tel Aviv, 1945–1946).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, Polizeipräsident Sosnowiec, M Sosn); AŻIH (e.g., 301/704, 3404, 3480, 3536); BA-BL; IPN; USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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2. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 11.
3. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Kurzer Überblick über die Organisierung und Tätigkeit der Kultusgemeinden und der Zentrale der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden, p. 22; Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 21.
4. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, Bulletin no. 1, September 15, 1940, p. 1.
5. AŻIH, 301/4304, testimony of Grzegorz Arbeszyc.
6. APKat, RSGŻDG, Jüdische Fürsorge in Ost-Oberschlesien, March 25, 1941, p. 241.
7. AŻIH, 301/4304; also Sądy Społeczne, sygn. 313/83, p. 4.
8. Ibid., 301/704, testimony of Jan Rosencwajg.
9. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1942, p. 126.
10. R. Kaczmarek, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945* (Katowice: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1998), p. 73.
11. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, pp. 28–29.
12. APKat, Akta Miasta Sosnowca (M Sosn), sygn. 2779.
13. APKat, Polizeipräsident Sosnowiec, sygn. 363, letter dated June 11, 1940, p. 1.
14. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 50.
15. APKat, M Sosn, sygn. 6370, Pismo prezidenta policji w Sosnowcu do Centralnej Rady Starszych Wschodniego Górnego Śląska, May 10, 1943, pp. 201–202.
16. Szternfinkiel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, p. 34.
17. Ibid., pp. 37–39.
18. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz 2779, Statistische Angaben über den Stand der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, August 24, 1942, p. 4.
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23. J.Sh. Stein, *Pinkes Bendin* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at Irgun Yots'e Bendin be-Yisrael, 1959), pp. 355–357.

24. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), p. 705; Szternfinkel, *Zagłada Żydów Sosnowca*, pp. 56–57.

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STRZEMIESZYCE

Pre-1939: Strzemieszyce, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Schümenschutz, Kreis Bendsburg, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Strzemieszyce, województwo śląskie, Poland

Strzemieszyce is located about 18 kilometers (11 miles) northeast of Katowice. Before the war, there were around 2,000 Jews living in Strzemieszyce.

German forces entered Strzemieszyce on September 5, 1939. They plundered Jewish shops and businesses, physically humiliated the Jewish residents of the town, and immediately demanded monetary contributions. Jews were also ordered to perform heavy physical labor. On the first day of occupation, one Jew was shot on the street.

In early November 1939, more systematic persecution of the Jews began, as a German civil administration had taken over from the military in the region. Various forms of Jewish and Polish property were confiscated. The Germans took control of Jewish retail and manufacturing businesses, blocked Jewish bank accounts, restricted payments, marked Jewish stores, and closed Jewish wholesale trade. They also established a trustee organization, the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost, to confiscate, administer, and sell Jewish and Polish businesses and their assets. In 1940, Jewish real estate was confiscated by the state-owned Grundstücksgesellschaft, and the best Jewish apartments were taken over by Germans.

From the end of 1939, Strzemieszyce was incorporated into Kreis Bendsburg in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz. A man named Zur was appointed as the Amtskommissar in Strzemieszyce in 1941.¹

In November 1939, a Judenrat was appointed, with a man named Horowitz at its head.² In January 1940, on the recommendation of Mojżesz Merin of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office), the Judenrat was reorganized, and Azryel Flaszenberg was appointed as its new head. The community in Strzemieszyce served under the Kreis Inspectorate in Dąbrowa Górnicza, whose head was Icek Borenstein. Also subordinated to the Judenrat in Strzemieszyce were Jews from the surrounding villages, including Grabocin, Niemce, Porąbiec, Maczki, and Kazimierz. In May 1940, around 400 Jews were resettled in Strzemieszyce, arriving from Cieszyn in the territory of the pre-1939 German Provinz Schlesien.³ In October 1940, there were 1,782 Jews living in Strzemieszyce, including those who had been resettled.⁴

The Jews in Strzemieszyce, like all the Jews in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, from October 1940 came under the jurisdiction of Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt, which

was responsible for the deportation of Jews to labor camps and their assignment to factories and workshops.

The first transport to the labor camps from Strzemieszyce took place in October 1940, when 65 Jewish men were sent to work at road construction camps (Reichsautobahn-Lager) in Silesia.⁵ In 1941 and 1942, other groups of young Jews were also sent to these camps. According to German statistics from August 1942, there were 192 Jews from Strzemieszyce working in various forced labor camps within the Reich.⁶

In Strzemieszyce, the Jews worked in two workshops: in a branch of Albert Rossner's tailoring shop and in a branch of the tin-making shop of Josef Skopek.⁷ According to a report in the *Gazeta Żydowska*, the Judenrat obtained permission from the Bürgermeister (mayor) of Strzemieszyce to start a farm plot on 18 hectares (44.5 acres).⁸

Available information regarding the ghetto in Strzemieszyce is somewhat contradictory. According to the recollections of Rose Chrustowski, the ghetto was set up in 1941 in a suburb of the town where previously no Jews were living. About 20 blocks were designated and surrounded with barbed wire. The Jews had to leave most of their possessions behind on moving in, taking only their clothes and a little food. German and ethnic German policemen guarded the ghetto externally, and Jewish Police guarded it internally. The Jews were permitted to leave at certain times to go to the post office or obtain food. Bread and soap were in short supply in Strzemieszyce, as Jews were only allowed the amount on their ration cards. Henry Feigenblatt also recalls having to exchange his apartment for a house in the ghetto.⁹

Jerichem Frajman, however, who remained in Strzemieszyce longer than the above two inmates, who had been deported to labor camps by the spring of 1942, uses the term *ghetto* only with respect to the last months of the community's existence in 1943. He mentions that by then the Jews were not permitted to show their faces on other streets, although the concentration of the Jews on Długa Street appears to have taken place earlier.¹⁰

By June 1942, there were 1,598 Jews left in Strzemieszyce. On June 23, 1942, the Germans unexpectedly cordoned off Długa Street. The Jews were ordered to assemble, and 400 elderly and infirm people, or those deemed unfit for labor, were selected. These people were permitted to collect 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of luggage and then were transferred to Dąbrowa Górnicza. From there they were sent by train to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Among those deported were also Jews brought to Strzemieszyce from Czarne Morze and other places nearby. During the transfer from Czarne Morze about 50 Jews managed to flee from the escorting Jewish policemen before the German police was summoned to restore order.¹¹

At the end of July 1942, all Jewish residents of Strzemieszyce had to assemble at a designated point and get their identity cards (*Lichtbildausweise*) stamped. After the verification of their documents, the approximately 1,000 remaining Jews were permitted to return to their houses.

According to Frajman, by March 1943, all of the Jews of Strzemieszyce had been concentrated on Długa Street, where

they “vegetated in the ghetto” until June 1943, when the Germans liquidated the ghetto. German police forces surrounded the ghetto on June 15, 1943, and deported most of the remaining Jews to Auschwitz. The Germans murdered 43 people in Strzemieszyce during the Aktion, including a number of children. A group of employees of the Judenrat remained in the town for a few more weeks to salvage remaining Jewish property in the ghetto. They were later resettled to the ghetto in Będzin.¹² In March 1944, the Amtskommissar in Strzemieszyce transferred to the Treuhandstelle Kattowitz the sum of 51,150 Reichsmark (RM) arising from the liquidation of Jewish property.¹³

Only around 70 Jews from Strzemieszyce are estimated to have survived the German occupation.¹⁴

SOURCES To date, there is no specific publication concerning the fate of the Jews of Strzemieszyce during the Holocaust. The existence of a ghetto in Strzemieszyce Wielkie is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 151.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat (e.g., RSGŻDG, 3; M Sosn, 6368; Regierung Kattowitz, 3117); AŻIH (e.g., 301/919, 1553, 2444); VHF (# 7985 and 11030); and YVA (e.g., M-49/E/1547 and O-3/3391).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas II wojny światowej* (Katowice, 2006), p. 106.
2. AŻIH, 301/1553, testimony of Jerichem Frajman.
3. Ibid.
4. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, Aufstellung der dem Leiter der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden in Ost-Oberschlesien unterstehenden Ältestenräte der jüdischen Kultusgemeinden, October 1, 1940, pp. 109–122.
5. Sybille Steinbacher, *“Musterstadt” Auschwitz: Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1999), p. 146. Local witnesses, however—e.g., YVA, M-49/E/1547, testimony of Samuel Zborowski; O-3/3391, testimony of Ester Malka Zajdman—give higher numbers.
6. APKat, M Sosn, 6368, for a statistical breakdown of the Jewish community; also information from the police of Sosnowiec, August 24, 1942, p. 2.
7. AŻIH, 301/1553.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 22, March 18, 1941, p. 5.
9. VHF, # 7985, testimony of Rose Chrustowski (née Cygler); # 11030, testimony of Henry Feigenblatt. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 151, date the establishment of the ghetto in January 1941.
10. AŻIH, 301/1553.
11. Ibid., 301/2444, testimony of Roza Felczer; YVA, O-3/3391; M. Guterman, “Holocaust Strzemieszyckich Żydów,” *Ekspres, Magazyn Zagłębiowski*, no. 3 (1997): 29–31.
12. AŻIH, 301/1553.
13. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 3117, p. 205.
14. AŻIH, 301/1553.

SUCHA

Pre-1939: Sucha, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Saybusch (Żywiec), Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Sucha Beskidzka, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Sucha is located 48 kilometers (30 miles) south-southwest of Kraków.

Units of the Wehrmacht arrived on September 4, 1939. In November, the Germans incorporated the town into Provinz Schlesien and annexed it to the Third Reich.

The Germans chose Sucha as the place to concentrate the Jewish population of the Żywiec region. In the fall of 1939, many were expelled into the Generalgouvernement. During 1940–1941, the remaining Jews were brought to Sucha from Żywiec-Zabłocie, Rajcza, Milówka, and smaller villages. By March 1941, the number of Jews in Sucha had reached 480. Subsequently this figure may have grown to 600.

By the end of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) had been established in Sucha. In 1940 it was subordinated to the authority of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office), based in Sosnowiec. The first chairman of the Sucha Judenrat was Buchbaum, but his German was very poor. Erwin Klapholz, from a German-Jewish family in Rajcza, took over. The Judenrat members included Dr. Josef Kornhauser (labor coordinator), Klar (food supply), and Egon Wolkan (secretary), all fluent in German. The Judenrat enjoyed the confidence of most Jews. There was also a three- or four-man Jewish police unit. Most of the younger Jews, about 200 men, worked full-time on various jobs, primarily flood control on the Skawa River. Others were put to work on road repairs, tree cutting, street cleaning, and unloading coal. Women were assigned to gardening.¹

The Poles of Sucha were very resentful of the German occupiers, who sought to populate the new German land with ethnic Germans from Bukovina and Transylvania. They forced Poles out of their homes to make room for the newcomers. The embittered Poles saw little reason to join in the German persecution of the Jews.²

The Judenrat opened a bakery and a food center to provide for the community. In 1941 a public kitchen was opened to serve 200 lunches per day. Sick people initially were attended to by Dr. Rauk from Bielsko-Biała. In 1941 a clinic was opened, at which Dr. Kornhauser (a dentist) provided general medical care. There was no charge for medical assistance. Difficult cases were transferred to the Jewish hospital in Sosnowiec. The doctor made monthly visits to Jewish homes to check on sanitary conditions.

The transfers of Jews to labor camps began in 1941, when a group of 50 young men were sent to a camp near Breslau. In March 1942, Jewish policemen from the Central Office took 30 people to a transit camp in Sosnowiec. Every day 70 young women traveled from Sucha to a workshop in Wadowice.

Some sources mention the existence of an open ghetto in Sucha in the period 1940–1942. Leon Kornhäuser maintained

that in the ghetto “there was no public kitchen, so food had to be bought in a small store. The ghetto was unfenced. We could leave it without any problem (up until May 1941), but we were afraid of the people outside. We had to wear our armbands when we went out and the policemen were the masters over life and death, who could decide to punish us for any reason.”³

At the end of June 1942, 40 SS men headed by two German officials—Heinrich Lindner and Friedrich Karl Kuczynski—arrived from Sosnowiec. They were joined by Mojżesz Merin, the chairman of the Central Office of Jewish Councils. Local German police surrounded the town, and the Gestapo pulled Jews out of their houses according to a list that had been prepared in Sosnowiec. The Jews of Sucha had anticipated an Aktion, but only a few attempted to hide. All the Jews, with the exception of the Judenrat members, their clerks, and the Jewish Police, were concentrated in the school building. In the courtyard a selection took place in the presence of Merin. The sick, the aged (even those holding down jobs), and entire families were taken to the train station and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. It is claimed that the original number marked for transport was 270 but that Merin’s intercession brought the total down to 220; 50 men were supposed to be sent to the transit camp in Sosnowiec. Altogether, about half of the 600 Jews were deported from Sucha.⁴

Thanks to the intervention of representatives of the German waterworks firm in Bielsko, which employed many Sosnowiec Jews for flood control, their 50 workers remained in Sucha, along with the others deemed “fit for labor” and the families of the Judenrat members. The Sucha Jews who worked in Wadowice also were brought back to Sucha. Only 40 of the Jews from Wadowice and Zator remained in Sucha.

After the June deportation Aktion, the German authorities officially proclaimed Sucha to have been cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*), but in fact around 300 Jews remained. All of these Jews were moved into the old beer brewery, which became a remnant ghetto or labor camp, under the direction of the Water Management Office in Bielsko. The camp was known as the “Browar,” the Polish word for brewery. It was surrounded by a 1.5-meter-high (5-foot-high) fence. The large groups of workers assigned to labor tasks in the area were the only ones permitted to leave the premises. The Judenrat chair, Erwin Klapholz, was put in charge of maintaining order. The camp was linked to the Central Office in Sosnowiec, and everyone had to pay a poll tax. Among the 300 Jews in the Browar were 20 children aged 3 to 10. About 200 of the inhabitants were employed in flood control along the Skawa River at Sucha and in the neighboring village of Skawce, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) away.⁵

Opinions diverge on whether this facility was in fact a ghetto or a labor camp. Some Jewish survivors, including the author of the relevant entry in the yizkor book, consistently refer to the Browar as a ghetto,⁶ as do some secondary sources, including Czesław Pilichowski, *Obozy hitlerowskie*, citing a postwar report signed by the mayor of Sucha, which also refers to the “ghetto.”⁷ The entry in *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, however, maintains that it was a labor camp. The concentration of

Jews from other places in Sucha, the presence of children, and the continuity of the Judenrat’s authority all might argue in favor of the status of a ghetto.

In contrast to many other sites, the labor conditions for the prisoners in the Browar seemed more tolerable. Those who worked on the river were issued high rubber boots. They worked a six-day week, from 7:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., and the last workday ended at noon. Those who worked in Skawce were taken to the work site and brought back on a train. Laborers were paid 3 to 4 Reichsmark (RM) per day. About 15 men from the camp worked in the office of the mayor of Sucha.

Some of the inhabitants of the Browar lived with their families in separate rooms. Unmarried men and women were housed in segregated areas and shared a common dining room. The children remained at home, cared for by a kindergarten teacher sent from Sosnowiec.⁸

The flood-control workers received food coupons from the firm, which they used at the Browar food shop. Some foodstuffs were sent to the communal kitchen. In the morning people received coffee and sugar (no limit). At lunch they received servings of two dishes. Meat was available three to four times a week. Many sent food packages to their relatives in Sosnowiec and Chrzanów. On Sabbaths and festivals there were worship services in the dining room. One survivor also mentions a theater and dancing. These favorable conditions lasted about a year.⁹

The managers of the waterworks firm assured the Browar prisoners that they could continue working for them until the end of the war. They received the news with joy, but their hopes were not fulfilled. On or around May 8, 1943,¹⁰ in the early morning, the Browar was surrounded by local German police and Gestapo men, headed by Heinrich Lindner. The selection removed mothers and their children, the aged, and the infirm, 120 in all, and sent them to Auschwitz. Another 120 people deemed “fit for labor” were sent by train to a transit camp in Sosnowiec and then dispersed among other camps.

The survivors did not forget the sympathetic treatment they received from the German mayor of Sucha, Volk, as well as their positive relationships with the local population. The city engineer, Tyszkowski, and his wife paid with their lives for helping the Jews. They also perished at Auschwitz.

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on Avraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 274–276. Other information concerning the fate of the Jewish community of Sucha during the Holocaust can be found in David Jakubowicz, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice, Andrychów, Katowice, Myslenice, Sucha* (Ramat Gan: Former Residents of Wadowice, 1967). Reference to the existence of a ghetto in Sucha can be found in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 478.

Relevant documentation includes the following: IPN (ASG, sygn. 48b, pp. 254–255); USHMM (RG-15.019M); and VHF (# 18757, 25061, 36485).

Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot*, p. 441; VHF, # 36485, testimony of Saul Rubinfeld.
2. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot*, p. 442.
3. PAIH, Testimony of Leon Kornhäuser, September 5, 1996.
4. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot*, p. 442.
5. IPN, ASG, sygn. 48b, pp. 254–255.
6. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot*, p. 442. VHF, # 25061, testimony of Erna Fishman, uses the term *ghetto*; # 18757, Mina Lustiger, however, says that it was more a labor camp than a ghetto, as single able-bodied Jews were sent there to work. VHF, # 36485, however, referring to the period before the brewery, states that the whole town was a ghetto, due to the overcrowding of Jews brought in from Rajcza and elsewhere.
7. IPN, ASG, sygn. 48b, p. 255.
8. VHF, # 25061.
9. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot*, p. 443; VHF, # 36485.
10. IPN, ASG, sygn. 48b, p. 254.

SZCZAKOWA

Pre-1939: Szczakowa, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Schakowa, Kreis Krenau, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Szczakowa, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Szczakowa is located about 21 kilometers (13 miles) east-southeast of Katowice. The Jewish population of the town was 405 in 1921.

After the chaos of the first days of occupation, the German authorities began to restrict the Jews' rights and isolate them from the non-Jewish population. According to decrees issued by the military and civil authorities, the property of displaced people (Jews and Poles) could be confiscated; Jewish bank accounts were blocked; cash withdrawals were restricted; shops were marked; and warehouse stocks were requisitioned. Jewish businesses and workshops were taken over by commissars, which effectively meant their confiscation. In Szczakowa, the last Jewish businesses were closed or placed under trusteeship in December 1940. At the end of 1939, Jews were ordered to wear a white armband, which was replaced in September 1941 by a yellow patch on the left breast. Collective and individual contributions were imposed on the Jews by the German authorities. For example, in April 1940, Szczakowa's Jews were forced to pay the sum of 2,000 Reichsmark (RM). At the beginning of 1940, the authorities prohibited Jews from running pubs; in March, the mayor decreed that Jewish craft shops had to be open on Saturdays. In November, the mayor in Chrzanów forbade Jews from using public parks.¹

In Szczakowa, power was initially in the hands of the Amtskommissar, named Zollna, who subsequently became mayor of the town.²

In January 1940, the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office) was established, with Mojżesz Merin as its chairman. The Central Office super-

vised all the Jewish communities in the territory of Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, as well as some others in Regierungsbezirk Oppeln. On its authority, a Judenrat was established in Szczakowa in mid-January 1940. Joel Wajs was the Judenrat's first chairman; in April 1940, Chaim Włoszczowski replaced him; and from December 1941, Abram Selinger was the chairman. Szczakowa was included within Kreis Krenau Inspectorate of the Central Office, which was headed by Chaim Merin.³ A soup kitchen was opened in February 1940, which served approximately 36 percent of Szczakowa's Jews.

Approximately 200 Jews from Katowice, Chorzów, Świętochłowice, and Siemianowice were deported to Kreis Krenau, including Jaworzno and Szczakowa, at the end of May and in early June 1940.⁴ There were 480 Jews living in Szczakowa in September 1940; 506 in March 1941; and 503 in July 1941.⁵

At the beginning of the occupation, the German authorities conscripted Jews for forced labor, initially for cleaning jobs. More physically demanding labor was imposed following a registration conducted on January 18–19, 1940. From October 1940, Albrecht Schmelt's Organisation Schmelt assumed responsibility for the labor deployment of Jews in the region. Approximately 250 Jewish men and 70 women from Jaworzno and Szczakowa worked in quarries in Czatkowice near Krzeszowice, at a rubber plant in Trzebinia, in Chrzanów's factories, and in mines in Jaworzno. Approximately 100 people worked for the municipal authority.⁶ Roundups of Szczakowa's Jews, and those from its vicinity, to be sent to labor camps started in the fall of 1940. In April 1941, about 60 Jews were sent to camps and more were sent away at the end of the year. According to German statistics, there were 143 Szczakowa Jews in various labor camps in August 1942.⁷

It is difficult to establish the exact date when the ghetto was established in Szczakowa; it most likely took place in the early spring of 1942. At this time, Polish residents of the "Pasternik" (i.e., the area between the foot of the Góra Piasku Mountain and the Kozi Bród River) were ordered to leave. In March 1942, the first Jewish families were resettled into this area. In the following months, more families were moved in, totaling more than 280 people. They lived in dreadful housing conditions, as the authorities allotted only 44 rooms for them.

The area's natural features favored the isolation of the population residing there. To the south, the area was cut off by a high railway bank, which was convenient for German observation. The river running on the other side was another natural obstacle, preventing escape.⁸

The ghetto's liquidation took place on June 8, 1942. According to German statistics, out of Szczakowa's 470 Jews, 286 were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp, and approximately 200 were resettled in the Chrzanów ghetto.⁹

Only about 15 Jews from Szczakowa survived to the end of the war, including 3 who had fled to the Soviet Union.

SOURCES There is no specific publication on the history of the Jewish community of Szczakowa, but its fate is mentioned in the studies dedicated to Jaworzno's Jews (in 1956, Szczakowa



Group portrait of students and teachers at a school in the Szczakowa ghetto, March 1941. The children are dressed in costume for Purim. All were murdered following a selection in June 1942. At the far left, with his face partly cut off by the camera, is Chaim Włoszczowski, the head of the Judenrat.

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lost its status as a town and became a suburb of Jaworzno). Relevant information can be found in a two-part article by Barbara Legutko, “Żydzi w Jaworznie,” published in *Zeszyty Historyczne Miasta Jaworzna* no. 10 (2006); and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 297–298.

Documentary sources can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGŻDG, sygn. 30; and Regierung Kattowitz, 2779); AŻIH (301/2635); and YVA (e.g., O-41/108).

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NOTES

1. J. Zawistowski, “Wojna i okupacja,” in J. Zawistowski, ed., *Jaworzno. Zarys dziejów w latach 1939–1990* (Kraków, 1996), p. 34.

2. Ibid., p. 16.

3. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Wykaz gmin podlegających Centrali Żydowskich Rad Starszych, October 1, 1940, p. 114; Adolf Tatarczuch, “Monografia Szczakowej,” *Zeszyty Historyczne Miasta Jaworzna*, no. 9 (2005): 39.

4. AŻIH, 301/2635, testimony of Matylda Goldberger.

5. APKat, RSGŻDG, Bulletin no. 1, September 15, 1940, p. 2; RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1942, p. 169.

6. Legutko, “Żydzi w Jaworznie (cz. II),” *Zeszyty Historyczne Miasta Jaworzna*, no. 10 (2006): 14–15.

7. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, Aufstellung der Bevölkerungszahl, July 20, 1942, p. 169.

8. Legutko, “Żydzi w Jaworznie (cz. II),” pp. 17–18.

9. APKat, Regierung Kattowitz, 2779, Statistische Angaben zu den Stand der jüdischen Bevölkerung, August 24, 1942, p. 4.

TRZEBINIA

Pre-1939: Trzebinia (Yiddish: Tshebin), town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krenau, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Trzebinia is located about 38 kilometers (24 miles) west-northwest of Kraków. Before 1939, Trzebinia had about 5,000 inhabitants, including about 300 Jewish families or around 1,200 people.¹

German troops occupied the town on September 5, 1939. Many Jewish inhabitants, as well as many Poles, fled the town during the German aerial bombardments in the first days of the war. Most, however, returned a few days later. Immediately on the first day of the occupation, 87 Jews from Chrzanów and Jaworzno were shot in Trzebinia.² Only three days later, when Isucher Mandelbaum returned to the town, 40 Jews were hastily collected on the marketplace, some without their shoes. They were escorted out of town and forced to dig graves in

the vicinity of a monastery, before being shot and buried there. The Jewish communities of Trzebinia and Chrzanów exhumed the bodies in December 1939 and January 1940.³

In the days following September 8, 1939, there were a series of further raids and killings in which about 40 more Jews were shot. On September 23, 1939 (Yom Kippur), 30 to 40 Jews were herded together at the “Sokół” sports field, where they were shot by members of the Wehrmacht and buried in a mass grave. These corpses were also exhumed so that the victims from Trzebinia, Jaworzno, and Chrzanów could be identified and transferred to their respective Jewish cemeteries.⁴

From the end of 1939, the Jews were required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. In September 1941, these armbands were replaced with yellow stars bearing the word “Jew” (*Jude*). At the start of 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. In the same year, a Jewish police force, consisting of just two people, was set up.⁵

In May 1940, more than 1,000 Jews from Rybnik, Pszczyna, Mikołów, Żory, Chorzów, Katowice, and Mysłowice were deported to Chrzanów and Trzebinia.⁶ Initially the mayor was reluctant to accept them, arguing that the town already had enough Jews, but he was forced to submit to the Gestapo.⁷ Statistics of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia record 1,064 Jews in Trzebinia in May 1940, but these figures probably do not include the resettled Jews.⁸

Some sources maintain that there was no ghetto in Trzebinia.⁹ However, up until the day on which Trzebinia was declared to be “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*), on June 10, 1942,¹⁰ there was an open ghetto in the town. The process of ghettoization started in 1940, when the Jews were forbidden to live on or use the main streets of the town. Jews living on Kościuszko, Długa, or Stanisławów Street had to move out. In 1941, this ban was extended to Narutowicz and Kraków Streets, as well as to the market square (Rynek), so that it is possible to speak of de facto ghettoization. Jews could not cross these streets without a special permit. Those Jews forced to resettle could take with them their furniture and clothes, but any particularly desirable furniture was confiscated and given to German officials and their families, who had moved to Trzebinia. The Jews were concentrated on two streets: Piłsudski (Bergstrasse) and Ochronkowa (Kinderheimstrasse), close to the synagogue.¹¹ According to Tauba Friedlich, after the Jews were rounded up and concentrated on one street, her entire family of eight people had to live in one room with a kitchen.¹² There was a curfew at 6:00 or 7:00 P.M.; it was hard to make a living and get food.¹³

In October 1939, the Germans began to round up Jews in Trzebinia for forced labor. In order to prevent the random seizure of Jews off the streets, the Jews of Trzebinia established a committee, which assigned Jews to forced labor. Wealthy Jews were able to buy exemptions, and this money was used to pay replacements.¹⁴

In the fall of 1939, a public kitchen was opened, which distributed about 30 lunches and bread daily to the poorest members of the community. Each day, about 40 Jews were sent to perform forced labor. Hana Kotlicki of Trzebinia recalled:

“After Yom Kippur (in 1939) we started immediately with the work—we received the coupons.”¹⁵ The first deportation from Trzebinia for work deployment in the Old (pre-1939) Reich took place in the spring of 1941. One year earlier, the community was able to save its members from deportation for forced labor by bribing the commander of the police to accept a statement by the local doctor that there was a typhus epidemic in the town.¹⁶

In June 1941, the Jewish population of Trzebinia was 1,242.¹⁷ The Jews of Trzebinia worked in the “Zbyszek” coal mine (40 people) and cleaned the streets and performed construction work for the town administration (50 men and 20 women); from June 1941, at least 150 young women and 20 men worked in the rubber-clothing factory (Oberschlesische Gummiwerke GmbH Trzebinia).¹⁸ Some Jewish women were engaged in cleaning work, for the police and other German institutions.¹⁹ Jews who worked regularly received a special status, which protected them from the roundups of people sent to forced labor camps.

On May 30, 1942, German police surrounded the Trzebinia ghetto and organized its liquidation. In the market square, the Germans conducted a selection, and the Jews were separated into three groups. The first group was destined for deportation to the Auschwitz concentration camp; they were held in a municipal building without food or water for several days before their deportation by train. The second group was told it would remain in Trzebinia, and these Jews were permitted to return home. The third group was sent to the labor camps via the transit camp in Sosnowiec. As a result, about 1,000 Jews were deported from the town. Only a few days later, however, on June 7 or 8, 1942, the 300 Jews that remained in Trzebinia were transferred to Chrzanów, where the rubber-clothing factory was then based.²⁰ This “replenished” the Chrzanów ghetto just after a deportation Aktion there. On June 10, Trzebinia was declared to have been cleared of Jews. At that time there were about 6,000 Jews in Chrzanów, to which were now added the 300 people from Trzebinia.²¹

Several labor camps existed in Trzebinia in the period from 1942 to 1944, including a subcamp of the Auschwitz concentration camp from August 1944 to January 1945, which also held a number of Jewish prisoners.

SOURCES Published sources on the Jewish community of Trzebinia include: Pinhas Goldwasser et al., eds., *Kehilat Tshubin* (Israel: Committee of Trzebinians in Israel, 1969); and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 324–327.

Documentary sources can be found in the following archives: APKat (RSGZDG, sygn. 30; Łagiewniki township, 260); AŻIH (301/2718); USHMM (Acc.2007.226); VHF (e.g., # 3108, 35575, 37652); and YVA (e.g., O-3/9265, O-41/882).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2718. Jacek Chrobaczyński, “Wrzesień 1939. Kłeska. Początek okupacji,” in Feliks Kuryk, ed., *Trzebinia*.

Zarys dziejów miasta i regionu (Kraków, 1994), pp. 425–502, gives the figure of 600 to 700 Jews in Trzebinia, but this probably refers to the number of adult members of the community.

2. Chrobaczyński, “Wrzesień,” p. 484.
3. AŻIH, 301/2718, testimony of Isucher Mandelbaum, p. 3; Chrobaczyński, “Wrzesień,” p. 484.
4. AŻIH, 301/2718.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
6. APKat, Łagiewniki township, 260, Circular no. 3, Gestapo in Katowice, May 8, 1940, p. 10.
7. AŻIH, 301/2718.
8. APKat, HTO 1397, pp. 66ff.
9. Chrobaczyński, “Wrzesień,” p. 484.
10. AŻIH, 301/2718, p. 9.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6; VHF, # 3108, testimony of Leopold Popowsky.
12. VHF, # 35575, testimony of Tauba Friedlich (née Langer).
13. *Ibid.*, # 37652, testimony of Miriam Rozenbaum (née Oppenheim).
14. AŻIH, 301/2718, p. 4.
15. YVA, O-3/9265, p. 10, testimony from 1995.
16. *Ibid.*
17. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 30, census of the Jewish population as of June 20, 1941, p. 173.
18. AŻIH, 301/2718, p. 7; 301/2637, p. 3; and YVA, O-3/9265, p. 11. German documentation cites much larger numbers of Jews working at the rubber-clothing factory; see Sybille Steinbacher, *“Musterstadt” Auschwitz: Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1999), p. 151, but this refers to the period after June 1942, when the shop had been transferred to Chrzanów.
19. AŻIH, 301/2637, pp. 1, 3; VHF, # 37652.
20. AŻIH, 301/2637, pp. 1, 3; VHF, # 3108.
21. AŻIH, 301/2720, p. 7.

WADOWICE

Pre-1939: Wadowice, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wadowitz, Kreis Bielitz, Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Wadowice, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Wadowice is located about 56 kilometers (35 miles) southeast of Katowice. The Jewish population of the town was 1,437 in 1921, out of a total population of 6,862.

When the Germans occupied Wadowice on September 4, 1939, there were about 1,400 Jews living there. In October, the Zagłębie region, including Wadowice, was annexed to the Third Reich.

In November, the Germans established a four-man Judenrat. The first chairman, Reuven Scharfer, was a past chairman of the community council. He sought to address the needs of the local community and resisted the hegemony of the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office). The chairman of the Central Office, Mojżesz Merin, demanded unswerving obedience to German orders. Scharfer refused to cooperate and resigned; Berisch

Wolf took over. The representative of the Central Office and enforcer on the Wadowice Judenrat was Baruch Majerczyk, who by July 1942 had become the dominant figure in the town's leadership. The Jews of Wadowice called him the “Commis-sar.” A small Jewish police force was also established.¹

The Germans required that the Judenrat meet their daily demands for forced labor. Jewish women were put to work cleaning the police station, the military camps, and German private apartments. The men were sent to repair roads and bridges and to work on flood control along the Skawa River. The Judenrat also collected funds to meet the German demands for “contributions.” As the economic situation of the Jews steadily worsened, the Judenrat organized support for people in need: food, clothing, footwear, and monthly monetary aid. A public clinic was opened to provide free medical treatment.

The Jewish leadership made efforts to create local jobs deemed critical to the German war effort, to curtail the commandeering of Jews for forced labor camps. In 1940, the Judenrat opened vocational courses for young Jewish men and set up a sewing and cutting course for 50 young women.

In 1940, about 300 Jewish families who had been expelled from other towns in the area were brought to Wadowice. They came from Cieszyn, Katowice, Żywiec, Bielsko-Biała, Czechowice, and Dziedzice. The local community made every effort to ease their plight. They were housed in community buildings, empty shops, storehouses, and private apartments. The Wadowice Jews opened a community kitchen to provide warm meals for the refugees, as well as for the local needy.

Despite a German ban, secret school groups were organized. Adults and older youths taught the younger ones.²

In the fall of 1940, a group of 100 men was shipped to a labor camp in Ottmut, where they were put to work paving roads and in a shoe factory. At the beginning of 1941, the kidnappings and deportations to labor camps increased. In April, more than 50 men were sent to a labor camp in Gogolin.³ The prisoners worked on road repairs and in the agricultural fields around the camp. Following a “selection,” those deemed unfit for labor were sent from the camp to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

To deter further deportations, the Judenrat stepped up its efforts to find work in or near the town. Jews in the workshops made army uniforms, raincoats, belts, and shirts. People who wanted such work had to bring their own sewing machines and work tools. By early 1942, more than 1,000 Jews from Wadowice and neighboring towns were employed in the shops. Other Jews were still working on the river irrigation projects. But these “essential” jobs did not stop the Germans from deporting people to labor camps. The local Jewish Police were supposed to participate in the roundups, but they did not always obey German orders. To meet the quotas, the Central Office in Sosnowiec had to send in their own police.

Several sources refer to an open ghetto being set up in Wadowice in 1941, but very few details are available.⁴ Sabina Winter mentions that it was in the poorest part of town,

about a 20-minute walk from her former home, and that her family was given one room for five to six people to share. Zygmunt Litwok was sent to the Wadowice ghetto from a nearby town, but he took off his star and returned home on one occasion to forage for food.⁵

In June 1942, Jews from nearby towns—Kęty, Sucha, and Zator—were expelled and sent to Wadowice. It soon became evident that they were brought in to join the first mass deportation, which occurred on July 2. On that day Gestapo and SS men arrived from Sosnowiec. They ordered the Jews to leave their apartments and assemble at the army barracks on Zatorska Road. The apartments were locked and sealed. The Jews at various work sites were all brought to the assembly point for the “selection.” They were divided into two groups according to their place of employment. Those from the shops who were “fit for work” would remain in Wadowice. Those who worked on river irrigation would be sent to labor camps in Sakrau and Gross-Rosen. Women with children, the elderly, the lame, and the sick were kept to one side, soon to be deported. When the Germans realized that the number for deportation was short of their goal (probably at least 1,000 people), they added another several dozen from among the shop workers for the train “to the east,” that is, according to the yizkor book and other sources, to the Bełżec extermination camp even though Auschwitz was only 30 kilometers (19 miles) away.⁶

On the following day, July 3, 1942, an enclosed ghetto was established in Wadowice. The remnants of the community, that is, those whose forced labor was considered “essential,” were moved into the ghetto. Some Jews left over from the deportations in nearby towns, including Andrychów, were also sent to the ghetto. The streets in the ghetto area included Mydlarska, Kerent, Piaskowa, and the left side of Zatorska. Aside from the buildings on Zatorska, the ghetto encompassed the poorest part of town. The Poles who were living there rushed to take over vacated Jewish apartments.

During July, people who had hidden during the Aktions tried to slip back into the ghetto. Many were caught and shot by the Gestapo. Conditions in the ghetto were horrendous. Over 1,400 people lived there, with 20 or more sharing one room. They were so crowded that they had to take turns sleeping on the floor. A barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto. The only gate was guarded by the Jewish Police.⁷ Overcrowding, malnutrition, and disease claimed many victims. The Judenrat set up a small grocery and opened a public kitchen to feed the people. A medical crew headed by Dr. Bitter cared for the sick with great dedication. Strict sanitary standards were maintained to prevent the spread of disease.

The ghetto inhabitants opened a kindergarten. They also organized a school program for the children.⁸ Orphans were provided with food and clothing. In April 1943, the ghetto leaders mustered the resources to prepare a Passover seder for the ghetto inhabitants, led by a refugee from Zator.⁹

On May 10, 1943, 100 young women were sent from the Wadowice ghetto to work camps in Germany. They passed through many different camps, and most survived the war.¹⁰

On August 10, 1943, the ghetto was liquidated. By then it was one of the last ghettos left in the region. At the last minute a number of ghetto inhabitants tried to escape across the border into Slovakia. The route was very perilous, and many were caught and shot.¹¹

All the inhabitants were assembled in the town square. Sick people were carried by their families or friends. The Jews were ordered to turn in any jewelry and valuables. Many were killed during the Aktion. The rest were put into freight cars and transported to the Auschwitz extermination camp. On August 11, 1943, the *Oberschlesische Zeitung* proclaimed that the days when “dirty-greasy Kaftan Jews” walked the streets of Wadowice had now passed, and it was now a stronghold of the Germans (*ein Hort des Deutschtums*).

After the ghetto’s liquidation, the Germans searched for people in hiding. Most were captured and killed. About 10 people remained hidden until the town was liberated. Altogether about 170 Jews from Wadowice survived the war, mostly people who were in the labor camps, as well as some of those who had escaped into the Soviet Union in 1939.

SOURCES Much of the information for this entry comes from Avraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicja and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 124–129, also available in English as Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 338–341. Reference has also been made to the yizkor book edited by David Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice, Andrychów, Kalwaria, Myslenice, Sucha* (Ramat Gan: Former Residents of Wadowice, Andrychów, Kalwaria, Myslenice, Sucha, 1967). The Wadowice ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 536.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APKat; AŻIH (301/761, 4986); and VHF (# 15968, 20985, 31931).

Samuel Fishman and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice*, pp. 186–187; VHF, # 20985, testimony of Marian Jurkowski; AŻIH, 301/761, testimony of Sala Luftglas.
2. VHF, # 31931, testimony of Sabina Winter.
3. AŻIH, 301/761.
4. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 536. AŻIH, 301/761, mentions that the ghetto was reduced in size following the deportation Aktion on July 2–3, 1942.
5. VHF, # 31931; and # 15968, testimony of Zygmunt Litwok.
6. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice*, p. 192; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, 3:128; AŻIH, 301/761; and 301/4986, testimony of Henryk Klausner.
7. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, 3:128; Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice*, pp. 192, 199; AŻIH, 301/761 and 4986.
8. Jakubowicz, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Wadowice*, p. 199.

9. Ibid., p. 202.

10. Ibid., pp. 203–204; AŻIH, 301/761.

11. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, 3:128–129, and Pilichowski *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 536, give the date of August 10, 1943; AŻIH, 301/4986, dates it on July 9, 1943.

ZAWIERCIE

Pre-1939: Zawiercie, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Warthenau, Kreis center, Regierungsbezirk Oppeln, Provinz Oberschlesien; post-1998: Zawiercie, województwo śląskie, Poland

Zawiercie is located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) south-southeast of Częstochowa. From 1919 the Jewish communities in Kromołów, Kroczyce, Mrzygłód, Myszków, Poraj, Łazy, Wysoka, Chruszczobród, Pradła, Ogrodzieniec, Rokitno Szlacheckie, Siewierz, and Koziegłowy all belonged to the district of Zawiercie. Just before the outbreak of World War II, Zawiercie had about 40,000 inhabitants, of which 5,676 were Jews.

The German army entered Zawiercie on September 3, 1939. After the chaos of the first days of occupation, the Germans began to eliminate the Jews from economic life, seizing their property, imposing restrictions on their freedom, and isolating them from the non-Jewish inhabitants.

Dr. Wilhelm Frick, who was also the head of the regional section of the Nazi Party, became mayor of Zawiercie. In 1940, an office of the Grenzpolizei (Border Police), which was subordinated to the Staatspolizei (State Police), was established in the town. At first the head of this office was Kriminalsekretär Georg Folta, and then (from the second half of 1942) Kriminalsekretär Hans Heinz Rother. His deputy was Rudolf Schneider. The Grenzpolizei office in Zawiercie was subordinated to the main office in Lubliniec. The Gestapo in Zawiercie was subordinated to the State Police in Opole. There was also an office of the Kriminalpolizei (Criminal Police) and a Military Police unit in Zawiercie, the head of which was Wilhelm Fuchs.¹



A German policeman publicly humiliates a Jew in the Zawiercie ghetto by shaving his beard, n.d.

USHMM WS #07267, COURTESY OF SCHWARTZBAUM

In December 1939, on the order of Dr. Frick, the Jewish religious community in Zawiercie was reorganized, and a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was appointed. Its first chairman was the sculptor Ignacy Buchner, who was sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1941, with his family, for refusing to organize a transport of Jews to a forced labor camp. The next chairman of the community was a merchant, Mojżesz Windmann from Sosnowiec. The members of the Judenrat included: Dr. Zygmunt (Selig) Lewkowicz, clerk Stanisław Szłoma Lewkowicz, Aleks Turner, Wolf Percis, barrister Bornstein, Justmann, merchant Perelmutter, Srul Schwarzbaum, and the owner of a sawmill, Potok.² The Jewish community in Zawiercie was subordinated to the Central Office of Jewish Councils in Eastern Upper Silesia (Central Office) in Sosnowiec, which was the supervising body for the Jewish communities in Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz and also for some in Regierungsbezirk Oppeln. In this way, Zawiercie became the seat of one of eight Kreis Inspectorates subordinated to the Central Office, and Mojżesz Windmann performed the function of Kreis Inspector. In September 1940, there were 7,555 Jews registered in Jewish communities in the Kreis: Zawiercie (5,340), Kromołów (160), Łazy (395), Siewierz (235), Poręba (140), Poraj (75) Masłońskie-Natalin (7), Myszków (930), Mrzygłód (30), Koziegłowy (230), and Kamienica Polska (13).³ In May 1940, about 500 Jews from Lubliniec, Tarnowskie Góry, Cieszyn, Karwin, and Bogumin were resettled to Zawiercie.⁴

The Jewish community ran a soup kitchen (set up on January 9, 1940), serving about 40 percent of the community in 1941, and an orphanage (set up on December 22, 1940), where there were 55 children at that time. A hospital was established on Poręba Street. The hospital was located in the house of Rabbi Kromołowski and was run by Zelik Lewkowicz. Probably at the end of 1940 or at the beginning of 1941, a Jewish police force was organized; its first commandant was Jakub Banker (he was probably shot), and then he was succeeded by Wolf Percis.

In July 1940, a Jewish quarter (ghetto) was established. It consisted of Hoża (Wasserwerk), Jasna (Helle Gasse), Apteczna (Apotheker Strasse), Poręba, Marszałkowska (Alte Markt Strasse), and Ciemna (Dunkel Gasse) Streets, as well as the Old Market (Alter Ring) and New Market (Neuer Ring).⁵ At first, it was surrounded by a wooden fence. Later, probably in 1941, the area was partially surrounded with barbed wire, a wall, and a fence; Jewish Police guarded the perimeter. There was no German guard post, but regular inspections of the ghetto were carried out by the Military Police, the Gestapo, and the Order Police.

The ghetto was reduced in size as time went on. The already overcrowded conditions deteriorated further in 1942, when Jews from the surrounding communities were brought into the ghetto from Kromołów, Mrzygłód, Łazy, Poręba, Ogrodzieniec, and Siewierz.

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Germans enclosed the ghetto with a barbed-wire fence. From October 1940, the Jews of Zawiercie, like all Jews in this region, were placed at the disposal of the forced labor authority in Silesia, Organisation Schmelt,



A street in the Zawiercie ghetto, ca. 1941.
USHMM WS #05945, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

which decided on the allocation of Jews to forced labor camps or their employment in factories or workshops. One of the largest companies in Zawiercie that employed Jews produced uniforms for the Luftwaffe. It was established in the autumn of 1941 or the spring of 1942 in the former textile factory of Towarzystwo Akcyjne Zawiercia (TAZ), employing about 4,000 Jews, managed by Willy Garbrecht and a man named Teicher. Some Jews were assigned to work at the iron foundry, "Erbe," while others were forced to work cleaning the streets.

At the end of 1941 an underground anti-Nazi resistance movement of young people connected to the Zionist group Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir emerged, headed by Berl Szwartz. It organized the production of forged documents and helped people to escape from the ghetto. This group tried to get in contact with the Polish underground. In the middle of 1942, Mordechaj Anielewicz, one of the founders of the Warsaw Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB) came to Zawiercie. He urged young Jewish people from the area to organize a resistance movement and form combat organizations. There was a Jewish committee in the ghetto, composed of David Grunwald, Zygmunt Grunwald, and Joel Grünkraut, which cooperated with Polish partisans from the Bataliony Chłopskie (BCh). Their tasks included the distribution of food supplied by the BCh group under the command of Antoni Jastrząb, as well as false documents prepared by the partisans, who also



German police round up Jews in the Zawiercie ghetto, ca. 1941.
USHMM WS #07269, COURTESY OF SCHWARTZBAUM

delivered weapons and ammunition into the ghetto. Jastrząb was to warn the Jews about the planned liquidation of the ghetto and to help those who survived the Aktion to escape.

The first transport of Jews (200 people) assigned for forced labor in the Reich left in November 1940.⁶ On March 26, 1941, a second transport of 250 people followed. Heinrich Lindner, of Organisation Schmelt, was in charge of this operation. The Jews called that day "bloody Wednesday," because many Jews were robbed and beaten and some women were raped as the German police broke into Jewish apartments to drag Jews to the selection.⁷ Another transport to labor camps left at the beginning of May 1941. The Gestapo also arrested a number of Jews as suspected Communists in June 1941, at the time of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. In November 1941, 270 people were sent to labor camps. In February 1942, 100 young women aged 15 to 25 were taken away. On March 12, 1942, about 200 people were sent to a transit camp in Sosnowiec (Dulag), as they had special work cards. This Aktion was commanded by the head of the Criminal Police in Zawiercie—Nertens. The last Aktion of this type took place in the winter of 1941–1942. The Jewish Police detained young Jewish females, who reported to the Jewish community on their orders. Due to active resistance by these young girls, who threw stones at the policemen and broke windows in the offices of the Jewish community, the police only managed to capture about 30 of them.⁸

The first mass deportation Aktion took place on June 16 and 17, 1942.⁹ Reportedly some 5,408 Jews were living in the Zawiercie ghetto at that time.¹⁰ The selection, supervised by Kriminalkommissar and head of the Jewish section of the Kattowitz Gestapo, Hans Dreier, and by an employee of Organisation Schmelt in Sosnowiec, Friedrich Karl Kuczynski, took place on Nowy Rynek (New Market Square). Some 5,000 people were gathered there. Jews from the surrounding communities of Kromiów, Siewierz, Poręba, and Myszków were also brought there (about 2,000 people). During the selection, the Jews were divided into three groups: the young and strong were assigned for labor camps; a part was kept for work in the ghetto or workshops; and the third group, deemed unfit for work, was to be transported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. About 1,650 to 1,800 people were deported at this time. Many Jews hid in bunkers and cellars on that day. If they were found, they were shot on the spot or on Nowy Rynek (about 200 people).¹¹

The second mass deportation of the Jews from Zawiercie took place in May 1943. The old and unfit for work (about 400 people) went to Auschwitz; the physically strong (about 200 people) went to labor camps.¹² First, a German-organized manhunt (Gestapo, Schupo, and Military Police from Katowice, Opole, Sosnowiec, and Lubliniec) aimed at finding escapees from the Warsaw ghetto. The Jews were assembled in the yard at the TAZ factory; and at that time the Jewish living quarters were searched, property was taken, and about 20 people were shot.

The last deportation Aktion combined with the liquidation of the ghetto took place on August 25–26, 1943. The resettlement

was supervised by the Gestapo from Opole; Schupo from Opole, Katowice, Sosnowiec, and Zawiercie; plus the Gestapo and Military Police from Zawiercie. Several dozen Jews were murdered during the selection. One transport was sent at about 2:00 P.M., the other one at about 9:00 P.M. According to the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, around 1,500 Jews from the Zawiercie ghetto arrived there on August 26 and another 1,500 on August 27. Of these arrivals, 1,200 were gassed immediately, and the others, slightly more women than men, were registered in the camp. The Jewish hospital in Zawiercie was also liquidated during the Aktion. Patients who were able to walk were transferred to the ghetto, and the remainder were given morphine injections. Schneider, who supervised the liquidation of the hospital, personally administered lethal drugs to patients. Around 20 ill and elderly Jews were murdered.

After the August Aktion, only 350 to 400 people employed in the TAZ factory remained in Zawiercie. This group was deported to Auschwitz on October 17, 1943.¹³ The main factory master managed to hide 7 people, who worked in a workshop making uniforms for the Luftwaffe until January 1945. They were: Zygmunt Sobelman, Ignacy Rotmensch, Chaim Cukier, Bencjan Brokman, Henryk Landau, Iser Cukrowski, and Joel Grünkraut. They were among the few Jews of the town who survived the war, as were two young boys who escaped from Auschwitz.

During the entire period of the ghetto's existence, apart from the mass deportations, there were 58 documented individual or group murders of Jews. In total, about 100 Jews survived the war and returned to Zawiercie.

SS-Oberscharführer Rudolf Emanuel Schneider, born on March 26, 1910, in Sosnowiec, who was the deputy head of the Gestapo in Zawiercie during the occupation, was tried by the District Court in Częstochowa and sentenced to death on April 7, 1948.¹⁴

SOURCES The history of the Jews of Zawiercie and their fate is mentioned only briefly in the more general historical publications about the town such as: Z. Jagodziński, ed., *Zawiercie* (Zawiercie, 2003); or J. Abramski, *Zawiercie* (Zawiercie, 1994). A description of living conditions for the Jews in German-occupied Zawiercie can be found in the memoir of Inka Wajsbort, *Był świat* (Warsaw, 1996). See also the German-language edition Inka Weisbort, *Im Angesicht des Todes: Von Chorzów über Zawiercie, Tarnowitz, Tschenstochau durch Auschwitz nach Malchow und Oshatz: Jüdische Schicksale in Oberschlesien 1939–1945* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2000). The yizkor book, edited by Sh. Spivak, *Sefer zikaron, kedoshei Zawiercie ve-ba-*

sewiva (Tel Aviv, 1948), also contains useful information on the ghetto; as does “Zawiercie,” in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 192–196.

Jan Pietrzykowski writes about the extermination of the Jews of Zawiercie in his book *Oskarżalem kata Zawiercia. Proces Rudolfa Emanuela Schneidera* (Katowice, 1987). The author based his work to a large extent on the court files of the trial that are kept in the archives of IPN. The evidence gathered by the Katowice Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (now in IPN-Kat) during its work on cases concerning Gestapo crimes in Zawiercie and the deportation of the Jews from Zawiercie is also of considerable importance. Relevant German court material is in BA-L (e.g., B 162/14682). Personal testimonies of Jewish survivors from Zawiercie can be found in AŻIH (e.g., 301/628, 2625, 3552). Additional documentation concerning the German occupation is located in APKat (e.g., RSGŻDG, sygn. 3; Gmina Łagisza, sygn. 260; Landrat of Zawiercie, sygn. 7).

Aleksandra Namysł

NOTES

1. IPN-Kat, case concerning crimes committed by the Gestapo in Zawiercie, Ds. 19/69, report on the state of the investigation against Hans Heinz Rother and others, January 15, 1969, pp. 1–3.
2. Ibid., pp. 4–5.
3. APKat, RSGŻDG, sygn. 3, Bulletin no. 1, October 15, 1940, p. 1.
4. Ibid., Gmina Łagisza, sygn. 260, Circular letter no. 3 issued by the Gestapo in Katowice, May 8, 1940, p. 11.
5. IPN-Kat, Ds. 19/69, p. 6.
6. AŻIH, 301/2625, testimony of Joel Grünkraut.
7. Ibid.; 301/3965, testimony of Szlama Lewkowicz.
8. Ibid., 301/2625, testimony of Joel Grünkraut; 301/3965, testimony of Szlama Lewkowicz.
9. Wajsbort, *Był świat*, p. 63; see also BA-L, B 162/14682, verdict of LG-Hamb (89) 2/83 Ks 2200 Js 2/80, July 29, 1985, p. 108.
10. APKat, Landrat of Zawiercie (1939–1945), sygn. 7, letter of mayor of Warthenau to Landrat, April 2, 1942, p. 56.
11. IPN-Kat, Ds. 19/69, report on the state of the investigation, January 15, 1969, p. 8.
12. Ibid., p. 9.
13. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990) p. 508, however, registers the arrival of about 1,000 Jews from a labor camp in Zawiercie on October 18.
14. The case against Schneider is in IPN, SOCz 345–348.

SECTION II

PROTECTORATE OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA (PROTEKTORAT BÖHMEN UND MÄHREN)

The Munich Agreement of September 29–30, 1938, which permitted Germany under Adolf Hitler's direction to annex the Sudetenland, was soon followed by the destruction of the interwar independent and democratic state of Czechoslovakia. Further annexations of Czechoslovakian borderlands in November 1938 by Hungary and Poland, with German and Italian backing, were succeeded in March by the secession of Slovakia, which became a Nazi satellite state. Then on March 15, 1939, German troops occupied the rump Czech lands, which Hitler declared to be a protectorate of the German Reich. The new state consisted of two provinces, Böhmen und Mähren (Bohemia and Moravia), which in most respects were treated as part of the German Reich. Much of the Czech administration was left intact but placed under the close supervision of German officials in charge of the various departments.

The first Reichsprotektor was Konstantin von Neurath. He was effectively replaced by Reinhard Heydrich

on September 27, 1941, although Neurath retained the title of Reichsprotektor until his formal resignation in August 1943. After the assassination of Heydrich in May 1942, he was succeeded first by Kurt Daluege (head of the Order Police), then by Wilhelm Frick, who served as Reichsprotektor from August 20, 1943, until the end of the occupation in May 1945.

There was only one ghetto established in the Protectorate in November 1941—the fortress town of Terezín (Theresienstadt), 70 kilometers (44 miles) north-northwest of Prague. The Jews of the Protectorate were concentrated there before most were deported to the east. Additionally, tens of thousands of mostly elderly Reich Jews were sent to Terezín after January 1942, when it was officially designated a “ghetto for the aged” (*Altersghetto*). Some Jews from the Netherlands, Denmark, Slovakia, and Hungary also were sent to Terezín.



TEREZÍN



A large group of Dutch Jews who have just arrived in Terezín are herded into one of the ghetto's entrances, January 20, 1944. This photograph by Ivan Fric was taken in preparation for the Nazi propaganda film, *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt* (*The Führer Gives a City to the Jews*).

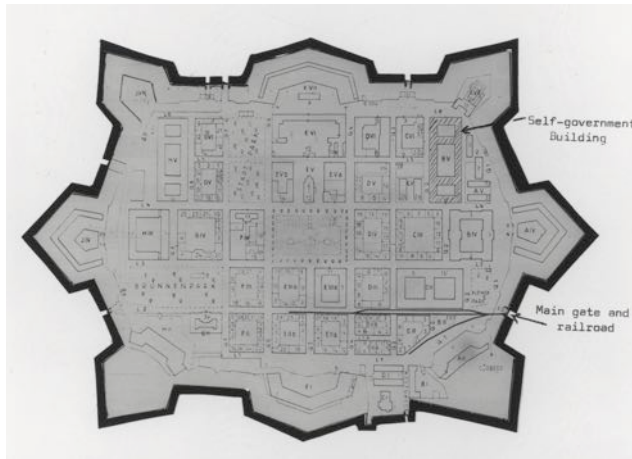
USHMM WS #20255, COURTESY OF IVAN VOJTECH FRIC

TEREZÍN

Pre-1939: Terezín, town, Litoměřice district, Čechy province, Republic of Czechoslovakia; 1939–1945: Theresienstadt, Leitmeritz district, Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren; post-1992: Terezín, Litoměřice district, Ústí nad Labem region, Czech Republic

Terezín is located about 70 kilometers (44 miles) north-northwest of Prague. Built in the 1780s, Terezín's existence as a fortress town dominated its history. Terezín's "Small Fortress" was a notorious Habsburg-era detention site that became the Gestapo police prison for Prague in June 1940. On November 24, 1941, after approximately a month's administrative preparation, the German authorities established a ghetto in part of the town. Originally intended for Jews from the Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren, Terezín later held Jews from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark, Slovakia, and Hungary. By May 8, 1945, approximately 155,000 men, women, and children had passed through Terezín. Some 35,000 of them died in the ghetto; another 83,000 perished after deportation to killing centers, ghettos, and labor camps in the east.

The ghetto functioned as a reception and transit camp, which has led some witnesses and scholars to classify it as a concentration camp. The designation originated during World War II and can be found, for example, in International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) files.¹ Terezín was never subordinate to the SS Business Administration Main Office (SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt, WVHA), however, meaning that it was not a concentration camp in the strictest sense, and the forced removal, by June 1942, of the town's non-Jewish inhabitants strongly suggested that Terezín was a ghetto. As early as the 1950s, scholar H.G. Adler subdivided its World War II history into four phases, an indication of its repurposing or "morphing" over time: "closed camp" (November 1941 to July 1942); "ghetto" (July 1942 to the summer of 1943); "Jewish settlement area" (the summer of 1943 to September 1944); and decline and dissolution (September 1944 to May 1945).



Map of Terezín that was cut out of an original document and mounted on black paper in an album assembled by a survivor, n.d.
USHMM WS #42024, COURTESY OF HENRY KAHN

On November 24, 1941, a construction kommando of 342 young Jewish men from Prague arrived at Terezín's Sudeten barracks. Its task was to prepare other town structures for the reception of deportees beginning on November 30. Having been stripped of most property during the deportation, except for 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of luggage, the deportees arrived at the Bohušovice railway station, some 2.4 kilometers (1.5 miles) away. The new arrivals had to walk from the railway station to the ghetto; many old and ill people did not survive the journey.

The ghetto's commandants were SS-Obersturmführer, later Hauptsturmführer, Dr. Siegfried Seidl; SS-Obersturmführer Anton Burger; and SS-Obersturmführer Karl Rahm. These officers mistreated inmates both indirectly, through a system of orders and prohibitions, and directly, in the bunkers beneath the command post, where inmates were interrogated and tortured. The three commandants were Austrian Nazis with administrative ties to SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, who headed the Jewish Affairs desk (Office IV-B-4) in the SS-Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA). Indeed, Eichmann nominated Seidl as ghetto commandant in late October 1941.

The SS transmitted orders to the ghetto's inhabitants through the Jewish self-administration (Jüdische Selbstverwaltung). The self-administration consisted of a Jewish elder (Judenältester), deputy, Council of Elders (Ältestenrat), and Central Secretariat with initially five, later nine, main departments. In succession, the Jewish elders were Jakob Edelstein (December 1941 to December 1943), Dr. Paul Eppstein (December 1943 to September 27, 1944), and Dr. Benjamin Murmelstein (December 1944 to May 1945). According to an organizational table published by the Jewish self-administration on August 10, 1944, the main departments were the Directorate (Leitung), Labor Central Office (Arbeitszentrale), Department for Internal Administration (Abteilung für innere Verwaltung), Economic Department (Wirtschaftsabteilung), Technical Department (Technische Abteilung), Financial Department (Finanzabteilung), Health Matters and Welfare (Gesundheitswesen und Fürsorge), Youth Welfare (Jugendfürsorge), and Leisure Time Organization (Freizeitgestaltung).² While some of these departments and their attendant agencies served Nazi propaganda functions, others somewhat attenuated the inhabitants' suffering. For example, the child welfare division established children and youth homes, where caretakers, officially forbidden to provide schooling, utilized games and songs in the attempt to prepare their charges for life after the ghetto.

Cultural activities, which originally emerged as spontaneous "friendship evenings" that some of the young men among the first arrivals held, soon came under the auspices of the Leisure Time Organization. Although for propaganda purposes the SS later exploited the ghetto's dramatic performances, lectures, and concerts, such activities signified important coping mechanisms, giving inhabitants a temporary escape, a sense of continuity with pre-war lives, and the opportunity to imagine a postwar future. Some inhabitants, such as administrator



Still photograph from the Nazi propaganda film, *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt* [*The Führer Gives a City to the Jews*], showing members of the Terezín Jewish Council, 1944. Standing are Otto Zucker, Jewish Elder Paul Eppstein, and Eppstein's successor, Benjamin Mummelstein.

USHMM WS #59545, COURTESY OF IVAN VOJTECH FRIC

Philipp Manes, maintained diaries, while others produced works of art. Manes's diary conveyed a sense of the scope of Terezín's cultural activities; he recounted lectures, parenthetically recording the languages other than German in which they were delivered. For the day of August 8, 1944, the host of topics included lectures on Flemish art by Alice Bloemendahl (in French); Jewish mysticism by Dr. Josef Pollak; Joseph in Egypt (in Hebrew); Jewish artists, including Marc Chagall, by Dr. Karl Fleischmann; and the division of labor by Ing. H. Haber (in Czech).³ Among Terezín artists whose work extensively chronicles the ghetto were Leo Haas and Alfred Kantor. Still other inhabitants found other means of escapism. Wilhelmina (Minna) Paechter maintained a small cookbook with recipes in German and Czech. Whether these recipes, which included tortes, strudel, and macaroni, were made in the ghetto is unclear.⁴

The January 9, 1942, order of the day announcing the transport to Riga dashed whatever illusions remained that Terezín might be a place to live and work until war's end.⁵ Indeed, this order explicitly stated: "It is to be reckoned, as far as can now be said, with further transports from Theresienstadt to the East."⁶ The Riga deportation was the first of 63 transports totaling more than 87,000 people from Terezín. Aside from Riga, the deportees were sent to ghettos including Białystok, Łódź, Minsk, Piaski Lutarskie, and Warsaw and to concentration camps and extermination centers at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, Lublin-Majdanek, and Treblinka. Approximately 3,800 of them survived the war.

At the Wannsee conference on January 20, 1942, Terezín officially became the "ghetto for the aged" (*Altersghetto*) for Jews from Germany and Austria, a policy that followed its provisional designation by the RSHA in October 1941.⁷ People over 65 years of age and famous or privileged people, especially with foreign ties (in Nazi terms, the *Prominente*), were deported

to Terezín. This policy's ultimate purpose was to deflect international criticism of Nazi anti-Jewish policy. The ghetto's new role called for a marked increase in accommodations. Until then, the inmates were crowded in 11 guarded barracks in town. Now, the entire town became a large ghetto. Chief of the Security Police and SD (Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und SD, CSSD) Reinhard Heydrich issued a decree in February 1942 abolishing the Terezín community; the non-Jewish Czech population was removed by the end of June. Elderly and "prominent" Jews poured into the town, first from Germany and Austria, then, beginning in 1943, from the German-occupied Netherlands and Denmark. The ghetto reached peak accommodation capacity in September 1942 with 58,491 inmates, as compared to 12,968 people the previous April. While its population quadrupled between April and September, the mortality rate increased more than 15-fold. Deportations to killing centers continued apace as overcrowding worsened.

Beginning in late 1942, German military reverses affected the implementation of the "Final Solution." The German authorities thereupon sought to exploit the Terezín ghetto for propaganda, launching a "beautification" (*Verschönerung*) campaign in the spring of 1943. On a grand scale, this campaign elaborated on early Nazi camp practices in which foreign visitors, including the ICRC's Carl Burckhardt, were given "Potemkin village" tours of camps in the early 1930s. Growing requests by international organizations, primarily the ICRC, for permission to visit the actual destinations of Jewish deportations culminated in the first half of 1944. The beautification campaign paid particular attention to the cosmetic improvement of houses and green space. Such measures included the planting of flowerbeds, the building of a musical pavilion for concerts on the square, and erecting a children's pavilion and nearby playground. A former gym was turned into a "community center" (*Gemeinschaftshaus*) with halls for cultural programs, a prayer room, a library, and a restaurant on a terrace. As described by Dr. Ludwig Hift, an employee of the ghetto's "bank," another institution devised for propaganda purposes, such measures were "eye-wash."⁸

Headed by delegate Dr. Maurice Rossel, the ICRC visit took place on June 23, 1944. Rossel's report met the German authorities' most optimistic expectations. Uncritically accepting SS efforts at subterfuge, Rossel described Terezín as a "final camp" (*Endlager*) from which Jews were no longer deported and quoted Eppstein as announcing, "You are visiting a normal provincial town."⁹ In a comment redolent of the Nazi association of Jews and Bolshevism, the ICRC delegate observed, "The ghetto of Theresienstadt is a communist society, led by a 'Little Stalin' of high value: EPPSTEIN."¹⁰ In actuality, tens of thousands of Terezín inmates had already perished in killing centers, while death awaited many others, most immediately the inmates of the Czech "family camp" at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, murdered on July 22, 1944, almost one month after Rossel's visit. Historian Otto Dov Kulka connects the timing of the second Czech family camp's destruction to SS satisfaction with the outcome of Rossel's visit: there were to be no more inquiries into the Terezín deportees' fate.

In yet another propaganda tactic, the SS produced a film about Terezín in August and September 1944. The film, best known after the war as *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt* (*The Führer Gives a City to the Jews*), used as backdrop the freshly renovated town, thereby creating the false impression of contentment within the “Jewish settlement area.”¹¹ One week after finishing, the SS announced that, due to Terezín’s inadequate production capacity, more inhabitants had to be deported to facilitate war production. One day before this transport began, September 27, 1944, Terezín’s second Jewish elder, Dr. Paul Eppstein, was shot in the Small Fortress. Almost all the members of the Council of Elders, other Jewish officials, and their families were deported, beginning with the September 28, 1944, transport.

Between September 28 and October 28, 1944, a total of 18,400 Terezín Jews were sent to Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Approximately 11,000 people, mostly elderly, remained after the last wave of transports. Such a dramatic population drop put greater reliance on women’s and children’s labor. The Jewish self-administration found it difficult to regain its strength and fully resumed its activities only in December. Dr. Benjamin Murmelstein became Jewish elder, and Dr. Leo Baeck headed the Council of Elders.

Beginning in December 1944, new groups started to arrive at Terezín. Four transports holding 1,400 Slovakian Jews were sent from the forced labor camp at Sered. These people were originally sent to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, but after the local extermination facilities ceased operation, they were rerouted to Terezín. The Slovak Jews brought news about the Auschwitz killing center’s actual function. In mid-January 1945, the RSHA ruled that members of mixed marriages from Germany, Austria, and the Protectorate should be sent to Terezín for supervised labor, while persons of mixed “race” (*Mischlinge*) from the Protectorate were also consigned to Terezín. The first such transports arrived from Prague on January 31, 1945. By the end of April, the above-mentioned groups numbered 5,736. Other new arrivals included a group of 1,150 Hungarian Jews, originally deployed for fortification work around Vienna, who were dispatched in March 1945.

Germany’s imminent defeat engendered growing anxiety among the SS. On the one hand, the SS prepared once more to use Terezín in its attempted cover-up of the “Final Solution”; on the other, preparations got under way for the possible massacre of Terezín’s population before the arrival of Allied forces. By this time, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler planned to exploit Jews as his most valuable asset in secret negotiations with the Allies. After his talks on January 15, 1945, with former chairman of the Swiss Federal Council Jean Marie Musy, some 1,200 Terezín inmates departed for Switzerland on February 5. On April 6, 1945, Dr. Otto Lehner and Paul Dunant of the ICRC and Swiss diplomat Buchmüller arrived at Terezín. After the visit, Lehner depicted the ghetto as the “little Jewish state,” another depiction welcomed by the SS.¹²

The war’s approaching end brought little relief for Terezín. On April 15, 1945, as part of Aktion Bernadotte, the humanitarian operation mounted by Swedish rescuer Count

Folke Bernadotte, Danish Jews departed Terezín for Sweden. They rode aboard a convoy of buses supplied by the Swedish Red Cross. In April and May 1945, evacuation transports from WVHA camps arrived in Terezín by train or on foot. The influx of 15,500 people nearly doubled the ghetto’s population, which prior to the evacuations stood at 17,500. The prisoners originated from at least 22 subcamps of Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, and Sachsenhausen and from the Bergen-Belsen main camp. Terezín was the destination for evacuations because of its position in what remained of German-controlled territory, its proximity to rail connections, and the neighboring Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmeritz, which functioned as a transit camp in the same period. In many cases, the SS dispatched Jewish prisoners from the transports to Terezín, leaving the remainder at Leitmeritz. The new arrivals were terribly emaciated. Many were dying, while dead bodies lay on the trains. The arriving transports were rife with contagious diseases, particularly louse-borne epidemic typhus. Typhus exacted a terrible death toll among ghetto inhabitants before and after liberation.

Most of the SS fled on May 4, followed shortly thereafter by Terezín’s last commandant, Rahm. The first Red Army units advancing to Prague passed through Terezín only in the late afternoon of May 8, 1945.

The fight against epidemics continued unabated in the days and weeks that followed. A group of doctors and nurses, named Czech Action for Help (*České pomocné akce*), arrived at Terezín on May 4, 1945. Its services were all the more urgently needed because typhus fever victims from the Small Fortress were brought into the ghetto. Soon afterwards, the Red Army medical service furnished invaluable assistance. But the burden of combating epidemics still fell to Jewish medical personnel. More than 1,500 inmates died from disease during the last days of war and immediately thereafter. The death toll included 43 victims among the Jewish medical staff. Four medics from Czech Action for Help also died, as did some Soviet medical personnel.

In October 1946, the Volksgericht Wien condemned Siegfried Seidl to death in part for 16 counts of homicide arising from his command at Terezín. He was executed on February 4, 1947.¹³ The Litoměřice state court pronounced a death sentence on Karl Rahm, and he was executed on April 30, 1947.¹⁴ The same court condemned to death in absentia Terezín’s second commandant, Anton Burger, who lived in the Federal Republic of Germany under the alias of Wilhelm Bauer until his death on December 25, 1991. Volksgericht Wien also conducted separate investigations of Burger and Rahm.

SOURCES The first major study of the Terezín ghetto, and still a standard source, was H.G. Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941–1945: Das Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft; Geschichte, Soziologie, Psychologie*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1960). A thoughtful critique of the question of whether Terezín should be categorized as a ghetto or a concentration camp may be found in Peter Klein, “Theresienstadt: Ghetto oder Konzentrationslager?” *TSD*, no. 12 (2005): 111–123. Other secondary sources include George E. Berkley, *Hitler’s Gift: The Story of*

Theresienstadt (Boston: Branden Books, 2002); Vojtěch Blodig, Ludmila Chládková, and Miroslava Langhanerová, *Terezín Litoměřice: Places of Suffering and Braveness*, trans. Peter Kurfürst (Prague: Jitka Kejřová, V RAJI Pub., 2003); Ludmila Chládková, *Terezínské ghetto* (Prague: Památník Terezín, 2005); Miroslav Kárný, ed., *Terezínská pamětní kniha: Židovské oběti nacistických deportací z Čech a Moravy 1941–1945* (Prague: Terezínská iniciativa; Melantrich, 1995), available in English as *Terezín Memorial Book: Jewish Victims of Nazi Deportations from Bohemia and Moravia 1941–1945: A Guide to the Czech Original with a Glossary of Czech Terms Used in the Lists* (Prague: Terezín Initiative; Melantrich, 1996); M. Kárný, V. Blodig, and Margita Karna, eds., *Theresienstadt in der “Endlösung der Judenfrage”* (Prague: Panorama, 1992); Zdeněk Lederer, *Ghetto Theresienstadt*, trans. K. Weisskopf (New York, 1983). Other useful studies relating to Terezín include Otto Dov Kulka, “Ghetto in an Annihilation Camp: Jewish Social History in the Holocaust Period and Its Ultimate Limits,” in Israel Gutman and Avital Saf, eds., *The Nazi Concentration Camps: Proceedings of the Fourth Yad Vashem International Historical Conference* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 315–330; and Jan Björn Potthast, *Das jüdische Zentralmuseum der SS in Prag: Gegnerforschung und Völkermord im Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2002). Terezín’s rich cultural history has inspired numerous studies, including: Anne D. Dutlinger, ed., *Art, Music and Education as Strategies for Survival: Theresienstadt 1941–45* (New York: Herodias, 2001); Gerald Green, *The Artists of Terezín* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1969); Joža Karas, *Music in Terezín, 1941–1945* (New York: Beaufort Books, 1985); Elena Makarova, *From Bauhaus to Terezín: Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and Her Pupils* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990); Massachusetts College of Art, *Seeing through “Paradise”: Artists and the Terezín Concentration Camp* (Boston, MA: The College, 1991); and Terezín Memorial, ed., *Kultura proti smrti: Stálé expozice Památníku Terezín v bývalých Magdeburských kasárnách* (Prague: Helena Osvaldová, 2002). Studies of Terezín’s perpetrators include Tomáš Federovič, “Der Theresienstädter Lagerkommandant Siegfried Seidl,” *TSD* (2003): 162–209; T. Federovič, “Neue Erkenntnisse über die SS-Angehörigen im Ghetto Theresienstadt,” *TSD* (2006): 234–250; and Karla Müller-Tupath, *Verschollen in Deutschland: Das heimliche Leben des Anton Burger, Lagerkommandant von Theresienstadt*, foreword by Simon Wiesenthal (Hamburg: Konkret, 1994). Two biographies of leading inmates in Terezín are Ruth Bondy, “Elder of the Jews”: *Jakob Edelstein of Theresienstadt* (New York: Grove Press, 1989); and Albert H. Friedlander, *Leo Baeck: Teacher of Theresienstadt* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968). Studies on youth in the ghetto include Thelma Gruenbaum, *Nešarim: Child Survivors of Terezín* (London, 2004); and Anna Hájková, “Die fabelhaften Jungs aus Theresienstadt: Junge tschechische Männer als dominante soziale Elite im Theresienstädter Ghetto,” in Christoph Dieckmann and Babette Quinkart, eds., *Im Ghetto 1939–1945: Neue Forschungen zu Alltag und Umfeld* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), pp. 116–135.

The first published primary source collection on Terezín was H.G. Adler, ed., *Die Verheimlichte Wahrheit: Theresienstädter Dokumente* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958). This source contains extracts from official documents from the Reich, Jewish self-administration, and the ICRC, but the provenance of many sources is not indicated. Other

published primary sources and collections include Anita Franková, Ludmila Kybalová, and Hana Povolná, eds., *Dětské na zastávce smrti, Terezín 1942–44* (Prague, 1993); *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt; The Führer Gives a City to the Jews*, DVD, directed by Kurt Gerron (1944; Waltham, MA: National Center for Jewish Film, 2005); ICRC, *Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on Its Activities during the Second World War (September 1, 1939–June 30, 1947)*, 4 vols. (Geneva: ICRC, 1948); Miroslav Kárný, ed., “Der Bericht des Roten Kreuzes über seinen Besuch in Theresienstadt,” *TSD*, no. 3 (1996): 276–320; Marie Rút Křižková et al., eds., *Je mojí vlastí bradba ghatt? Básně, próza a kresby terezínských dětí* (Prague: Aventinum, 1995); Markéta Petrášová and Arno Pařík, eds., *Terezín in the Drawings of the Prisoners, 1941–1945*, trans. Olga Berntová (Prague: State Jewish Museum in Prague, 1983); Státní židovské Museum, ed., *Children’s Drawings from the Concentration Camp of Terezín* (Olomouc: Moravské tisíkáské závody, 1978); and Hana Volavková, ed., *I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children’s Drawings and Poems from Terezín Concentration Camp, 1942–1944*, trans. Jean Nemcova (New York: Schocken Books, 1993). Terezín’s memoir literature is too extensive for comprehensive enumeration, but the following testimonies give a broad sampling, including one testimony by a Danish survivor and another by a survivor of Terezín’s end phase: Ruth Elias, *Die Hoffnung erhielt mich am Leben: Mein Weg von Theresienstadt und Auschwitz nach Israel* (Munich: Piper, 1988). The anthology by František Ehrmann, Otta Heitlinger, and Rudolf Iltis, eds., *Terezín; Terezín* (Prague, 1965), contains a number of excellent testimonies, including Ludwig Hift, “The Bank of the Jewish Self-Government Administration in Terezín,” pp. 164–168; and Hans Hofer, “The Film about Terezín: A Belated Reportage,” pp. 180–184. Also see Jana Renee Friesová, *Pevnost mého mládí* (Prague: Nakl. Jaroslava Poberová, 2005); Hana Greenfield, *Fragments of Memory: From Kolin to Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 1990); Alfred Kantor, *The Book of Alfred Kantor* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971); Philipp Manes, *Als ob’s ein Leben war: Tatsachenbericht; Theresienstadt 1942–1944*, ed. Ben Barkow and Klaus Leist (Berlin: Ullstein, 2005); Vera Meisels, *Terezín’s Firefly*, trans. Riva Rubin (Prague: GplusG, 2001); Mélanie Oppenheim, *Menneskefaelden: Om livet i KZ-lejren Theresienstadt* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzel, 1981); Vera Schiff, *Theresienstadt: The Town the Nazis Gave to the Jews* (Toronto: Lugas, 1996); Gerty Spies, *My Years in Theresienstadt: How One Woman Survived the Holocaust* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1997); and Norbert Troller, *Theresienstadt: Hitler’s Gift to the Jews*, ed. Joel Shatzky with Richard Ives and Doris Rauch, trans. Susan E. Cernyak-Spatz (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

Archival sources on Terezín may be found in A-ICRC; AMv; APT; BLHA-(P); BStU; DÖW; ITS; LBI; NA(P); USHMM; VHAP; WL; YVA; and ŽmP. At APT, the Terezín ghetto documents constitute a modest part of the collection because the archives only began collecting at the end of the 1960s. APT’s collection consists mostly of contributions from former inmates, especially from Czech Jews and their relatives. An important part of the documents was the gift of the Jewish religious community in Prague. Presently there are more than 3,500 inventory numbers registering Terezín ghetto documents. Important groups represent personal documents (identity cards and labor cards), correspondence, diaries, children’s

magazines (for instance, the well-known magazine *Vedem*), survivors' accounts, and money vouchers. There are also several reports on the Jewish self-administration's activities, orders of the day, and daily lists of deceased prisoners. Unfortunately these collections are fragmentary. The very important collection of transport lists to the ghetto from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is nearly complete. There are also complete lists of names of Protectorate Jews compiled in the autumn of 1941. Jewish self-administration documents are written in German, and some other materials (for instance, most of the memoirs, magazines, and some diaries) in Czech. USHMM holds a number of Terezín ration books and ghetto scrip, a cookbook compiled by Wilhelmina Paechter (David Stern collection, Acc.1996.109), and a small collection of artwork by survivor Leo Haas. USHMM also has copies of the Seidl trial and investigations against Karl Rahm and Anton Burger, copied from DÖW as RG-17.003M (Acc.2004.118). In addition, USHMM holds an extensive collection of ICRC documentation on Terezín, under RG-19.045M (Commission of Prisoners, Internees, and Civilians; Jews = Israélites, 1939–1961), reels 2 and 6; RG-58.002M (Special Relief Division, 1940–1963); and RG-58.004M (Selected Records of the ICRC). The International Tracing Service (ITS) contains 119 inventory collections for Terezín, making it by far the best-documented ghetto in ITS holdings. These collections include original Gestapo transport lists, postwar lists of survivors, and compilations of burial records.

Vojtěch Blodig and
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NOTES

1. P. Kuhne, "Note sur l'activité la Comité international de la Croix-Rouge au camp de Theresienstadt," June 1945,

USHMM, RG-19.045M, ICRC, Commission of Prisoners, Internees, and Civilians, Jews = Israélites, 1939–1961, file G59/3/Th-63, reel 6, frame 0528.

2. Gliederungsplan, August 10, 1944, as reproduced in Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941–1945: Das Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft*, pp. 224–240.

3. Manes, *Als ob's ein Leben wär*, pp. 358–359.

4. Wilhelmina Paechter, "Kochbuch," 1942–1944, USHMM, Acc.1996.109, David Stern collection.

5. The January 9, 1942, order is reproduced in Adler, *Die Verheimlichte Wahrheit*, p. 97.

6. Ibid.

7. Quotation in Wannsee conference minutes, January 20, 1942, NG-2586-G, *TMMC*, vol. 13, p. 213.

8. Hift, "The Bank of the Jewish Self-Government Administration in Terezín," p. 168.

9. Quotations from Maurice Rossel, "Besuch im Ghetto," trans. Gisela Harras, in Miroslav Kárný, ed., "Der Bericht des Roten Kreuzes über seinen Besuch in Theresienstadt," *TSD*, no. 3 (1996): 286–287.

10. Ibid., p. 297.

11. Quoted from the still photograph from the September 1942 film of Terezín, held by WFDIF and reproduced as cover photo by *TSD* (1998).

12. As quoted in Adler, *Die Verheimlichte Wahrheit*, p. 356.

13. Urteil gegen Dr. Siegfried Seidl, Case no. LG-Wien Vg 1b Vr770/46, DÖW Sign. V37/1-20, USHMM, RG-17.003M, Acc.2004.118, Wiener Prozesse gegen NS-Verbrechern, microfilm no. 1014.

14. On Rahm's extradition to Litoměřice, "Der letzte Leiter von Theresienstadt verhaftet," *Aufbau*, February 7, 1946, filed in USHMM, RG-19.045M, file 659/3/Th-63, reel 6, frame 0575.

SECTION III

GENERAL GOVERNMENT (GENERALGOUVERNEMENT)

Reichskanzler Adolf Hitler ordered the creation of the Generalgouvernement, which was established officially on October 26, 1939. He appointed Hans Frank as Generalgouverneur. Frank soon took up residence in the Wawel Castle in the Generalgouvernement's capital city of Kraków. Initially, the Generalgouvernement consisted of four Distrikte: Krakau, Lublin, Radom, and Warschau. On August 1, 1941, a fifth Distrikt, Galizien, was added, following the German invasion of the Soviet Union; at that point about 10 percent of the roughly 18 million inhabitants of the Generalgouvernement were Jews.

The Generalgouvernement was made up entirely of territory that had belonged to Poland at the start of 1939. Distrikt Krakau consisted of parts of the Kraków, Kielce, and Lwów województwa. Distrikt Lublin was formed of parts of the Lublin, Lwów, and Warsaw województwa. Distrikt Radom contained parts of the Kielce and Łódź województwa. Distrikt Warschau had parts of

the Warsaw, Lublin, and Łódź województwa. And Distrikt Galizien included the Stanisławów, Tarnopol, and most of the Lwów województwa.

Other than his personal subordination to Hitler, Generalgouverneur Frank administered the Generalgouvernement as an independent neighboring territory of the Reich (*Reichsnebenland*). The Generalgouvernement had its own currency and exercised sovereignty regarding customs and taxes. A central bureaucracy, based in Kraków, issued instructions to the regional administrations in each of the Distrikte, which were headed by their own respective Distrikt Gouverneur. The SS and police forces based in the Generalgouvernement, headed by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, however, owed loyalty both to Frank as Generalgouverneur and to Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler as head of the German police.



RADOM REGION



Clandestine photograph of the deportation of Jews from Pińczów to the Treblinka extermination center, October 1942.
USHMM WS #77726, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

RADOM REGION (DISTRIKT RADOM)

Pre-1939: parts of the Kielce and Łódź województwa, Poland; 1941–1945: Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: parts of the Łódź, Mazowieckie, Śląskie, and Świętokrzyskie województwa, Poland

Distrikt Radom was established on October 26, 1939, as one of the four initial Distrikte of the Generalgouvernement, which were all made up of parts of occupied Poland. Encompassing 24,500 square kilometers (9,460 square miles), it included much of the pre-war Kielce województwo, as well as stretches of the Łódź województwo, to the west. In Distrikt Radom, the German authorities created 10 Kreise (counties) that were governed by Kreishauptmänner, with centers in Busko-Zdrój, Jędrzejów, Kielce, Końskie, Opatów, Piotrków Trybunalski, Radom, Radomsko, Starachowice (until 1942, Iłża), and Tomaszów Mazowiecki. Stadthauptmänner governed the three independent municipalities (Stadtkreise) in the Distrikt: Radom, Częstochowa, and Kielce.

The Distrikt's territory, according to the March 1940 (German) census, was populated by over 2.7 million people, including more than 282,000 Jews. These statistics, however, are considered low, as possibly as many as 3 million people lived in the Distrikt. The number of Jewish residents in 1940–1942 is estimated at 360,000 to 400,000. This number takes into consideration the influx of approximately 70,000 Jewish refugees and deportees, as well as those who fled from the Distrikt. The first wave of deportees reached the Distrikt in late 1939 and included thousands of Jews from the Polish territories incorporated into Germany, especially from Reichsgau Wartheland.

The chief German civil authority in the Distrikt was governor Karl Lasch (October 1939–August 1941), who was succeeded by Ernst Kundt (September 1941–January 1945). The SS and Police Leader (SSPF) was the senior police official in

the Distrikt, subordinated to the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement. The position of SSPF in Distrikt Radom was held in the following succession: Fritz Katzmann (1939–1941), Karl Oberg (1941–1942), and Herbert Böttcher (1942–1945). The SSPF oversaw the forces of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo) in the Distrikt, comprising the Gestapo, Kripo, and SD and also those of the Ordnungspolizei (Orpo), which included the Municipal Police (Schupo) and Gendarmerie posts in the rural areas. The relevant local civil administrators were generally in charge of ghetto affairs. Surveillance and order were in the hands of the German Sipo and Orpo forces, with Polish and Jewish Police performing auxiliary duties under the Germans. The Jewish Police maintained order in the ghettos and guarded their internal borders, whereas Orpo forces and Polish (Blue) Police patrolled the external boundaries.

Taking over authority from the military on October 26, 1939, the German civil administration exacerbated the situation of the Jews, as previously spontaneous anti-Jewish measures were replaced by the systematic enforcement of antisemitic laws, which deprived the Jews of their economic, cultural, and social rights and introduced forced labor. The Germans ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils (Judenräte) in November 1939, holding the members responsible for the implementation of the authorities' orders, which included the organization of forced labor, the collection of taxes and "contributions," registration, the enforcement of sanitary regulations, and the organization of welfare and medical services. In some cases, pre-war community leaders were included in the Judenrat's composition, for example, in Przedbórz, Szczekociny, and Opatów. As of November 23, 1939, all Jews were obliged to wear armbands bearing the Star of David.

The first ghettos in the Distrikt were established in Piotrków Trybunalski (October 8, 1939) and Radomsko (December 1939). Their creation was largely due to the pressure of large ethnic German (*Völkische*) communities, which demanded the acquisition of Jewish property. Air raids and the influx of refugees led to considerable shortages of housing, which further increased the pressure for the construction of ghettos. In Piotrków, where the Germans razed the Jewish neighborhood, the community was given three weeks to relocate. In Radomsko, the ghetto's establishment was conducted without warning. Two thirds of Radomsko's Jews (over 4,000 people)—who lived outside the ghetto's delineated borders—were given only 20 minutes to relocate.

The September 21, 1939, express order, issued by Reinhard Heydrich regarding the Jewish question in occupied territory, stipulated the concentration of Jews in only a few towns, close



German troops round up a group of Jewish men on Strazacka Street in Częstochowa, early September 1939.

USHMM WS #26822, COURTESY OF B. ASHLEY GRIMES II

to railway connections with a view to their subsequent evacuation.¹ As Christopher R. Browning notes, however, “the first stage—the process of creating ghettos in the first place—stretched over many months for one reason: there was no centrally ordered, uniform policy of ghettoization.”² Since detailed arrangements were left to the local authorities, the process of establishing ghettos was extremely decentralized and drawn out over more than two years. It lasted in Distrikt Radom until the summer of 1942, when the deportations to killing centers began (e.g., on July 17, 1942, the Jews of Wierzbica, Kreis Radom-Land, were informed that an enclosed ghetto would be established in the village on August 1, 1942).

One ghetto might be very different to another nearby, as there were few clear directives on how to organize them. Some of the ghettos were established only as open ghettos, whereas others were closed, with the latter type predominating from the spring of 1941 onward. Whereas some were physically enclosed with walls and fences and guarded, others remained unfenced, with only signs designating their borders. In the case of many small ghettos, the inhabitants were simply ordered not to leave the limits of their settlement. Alternatively, a ghetto could be fenced but considered by the Germans as open, simply designated as an area for the Jews to live in, with no or few restrictions on their movement—as, for example, was the case in Lipsko. In Jędrzejów, Jews were ghettoized, possibly as early as February 1940. Guards were posted at the ghetto’s exits, but the residents initially were still able to come and go freely.

The same lack of rules applies to the process of ghetto creation; in some cases, it took months or was only announced shortly before the ghetto’s destruction. Most often, the Jews were already the predominant inhabitants of the area selected for the ghetto; otherwise, the authorities would typically seek to relocate them into any run-down or razed part of town.

Krzysztof Urbański points out the sole common denominator in creating ghettos: the area allocated for a ghetto was always much too small for the Jews assigned to live there. Urbański estimates that there were more than 120 ghettos established in Distrikt Radom, but the detailed research undertaken in preparing this volume identified clearly only around 100 such sites, as for some places insufficient evidence exists to make a determination. Most ghettos established throughout the Distrikt were relatively small, holding from only a few hundred up to around 4,000 people.

A number of additional ghettos were established in Distrikt Radom in 1940; among them were Przedbórz (March 1940), Wodzisław (June 1940), and Włoszczowa (July 10, 1940). A temporary halt to ghetto building was called by Generalgouverneur Hans Frank in the summer of 1940, in view of the Madagascar Plan, but then several more ghettos (e.g., Opoczno) were established in the second half of 1940.

In the spring of 1941, German preparations for attacking the Soviet Union were accompanied by ghettoization plans affecting a number of communities within the Distrikt. At



Jewish expellees from the town of Płock in the Wartheland are resettled in Chmielnik, February–March 1941. The Jews wear armbands and circular badges on their coats.

USHMM WS #96916, COURTESY OF VARDA KLEINHANDLER COHEN

a meeting of the Kreis- und Stadthauptmänner, called by Distrikt governor Lasch at the end of March, he ordered the establishment of Jewish residential areas in larger towns and cities (Stadtkreise) by April 5, 1941. At this time, large ghettos were established in Kielce (April 5), Radom (April 3), and Częstochowa (April 9), which together in 1941 held approximately 100,000 people. Shortly afterwards, all three were sealed off, and thereafter the Jews living there needed special permission to leave them safely.

This wave of ghetto establishment in the Distrikt in April 1941 was preceded by a second wave of deportations into Distrikt Radom. In February and March of 1941, 10,000 Jews arrived from Płock and another 4,000 from Vienna. This influx may have accelerated the establishment of some ghettos. From the beginning, conditions for the deportees were much worse than for the local Jews. Prior to their arrival, the Płock deportees were held for several days in a transit camp in Działdowo, and they arrived in the Kreis centers with small bundles, only to be sent away to small villages a few days or weeks later. One of the Płock transports, with 1,000 people, arrived in Końskie on March 6, 1941, in the midst of the ghetto’s construction. Three days later, via Opoczno, these deportees were distributed among six smaller localities (e.g., 200 arrived in Drzewica on March 9, 1941). Most of the Viennese Jews were assimilated elderly professionals for whom life in the shtetl ghettos was especially harsh. They often migrated illegally to larger ghettos. Wherever there were large numbers of refugees, contagious diseases spread inevitably, as most were forced to live in sheds, shops, and synagogues and sometimes even in the streets.

There were also displacements conducted within the Distrikt; for instance, all 3,500 Jews were deported from Przytyk in March 1941, as this area, north of Radom, was designated to become a military training ground.³ In some ghettos, the newcomers outnumbered the local Jews by a factor of two or more: in 1939, there were 500 Jews living in Koluszki, and by

May 1941 the Jewish population had more than doubled, rising to 1,177 residents of the recently established ghetto of which 873 were newcomers. At the end of 1941, more resettlements were carried out, and Jews from Kreis centers, again most of them deportees and refugees, were relocated to smaller localities due to the risk of spreading disease or simply to “beautify” the town. In Tomaszów, the Kreishauptmann used this opportunity to liquidate two of the three ghettos established there.

The administration of welfare was transferred from the Jewish Councils to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization (established in Kraków in May 1940) to help newcomers and the local poor. Its branches opened soup kitchens, distributed food and clothing, and sought to provide for children and the elderly. The level of assistance, due to insufficient funds, was disproportionately small in comparison to the need. In instances where the JSS members were also on the Jewish Council, tensions arose and consumed the energy of both sides, largely because the councils were unwilling to give up control of welfare. Consequently, the work of both institutions was hindered by accusations of corruption, em-

bezzlement of public funds, favoritism, and political infighting. Jewish Councils were also criticized for their treatment of newcomers and members’ comparatively lavish lifestyles; for enlisting the poor and refugees first for deportations, labor conscription, and transfer to the labor camps; and for being overly acquiescent towards the German authorities.

The Judenrat’s most common and effective means of dealing with the incessant German demands was to respond with bribery. In April 1942, Judenrat leaders from surrounding ghettos attended a joint conference in Sandomierz. One of the questions discussed was the possibility of organizing means of self-defense. Participants decided to look for resources to defend themselves by bribing the Germans, to “ward off disaster.”⁴

In July 1941, Generalgouverneur Frank responded to requests from the Kreishauptmänner to ghettoize Jews, stating that he did not want any more ghettos created, as the Führer had declared on June 19 that soon the Jews would be removed from the Generalgouvernement.⁵ Nonetheless, individual ghettos continued to be set up at this time, for example, in Odrzywół. However, by the fall of 1941, especially concerns about the spread of typhus among the Jews living in Distrikt Radom, as well as a desire to control black market activities, led German officials to intensify restrictions on Jews’ freedom of movement and introduce a more systematic ghettoization throughout the Distrikt.

Until the autumn of 1941, Jews were punished with fines or imprisonment for leaving ghettos without special permission (e.g., in Przedbórz, until October 1941, Jews caught outside were fined between 5 and 50 złoty); yet in practice harsher measures were sometimes implemented. On October 25, 1941, backdated to October 15, Generalgouverneur Frank decreed that henceforth Jews leaving ghettos without permission were subject to the death penalty.⁶ Initially these punishments were to be implemented by the Sondergerichte.

Then, on December 11, 1941, Distrikt governor Kundt announced again the death sentence for Jews leaving their places of residence, while further making the death sentence applicable to Poles sheltering or providing any form of assistance to Jews.⁷ In his accompanying letter to the Kreis- und Stadthauptmänner, Kundt ordered them to put up signs marking the boundaries of designated Jewish districts (Jüdischer Wohnbezirke) and informing the Jews of the death penalty for leaving them.⁸ In response to these instructions, a flurry of ghettoization measures followed, directed on the regional level by the Kreishauptmänner. For instance, the Końskie Kreishauptmann, Kurt Driessen, declared all settlements and villages with a Jewish population in his Kreis to be ghettos as of December 10, 1941. In Iłża, the Kreishauptmann announced on December 6, 1941, that such villages where ghettos had not yet been established would henceforth serve as a form of ghetto.⁹

As a result of these decrees, a number of new ghettos were created over the ensuing months, and many existing ones were now pronounced closed. Still, in many cases, “closed” did not mean physical enclosure. Many village ghettos with scattered houses were often impossible to physically divide,



Entrance to the Radom Judenrat building at 8 Grodzka Street, ca. 1940. The sign to the left of the door, in German and Polish, reads, “Head of the Council of Elders of the Jewish population of the Radom District in Radom City.”

COURTESY OF MUZEUM OKRĘGOWE W RADOMIU, WS #08305

for example, Wolanów or Gniewosów. The closure of ghettos further devastated Jewish communities. Jews now had to risk their lives by sneaking in and out to barter for or buy food from villagers.

The process of concentrating all the Jews of Distrikt Radom began in early 1942 and lasted until the fall of 1942. Until May, Jews were allowed to live in 150 towns and settlements in Kreis Opatów. Only after an order dated May 13, 1942, from Kreishauptmann Ritter, were all Jews restricted to 5 towns and 12 settlements in the Kreis that were recognized as ghettos. June 1, 1942, was the deadline for resettlement. This late example of ghettoization was conducted as a part of preparations for Aktion Reinhard, the plan to exterminate the Jews living in the Generalgouvernement.

The next stage of concentration in Distrikt Radom aimed at transferring the Jewish communities to ghettos with railway access, that is, to a few selected ghettos in each Kreis. At this stage, the Kreis borders did not matter; for example, the Busko-Zdrój ghetto had no railway connection, so the Jews of Busko were transferred to Jędrzejów. Many such transfers occurred just weeks or days before the collection ghetto's liquidation, and they were always conducted with utter ruthlessness accompanied by murder.

Historians have recognized a number of harbingers of the mass deportations to come. Apart from the death penalty for leaving the ghetto and helping Jews, Adam Rutkowski refers to the February 1942 reduction of food rations (from 337,000 to 200,000) with which Distrikt Jews bought their rations. In addition, ration amounts were reduced by 50 percent. Also, between February and the end of April 1942, the Germans seized and killed prominent Jewish cultural, social, and especially political activists in many ghettos.¹⁰ The goal was to terrorize Jews and forestall any attempts at self-defense. At the same time, the Germans were rounding up young Jews for work in labor camps in the Distrikt, many of which were producing munitions—for example, the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna.

From the spring of 1942, the JSS led a campaign to find employment for as many Jews as possible. It popularized the employment of Jews, including women, in agriculture. It also pushed for local JSS branches to organize vocational training courses and to set up workshops. As news of deportations and intensifying rumors about the killing centers reached the ghettos, there was a growing conviction that only those whom the Germans considered useful would be spared deportation. There are reports that some Jewish youths were volunteering for labor camps or even bribing their way in. Due to Judenrat efforts, tailoring workshops producing German army uniforms were set up in Staszów in August 1942, which temporarily secured the lives of 550 laborers upon the ghetto's liquidation in October 1942. In most ghettos, however, the Germans simply processed permissions to open workshops with the aim of preventing unrest. The limited possibilities for procuring work, whatever they were, were reserved mostly for men, with few openings for women and children.

The preparation of the deportations was in the hands of SSPF Herbert Böttcher and his staff, under the command of SS-Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Blum, who had been transferred in August 1942 from the personal staff of the Lublin SSPF, Odilo Globocnik, the commander of Aktion Reinhard. Execution of their orders was left to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) for Distrikt Radom, SS-Sturmbannführer Fritz Wilhelm Liphardt, who established Sonderkommando Feucht, commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Adolf Feucht, to plan and direct the individual deportation Aktions. The ghetto liquidations were implemented with the support of a number of Trawniki-trained auxiliaries (mostly from Ukraine or the Baltic states) and German Order Police units (battalions and stationary units of the Schutzpolizei and Gendarmerie). In some places, units of the Polish (Blue) Police, fire brigades, ethnic German Sonderdienst, and Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) also assisted them.

In many ghettos, prior to the liquidation Aktions, a new round of registrations was conducted and new identification cards issued, to separate so-called productive Jews from the remainder of the population. The number of Jews to be spared for labor camps in the Distrikt was set at approximately 30,000.

Rutkowski estimates that at the onset of Aktion Reinhard (in early August 1942), some 300,000 Jews were living in Distrikt Radom isolated in ghettos. According to Heinrich Himmler's order of July 19, 1942, all Jews were to be deported from the Generalgouvernement by December 31, 1942.¹¹ The process of ghetto liquidation was much more uniform than the process of their establishment and was conducted in an almost identical manner in both small and large ghettos. The destruction of the ghettos is much better researched and understood by scholars than the events leading up to it.

Some organizers of the Warsaw Uprising were in contact with several ghettos in Distrikt Radom, including those in Kielce, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, and Żarki. They distributed underground press materials and supplied funding for other resistance activities. Communist youth in the Ostrowiec ghetto had planned to set the town ablaze to facilitate escape in case of the ghetto's liquidation, but this plan was not realized. A number of Jews managed to escape from the ghettos and join partisan units; and sometimes they established their own, as was the case in Sandomierz, Częstochowa, Jędrzejów, Szydłowiec, and Ostrowiec.

The liquidations began with the seat of the Distrikt governor, Radom, on August 4–5, 1942, and were conducted Kreis by Kreis. Due to the large numbers of escapees during the course of the deportations, on September 21, 1942, Kundt announced once again his order that Poles face the death sentence for even the smallest assistance provided to Jews. As punishment for aiding Jewish escapees, often entire families were gunned down and their households razed. News of such punitive actions terrified the Polish population.

The last of the ghettos, located in Kreis Konskie, was liquidated at the beginning of November 1942. The complete liquidation of the ghettos in Distrikt Radom took only a little over three months. All but one of the transports went to the Treblinka extermination camp. Those Jews concentrated in Sandomierz were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. In many of the ghettos, a few Jews were retained to sort Jewish belongings or perform other labor tasks, in so-called small ghettos. In larger localities, such as Częstochowa, thousands of Jews initially were spared.

A number of Polish (Blue) Police actively participated in the manhunts that followed the liquidations. The plunder of Jewish property was the main motive for the majority of murders and denunciations of Jews in hiding, as committed by villagers, common criminals, and roving bands of people, who acted under the false cover of "partisan activity." Some right-wing resistance groups also engaged in such activities, and part of their motivation was ideological.

On November 10, 1942, the HSSPF of the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, issued an order creating four remnant ghettos in Distrikt Radom. They were established in Radomsko, Sandomierz, Szydłowiec, and Ujazd.¹² Their purpose was to lure out of hiding those who had evaded the deportations, by promising them safety and work. Approximately 17,000 Jews eventually were sent to these ghettos. Some people were transferred there from the small ghettos on their liquidation, while others emerged from the forests and bunkers, generally from sheer desperation. All these remnant ghettos were liquidated quickly within a few days on January 5–13, 1943. Although the Germans claimed that at this time the Distrikt was free of Jews (*judenfrei*), some Jews continued to live in small ghettos and other labor camps that the Germans had established, for example, in Częstochowa, Kielce, Ostrowiec, and Radom. Nevertheless, upon the completion of Aktion Reinhard, those Jews permitted to remain in Distrikt Radom were allowed to live legally only in labor camps.

SOURCES Secondary works including regional coverage of the history of Jews in the Distrikt Radom ghettos include Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 75–182; Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe, 1997); Felicia Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997); Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007); Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998); Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, "Organizacja i realizacja 'akcji Reinhardt' w dystrykcie radomskim," in Dariusz Libionka et al., eds., *Akcja Reinhardt: Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN-Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi

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Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APC; APK; APR; AŻIH; BA-BL; BA-L; IPN; NARA; USHMM; VHF; WL; YIVO; and YVA.

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NOTES

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3. AŻIH, JSS, 211/430; A. Rotkowski [sic], "The War and the Destruction of the Jewish Population in the Radom Region" (trans. Jerrold Landau), in *Przytyk Memorial Book* (transition of David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Przytyk* [Tel Aviv: Przytyk Societies in Israel, France and the USA, 1973]), p. 257.

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6. *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs*, 1941, p. 595.
7. IPN, NTN (Bühler Trial), vol. 335, pp. 96 ff.; and APR, Zbiór afiszów, plakatów i druków ulotnych 1939–1945, p. 481, both as cited by Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 247.
8. BA-BL, R 52II/254, Rundschreiben Oswalds, Leiter der Abteilung Innere Verwaltung im Distrikt Radom, December 11, 1942, as cited by Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 121.
9. AŻIH, NMO, Fot. dok. Niem. nos. 55 and 56.
10. BA-L, B 162/14521, Verdict of LG-Darm, December 7, 1972, pp. 31–32.
11. BA-BL, NS 19/1757.
12. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

Ghettos in the Radom Region



Borders as of 1942

BĘDKÓW

Pre-1939: Będków, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bedkow, Kreis Tomaszow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Będków, Łódź województwo, Poland

Będków is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) east-southeast of Łódź. On the eve of World War II, there were 228 Jews (32.8 percent of all residents) living in Będków.

German armed forces occupied the village in September 1939. According to one source, many Jews left Będków at the time of the occupation, probably in an attempt to escape from the fighting as the front passed through. However, it appears that most returned to their homes shortly afterwards. Within days of their arrival, German forces introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were stripped of their property, registered and marked with the Star of David, forced to remain within the town limits, and coerced to perform various kinds of heavy physical labor.

It is not clear when a ghetto was established in Będków. *Pinkas ha-kebilot* states that a ghetto was established in April or May of 1942. Robert Seidel claims that in the second half of July 1942 the Jews from Będków were deported to Biała Rawska, according to a decree issued by the official dealing with Jewish affairs in the Office of Internal Administration (Judensachbearbeiter im Amt Innere Verwaltung) of Kreis Tomaszow, Karl Frees, and in order to concentrate the Jews in a number of selected ghettos.¹ Other sources claim that August 1942 was the date of this resettlement.²

The resettlement to Biała Rawska took place with harsh brutality. Administrative personnel of the village had to report the numbers and names of Jews according to two categories: Jews who had come to Będków before November 1, 1941, were considered to have “moved illegally” and had to pay a fee; Jews who had moved to Będków after November 1, 1941, were accused of having illegally left the location assigned to them—a crime that was subject to the death penalty. All Jews were forcibly moved to Biała Rawska; their houses were searched and their property confiscated. The Jewish Council was forced to pay for the resettlement, and in case there was insufficient money, remaining Jewish property was to be sold to pay for these expenses.³

Most likely, after this resettlement a labor camp (or perhaps rather a “Sammelghetto”) was erected in Będków for a few weeks. Established on September 20, 1942, it was located on the property of Wojciech Pachniewicz, a local farmer, and measured 24 by 50 meters (79 by 164 feet).⁴ About 300 to 350 Jews were kept here, including several dozen Jewish refugees from Tuszyn and Rzgów, in western Poland. The inmates were taken to work in local fields as well as at a construction site along the road connecting Będków and Praszki. According to witness statements, several inmates died in the camp, and about 10 inmates were taken to Koluszki, where they were presumably executed. The camp was dissolved at the begin-

ning of November 1942.⁵ Most likely, the inmates were sent via Tomaszów Mazowiecki to the Treblinka killing center.⁶

SOURCES There are not many sources available on the Będków ghetto. The Jewish community of Będków and its destruction are described in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 77; and a short mention of the ghetto can be found in Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen. Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), p. 298. The ghetto is also listed in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 95. The Będków ghetto is also mentioned in Cezary Jabłoński, “Eksterminacja Żydów i cyganów w zachodnich powiatach dystryktu radomskiego w latach 1939–45,” in GKBZHWp, *Międzynarodowa sekcja naukowa nt. hitlerowskie ludobójstwo w Polsce i Europie 1939–1945*, Warsaw, April 14–17, 1983, pp. 1–10.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Będków can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/254); BA-L (ZStL, 206 AR-Z 12/63); IPN; and YVA. Relevant collections at the USHMM include RG-15.019M (IPN—ASG) and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC, 210/254).

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NOTES

1. BA-L, 206-AR-Z 12/63, pp. 447–448, closing report of April 14, 1964.
2. Jabłoński, “Eksterminacja Żydów,” p. 3.
3. Anordnung Kreishauptmann Tomaszow/Innere Verwaltung, July 16, 1942, in BA-L, B 162/26091 (206 AR-Z 12/63, Sonderband I), pp. 139–140. See also final report of ZStL, April 14, 1964, in BA-L, B 162/26092 (206 AR-Z 12/63, vol. 3), pp. 447–450.
4. USHMM, RG-15.019M.
5. Ibid.
6. According to the data of ŻIH, Warsaw, the date for the liquidation of the camp (ghetto) is given here as September 1942.

BIAŁACZÓW

Pre-1939: Białaczów, town, Opoczno powiat, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Bialatschew, Kreis Tomaszow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Białaczów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Białaczów is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) east-southeast of Łódź, a few kilometers due south of Opoczno. In 1921, 166 out of the 1,290 inhabitants of the town were Jews.

In September 1939, the German army took over the Białaczów area. From the start of the occupation, living conditions for the Jewish community steadily deteriorated. Jews lost their property and their jobs, and the Jewish community soon was pressed hard to cover its expenditures. Probably in 1941, a local office of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was opened in

Białaczów. It was under the supervision of the JSS office in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, run by Henryk Szczęśliwy. The records of the JSS provide valuable insight into the fate of Białaczów's Jews. The local Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by M. Połaczyński, worked hard to provide food and shelter for the members of the community. On June 12, 1941, the Białaczów Judenrat reported to the JSS head office in Kraków that the situation was desperate: a lack of medicine and medical care had resulted in several deaths. A soup kitchen was in existence, which provided 240 lunches per day. However, the prices for groceries were high, the funds of the Jewish Council almost exhausted, and requests for help sent to the Kreishauptmann and the Jewish Council in Tomaszów went unanswered. The situation deteriorated following the arrival of Jews from other towns. On July 9, 1941, about 20 Jewish families (about 205 people) arrived who had been deported from Płock via the Działdowo transit camp in March 1941. Among them were many children, sick, and elderly people. Some 40 more Jews also arrived from Mława. The refugees were impoverished, and there was no work available for them. About 20 families of resettled Jews were in need of immediate help. Many of the refugees were not able to pay for their food, and the Jewish Council was concerned that due to hunger and overcrowding, outbreaks of epidemics, such as typhus and dysentery, might soon develop.¹

The JSS tried to help as much as possible, for example, with repeated distributions of money or groceries. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the small local Jewish community consisted of only about 18 families. Most of them were craftsmen or small merchants who had lost their sources of income and therefore were incapable of providing support for the 50 or so families of refugees.² Out of about 350 Jews in the community altogether, there were some 240 deportees in need, but only about 150 could receive a daily meal from the JSS. The general conditions also deteriorated. According to an eyewitness, two Gestapo men shot a group of Jews in the summer of 1941. The incident happened around noon at the market square: the Gestapo men were drunk and began to fire into a group of Jews. About 30 people were killed or wounded.³

On July 8, 1941, the Jewish Council had to close the soup kitchen due to a lack of funding, but it was instructed by the JSS that they had to reopen it—or otherwise, they would not receive further deliveries of groceries.⁴ In early August 1941, the soup kitchen was reopened, but the Jewish Council reported: “the conditions here are horrible beyond description.”⁵ With the approach of winter, the outlook was bleak. In October 1941, about 25 Jews had to be taken to the Opoczno hospital, as they were suffering from various infections. The Jewish community was not capable of paying the high expenses needed for their hospital stay and funerals, and again they requested help from the JSS. The same applied to expenses of 3,000 złoty needed for a disinfection and delousing chamber, which the German authorities had ordered the Jewish community to build.⁶

There is only limited information on the fate of the Jews in the spring and summer of 1942, as reports from the JSS for

that period are not available. By this time, Jews faced the death penalty if caught outside the town limits without permission, as was the case in the Kreis center of Tomaszów Mazowiecki, where 10 Jews were shot in April 1942 for leaving the ghetto to trade on the black market.⁷ Felix Brand, a Jewish survivor who passed through Białaczów around this time, noted that “the town was a ghetto. . . . Jews were not supposed to leave the perimeter of the town and would be killed if they left without permission.” Despite the dangers, he decided himself to flee once he heard rumors that they were closing up the ghettos, as he feared he might become trapped there.⁸

The number of Jews began to decline—either because people tried to escape or because they were sent to German forced labor camps.⁹ On October 2, 1942, about 250 Jews were sent to Opoczno, and only 27 remained in Białaczów. One source states that 9 Jews were killed around that time and were buried in a nearby forest, but it is unclear if these Jews had tried to escape; were killed during the roundup for expulsion to Opoczno; or were killed at a later date when they were uncovered in hiding. Another source states that about 30 Jews were killed when the inhabitants of the Białaczów ghetto were taken to Opoczno.¹⁰

The concentration of Jews in larger towns prior to their deportation to concentration camps and extermination sites was a common German practice. Usually, only a few Jews were left behind to clear out the empty ghetto. Most likely, the same practice was used in Białaczów, and the 27 remaining Jews were kept behind to sort the Jewish belongings and to clean out the empty Jewish houses. On October 27, 1942, these remaining Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp, as were the Białaczów Jews who had been sent to Opoczno and the Jews from Paradyż and Skrzynno who had all been gathered in Opoczno. The deportation transport to Treblinka consisted of about 3,000 people.¹¹

SOURCES The Jewish community of Białaczów and its fate during World War II are described in Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 68; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 2007), pp. 165–166, 203, 272; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 96. The Białaczów ghetto is also mentioned in *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 91, 153, 177.

Archival sources concerning the Jewish community of Białaczów during World War II include the following: AŻIH; USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC, 1939–1941], 210/258; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH—JSS, 1939–1944], 211/142); VHF (# 2642); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/142, Jewish Council Białaczów to chair of JSS in Kraków, June 12, 1941.
2. Ibid., letter October 19, 1941.

3. According to the recollections of Krystyna Debowska in Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gębenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), p. 128.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/142, letters of Judenrat to JSS, July 27, 1941, and JSS to Judenrat, July 24, 1941.

5. Ibid., Judenrat to JSS, August 8, 1941.

6. Ibid., M. Plaszyński, Obmann des Judenrates to AJDC Kraków, October 10, 1941. On November 13, 1941, the Judenrat reported that the Jewish hospital in Opoczno charged 15 złoty per person per day and the Polish hospital only 6.

7. BA-L, B 162/14521, Verdict of LG-Darm, 2 Ks 1/69, December 7, 1972, p. 24.

8. VHF, # 2642, testimony of Felix Brand.

9. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 68.

10. Ibid.; and Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 96.

11. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 68; and Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 272.

BIAŁA RAWSKA

Pre-1939: Biała Rawska, town, Łódź województwo, Poland;
1939–1944: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement;
post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Biała Rawska is located about 70 kilometers (43 miles) east of Łódź. In 1921, there were 1,429 Jews out of a total population of 2,323. In 1939, it is estimated that about 1,250 Jews were residing in Biała Rawska.¹

Units of the German army entered the town on September 9, 1939. When the German forces arrived, they assembled many Jews and Poles in the market square and ordered them to clap their hands and cheer the German troops. These scenes were photographed for propaganda purposes. According to one account in the yizkor book, shortly after their arrival German forces arrested hundreds of Jews in the town, both refugees and local Jews, and then shot every tenth person. On the streets in and around Biała Rawska there lay the bodies of many Jews who had been killed either in the bombardment of the town or having been shot by the Germans.²

At the end of October 1939, Biała Rawska became a town in Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, in the Generalgouvernement. The new German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures, which effectively placed Jews outside the law. The Jews were forced to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. Germans assisted by local Poles stole Jewish property from their houses with impunity. Among the restrictions the Germans imposed was a prohibition on Jews working in their professions; Jews were also forbidden to engage in trade.³ The Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and also a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst).

Since Biała Rawska had not been incorporated into the Reich, it did not suffer from the mass evacuation of much of



A sampling of the more than 300 identification card photos of local Jewish residents found on the floor of the Biała Rawska Gestapo headquarters, January 1945. They were discovered by Leon Sztubert, a Jewish survivor from the town, who spent the war in hiding in a nearby forest. Pictured (from top row left and across each row) are Bolesław Zajz; Yehuda Mayer Kurtzbojm; Dvora Filossoff; Reva [illegible]; "sister of Hinda" (d. 1941); Mendel Weber; Rywka Marchew; Chana Tauba Hauberg; and "Zelcer."

USHMM WS #30125, COURTESY OF LILKA ELBAUM

the Jewish population that affected many other towns in the area around Łódź at the end of 1939. However, during the first year of the occupation, there was a steady influx of many refugees, mainly from the towns near Łódź. In May 1941, among the 2,328 Jews counted in Biała Rawska, there were 928 refugees; and by July 1941, the Jewish population had increased to about 4,700. Some local Jews, however, also left the town during the period up to July 1941. The Jews that remained in Biała Rawska did their best to assist the refugees.⁴ The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization provided aid to 2,000 people, and a public kitchen was organized that served 250 hot meals per day.⁵

In the fall of 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Biała Rawska in the western part of town, which occupied about one third of the town's area.⁶ The Jews were forced to live under terribly overcrowded conditions, with six or seven families sharing a room.⁷ As a result, various epidemic diseases, especially typhus, spread among the ghetto population, raising the mortality rate to 10 persons per day. To combat this, a hospital was set up within the ghetto.



A Jewish policeman salutes six other officers standing at attention in the Biała Rawska ghetto, n.d. The policemen's clothing and footwear varied, but most wear armbands, caps with badges, badges and lanyards on their tunics, and belts.

USHMM WS #30203, COURTESY OF LILKA ELBAUM

Jews performed forced labor outside the ghetto on road construction, in agriculture, and cleaning the streets of the town.⁸ Otherwise Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto, but many Jews continued to sneak out and trade with the local peasants in the villages. They exchanged their clothes for flour, potatoes, bread, and other food products. If they were caught outside the ghetto, they could be shot on the spot. At some time before the liquidation of the ghetto, probably in late April 1942, the Gestapo arrested nine young Jews and shot them in the Jewish cemetery.⁹

Between April and July 1942, a number of Jews capable of work were sent from the Biała Rawska ghetto to perform forced labor at the munitions factory camp (Hugo Schneider AG, HASAG) in Skarżysko-Kamienna. In the second half of July 1942, the overcrowding in the ghetto became more intense when Jews from Będków and Ujazd were rounded up and brought into the Biała Rawska ghetto.¹⁰ This concentration of the Jews, together with rumors of the liquidation of other ghettos, meant that in the summer and fall of 1942 the Jews of Biała Rawska became increasingly nervous that soon their turn would be next. A few people decided to take desperate measures to save what they could. Elke Gviazda gave birth to a son in the ghetto in August 1942, but after much heart searching, she and her husband Antshl gave the child to the family of a Polish cobbler who lived in a nearby village, who agreed to hide the child in return for a sizable payment. The Polish family hid him for much of the time in a small space under a bed before subsequently moving to Warsaw. Their efforts succeeded in saving the life of Mendelev Gviazda, who had been circumcised and was only three months old when he was given away just prior to the liquidation of the ghetto.¹¹

On October 26, 1942, the ghetto inmates (about 4,000 people) were forcibly resettled into the ghetto of Rawa Mazowiecka, where they had to sleep on the streets on arrival. At dawn on October 27, the Jews found the ghetto surrounded

by German and Polish (Blue) Police, and over the following days, together with the Jews of Rawa Mazowiecka, the Germans deported the Jews of Biała Rawska by train to the extermination camp of Treblinka. The Jews were crammed into the enclosed railcars so tightly that many people suffocated on the journey. On arrival at Treblinka, all of the remaining Jews were murdered in the gas chambers.¹²

Following the evacuation of the Jews from Biała Rawska, some of the houses in the ghetto were demolished, and the rest were occupied by the local population. After the war, among the very few remaining traces of the Jewish community of Biała Rawska were the ruined walls of the synagogue, which had been built at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹³

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jewish community of Biała Rawska and its destruction during the Holocaust include: Eliyahu Freudenreich and Arye Yaakovovits, eds., *Sefer yizkor le-kedoshai Biala Rawska* (Tel Aviv: Biala Rawska Societies in Israel and the Diaspora, 1972); and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 68–69.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Biała Rawska can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/210); BA-L (B 162/6090-92); IPN (ASG, sygn. 51, p. 188); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 16; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 14); VHF (# 24254); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 14, 211/210, p. 3.
2. “Aytsug fun ‘Mgilah Pulin’ vegn Biala-Ravska,” zugeshikt fun Velvl Goldberg, in Freudenreich and Yaakovovits, *Sefer yizkor le-kedoshai Biala Rawska*, p. 175, gives the figure of 1,200 Jews prior to World War II.
3. “Aytsug fun ‘Mgilah Pulin’ vegn Biala-Ravska,” p. 175.
4. Ishrael-Hersh Bielski, “Umkum fun der bialer yidisher kehillah,” in Freudenreich and Yaakovovits, *Sefer yizkor le-kedoshai Biala Rawska*, p. 148.
5. Ibid.; A. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 153.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 14, 211/210, pp. 3 and 10, reports of June and July 1941.
7. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 69; Bielski, “Umkum fun der bialer yidisher kehillah,” pp. 148–149; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, ASG sygn. 51 (Łódź województwo), pp. 188 and reverse side; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 153.
8. Bielski, “Umkum fun der bialer yidisher kehillah,” p. 149.
9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, ASG 51 (Łódź województwo), pp. 188 and verso.
10. VHF, # 24254, testimony of Sara Knecht. In April 1942 the Security Police in the Generalgouvernement conducted a widespread Aktion against suspected Communists that resulted in hundreds of Jews being shot.
11. BA-L, B 162/6092, pp. 447 ff., 206 AR-Z 12/63, Abschlussbericht, April 14, 1964; Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besat-*

zungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), pp. 298–299, 307–308.

11. Velvl Goldberg, “Geratevet a yidish kind,” pp. 194–196; Ziml Kupershmidt, “Der gurl fun a Mentsh,” pp. 202–203—both in Freudenreich and Yaakovovits, *Sefer yizkor le-kedoshai Biala Rawska*. Mendele Gviazda was subsequently identified as a hidden Jewish child by the Jewish Committee in Warsaw in 1946.

12. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 69, 259–260; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, ASG, sygn. 51 (Łódź województwo), pp. 188 and verso.

13. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, ASG, sygn. 51 (Łódź województwo), pp. 188 and verso.

BIAŁOBRZEGI

Pre-1939: Białobrzegi (Yiddish: Byalobz'ig), village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Białobrzegi, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Białobrzegi, town and county seat, Białobrzegi powiat, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Białobrzegi lies on the Pilica River, about 30 kilometers (19 miles) to the north of Radom, on the main road leading to Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, 1,814 Jews lived in Białobrzegi, constituting 60 percent of the village's inhabitants.¹

The Germans occupied Białobrzegi on September 9, 1939. In the fall of 1939, the German authorities ordered members of the Jewish Council of Elders to collect a “contribution” of 40,000 złoty, an enormous sum, considering local conditions. Białobrzegi Jews were also subjected to various antisemitic measures decreed by the German authorities, including the inclusion of markings on their clothing and confiscations.

In October 1939, the town became part of Kreis Radom-Land, governed by Kreishauptmann Dr. Friedrich Egen, but it lay directly on the border with Kreis Grojec in Distrikt Warschau. There was an outpost of the Gendarmerie on Piłsudski Street but no permanent Gestapo presence.

A Judenrat was established to represent the local Jewish community to the German authorities. Abram Goldberg, a local merchant, became its chairman. The Judenrat created a 20-man Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which was commanded by Nusyn Minkowski.² In the winter of 1939–1940, the Germans ordered the Jews to perform forced labor, which consisted of removing snow from the roads leading to the village. Subsequent forced labor tasks included bridge construction, work on various surrounding estates, and work for the ZEORK (Zakłady Energetyczne Okręgu Radomsko-Kieleckiego) electrical company, as well as for the Gendarmerie.

From the spring of 1940 until October 1942, living conditions for Białobrzegi's Jews declined steadily, due to the arrival of successive waves of Jewish refugees from other places. For example, in the spring of 1941, the Germans resettled 53 Jewish families from Przytyk in Białobrzegi.³ Jews also came from other

places nearby, including Stromiec and Wyśmierzyce, and in July or August 1942, from Jedlińsk, as well as from towns in Distrikt Warschau, such as from Warka, Grójec, Nowe Miasto, Mogielnica, and Warsaw.⁴ This migration was fostered in part by the widespread belief that one could still secure some kind of livelihood in Białobrzegi, for instance, from trade, as the enforcement of German regulations was initially less stringent than in larger towns. In April and May 1941, scores of Jewish escapees from Warsaw and its environs arrived daily in Białobrzegi. The majority of them were completely impoverished.⁵

The Germans established a Jewish residential area (open ghetto) in Białobrzegi in April or May 1941. The ghetto covered the western part of the village. Its border cut in half Krakowska Street, a main road in Białobrzegi. From there, it stretched to the buildings neighboring the river. Not all Polish families were expelled initially from the ghetto's terrain. Some were permitted to continue living there. In August 1941, official statistics claimed that 2,865 Jews lived in the ghetto, including 135 petty merchants and traders, nearly 200 tradesman, and 180 physical laborers.⁶

Following Kreishauptmann Dr. Egen's order of December 22, 1941, on the establishment of ghettos in the Kreis, the ghetto in Białobrzegi was sealed in January 1942, as more Jews from the surrounding villages were required to move there.⁷ Despite the prohibition on leaving the ghetto, now enforced with the death penalty, many people attempted to leave in search of provisions, and some of these attempts ended tragically. The Gendarmerie maintained a powerful presence. They patrolled Białobrzegi and the surrounding area, shooting on the spot any Jew found outside the ghetto without a valid permit (some Jews were permitted to move back and forth to labor sites outside the town). The Gendarmes frequently entered the ghetto; on occasion, they murdered individual Jews caught not wearing their armband or known to have been outside the ghetto illegally. The commander of the Gendarmerie post was an official of the Schutzpolizei named Wiechern; among the most notorious of his subordinates was a man named Josef Pfalzgraf, who shot Jews on numerous occasions.⁸

Tight control over the ghetto created severe impoverishment and hunger on a massive scale. The official daily food ration was only 80 grams (2.8 ounces) of bread per person. Białobrzegi's Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee, directed by the physician Dr. Rafał Bułka, tried to assist the most impoverished by establishing a community kitchen to offer reduced-cost meals. In the first months of the ghetto's existence, the committee could afford only to distribute 600 meals daily: one third of the demand.⁹ The absence of financial resources forced the kitchen to close after a while. The JSS and the Judenrat worked together to create an isolation hospital for those with infectious diseases; however, it had room for only 15 patients.¹⁰

In the summer of 1942, the poverty and starvation that reigned in the Białobrzegi ghetto reached their peak. Survivor Shlomo Kligerman recalled: “The Nazis massed all the Jews from the surrounding villages in Byalabgige [Białobrzegi], and the overcrowding was appalling. People were dying on the

street from hunger, and from time to time the Nazis would seize people from the streets for labor.”¹¹ In July or August 1942, some of the remaining Jews from the Jedlińsk ghetto and also the Jews of Wyśmierzyce were brought to Białobrzegi.¹² In September 1942, there were several recorded incidents of Jews being shot by the Gendarmerie for leaving the ghetto in search of food.¹³

On October 1 (or possibly September 1), 1942, German-led forces liquidated the ghetto.¹⁴ First, members of the Jewish Police went from house to house, telling the Jews to gather at the market square.¹⁵ At this time, a deep cordon of police had already surrounded the ghetto. German Gendarmes, Polish (Blue) Police, officials of the Security Police, and their Ukrainian auxiliaries—many of them drunk—entered the ghetto. The patients of the isolation hospital were murdered on the spot. The Germans also shot many old and sick Jews, as well as children, inside the town. Eyewitnesses indicate that around 200 people were murdered and buried at the Jewish cemetery in Białobrzegi on this day.¹⁶ (A Polish exhumation report indicates that at least 125 people were buried at the Jewish cemetery and that around 500 people [including some non-Jews] altogether were murdered by the German occupiers in and around Białobrzegi during the occupation.)¹⁷ On the market square the Germans selected around 100 Jews who were young and healthy for work tasks. Then about 3,500 Jews were formed into a marching column and escorted through Stromiec to the train station in the town of Dobieszyn. During this march, the police escorts beat or shot many Jews who were unable to keep up with the column. The train, composed of cattle wagons, which was waiting in Dobieszyn, left after a few hours in the direction of the Treblinka extermination camp, where the Jews were murdered on arrival.

About 200 Jewish men and 10 women, who had either been selected on the market square during the liquidation Aktion or returned to Białobrzegi from nearby work camps shortly thereafter, were confined within three adjacent houses next to the market square. Some of these Jews had to work cleaning out the ghetto, while others worked for the ZEORK company or for the Order Police. Most of these Jews were deported by truck to the munitions factory at Skarżysko-Kamienna in December 1942. From here some were sent to Częstochowa, Auschwitz, and other concentration camps. A few Jews from Białobrzegi survived the labor camps in Sucha, Pionki, and other places.¹⁸

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jewish community of Białobrzegi and its fate during the Holocaust include Regina Renz, ed., *Białobrzegi. Studia i szkice z dziejów miasta* (Białobrzegi, 1996); and the yizkor book edited by David Avraham Mandelboim, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Byalobz'ig* (Tel Aviv, 1991), which includes short biographical sketches of a number of survivors.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR (AgB 188); AŻIH (211/213-214 [ŻSS Białobrzegi]); BA-L (B 162/6305-06); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.2004.625 [Samuel Heider memoir]); VHF (e.g., # 1969, 39802); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 211/213-214 (ŻSS Białobrzegi).
2. APR, AgB 188.
3. Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1037, dates the resettlement in April 1941; VHF, # 39802, dates it in July 1941; other Jews were moved from Przytyk to Skaryszew and Szydłowiec at this time.
4. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 98; and Sebastian Piątkowski, “Białobrzegi i okolice w latach wojny i okupacji (1939–1945),” in Renz, *Białobrzegi*, pp. 161–162.
5. AŻIH, 211/213-214 (ŻSS Białobrzegi). See also BA-L, B 162/6305, p. 209, statement of Josef Friedmann, March 6, 1964, and p. 235, statement of Arie Leib Berkowicz, March 12, 1964.
6. AŻIH, 211/213-214 (ŻSS Białobrzegi).
7. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), p. 122. Most Jewish survivors date the ghetto’s establishment in January 1942; see BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 191, 196, 230, 233–234.
8. Piątkowski, “Białobrzegi,” pp. 163–164; and Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gehenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw, 1983), pp. 262–263. See BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 247–249, arrest order for Josef Pfalzgraf, May 19, 1965. VHF, # 1969, testimony of Abram Piasek, mentions that a boy was shot for going only a few yards outside the ghetto.
9. AŻIH, 211/213-214 (ŻSS Białobrzegi).
10. Ibid.
11. Mandelboim, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Byalobz'ig*, p. 345 (Shlomo Kligerman).
12. BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 200–203, 237–240, 241–243, statements by surviving Jews from the Jedlińsk ghetto; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 578.
13. See, for example, BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 207, 223–225, 235.
14. October 1, 1942, is given by most Jewish survivors; see BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 191, 196, 205, 209, 223, 226, 234. Others, however, date it on September 1; see pp. 213, 217.
15. Ibid., p. 210.
16. Ibid., p. 193.
17. Ibid., pp. 288–289.
18. Ibid., pp. 185, 189, 193–194, 196–197.

BLIŻYN

Pre-1939: Bliżyn, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Bliżyn, Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Bliżyn, village, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Bliżyn is located about 43 kilometers (27 miles) southwest of Radom. The Jewish population in the village was rather small; the 1921 census registered only 47 Jews in Bliżyn. A few hundred more Jews resided in the surrounding villages. In February 1941, the number of Jews in Bliżyn and the adjacent villages linked to the Bliżyn kehillah was estimated at about 375.¹

After the German occupation, the situation of the Jews in Bliżyn steadily deteriorated. According to the correspondence of the Bliżyn Jewish Council (Judenrat) with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the 45 families of Bliżyn's Jewish community were already in urgent need of material support in 1940. From the summer of 1940, the AJDC began to deliver food to Bliżyn's Jews. In July 1940, Bliżyn received 45 kilograms (99.2 pounds) of grits, 11 kilograms (24.3 pounds) of sugar, 42 kilograms (92.6 pounds) of flour, 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of lard, and 15 cans of condensed milk.² In total, two deliveries of food were made in 1940. Another indicator of the poor living conditions of the local Jews was the fact that in the spring of 1940 a sanitary commission was established, which consisted of 10 people.³ But there is no indication that a ghetto had been created at this time.

In February 1941, there were already about 100 Jewish refugees from Łódź in Bliżyn, who had arrived at some time after September 1939.⁴ Then in March 1941, the situation was exacerbated by the arrival of more than 200 Jews who had been deported from Płock via the Działdowo transit camp. These Jews arrived completely exhausted and dressed only in rags. About 700 Jews from Płock also arrived in the nearby town of Suchedniów.⁵

With the meager means available to the Bliżyn Jewish community, there was not much it could do to help the new arrivals. The soup kitchen of the Jewish community delivered 250 lunch meals per day, but supplies were scarce. The Jewish population, especially the new arrivals, was in a pitiable condition. In April 1941, the AJDC sent 500 złoty to the Jewish community, but this did not improve the situation very much. In May 1941, Chaim Razenki, chairman of the Jewish Council, reported that Bliżyn was now home to 211 former inhabitants of Płock, of whom about 75 were living in mass quarters, while the others were staying with local families. An outpatient hospital (Ambulatorium) and a quarantine station had been established, where people suspected of infectious diseases could be treated. However, funds were running short, and Razenki pointed out that the soup kitchen could only operate on a limited basis, as the food supply was not guaranteed.⁶ On May 20, the AJDC responded by transferring 750 złoty from its own funds and 500 złoty from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS).⁷ The regional branch of JSS had been founded on November 20, 1940, headed by Dr. Eliezer Polak.⁸

In the first months of 1942, the German authorities began a larger resettlement within Distrikt Radom. The civil administration began to concentrate the Jews in a few locations, especially bringing Jews from the countryside and villages into towns closer to railroad stations. This was intended to facilitate their subsequent deportation to labor and extermination camps. Due to its proximity to a major railroad line, Bliżyn was selected as one of the locations where Jews were concentrated, serving as a temporary transit ghetto.⁹ Almost no records concerning Bliżyn have survived from this period. Later in that year, probably in August 1942, the Bliżyn Jews, about 600 people altogether, were brought to the collection ghetto in Suchedniów. During this deportation Aktion, about

30 Jews were killed.¹⁰ From there, the remainder were sent with about 3,500 other Jews to the extermination camp in Treblinka on September 22, 1942.¹¹ It is probable that some of the Bliżyn Jews were among the 570 able-bodied Jews selected for work and sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) munitions factory camp at Skarżysko-Kamienna in the course of two transports in August and September 1942.¹²

On March 8, 1943, a forced labor camp for Jews (*Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden*) was established in Bliżyn. The camp eventually held about 5,000 to 6,000 prisoners, both male and female, becoming a subcamp of the Majdanek concentration camp in February 1944. The remaining prisoners were evacuated in cattle wagons to the Auschwitz concentration camp in July 1944.

On March 17, 1943, the synagogue of the "former Jewish community in Bliżyn" was confiscated by the Generalgouvernement, as it was deemed to be ownerless (*herrenlos*).¹³

SOURCES Not many sources mention the history of Bliżyn before the village became the site of a forced labor camp for Jews. Brief mentions of the Jewish community of Bliżyn in the period from 1939 to 1942 can be found in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, no. 15 (1955): 75–180. Edited by Czesław Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979) lists the Bliżyn "ghetto" and other camps there on pp. 108–109.

Primary sources regarding the Bliżyn ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/264); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/264; and RG-15.031M [Stadt- und Kreishauptmann, Kielce], file 129); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A0154, correspondence with AJDC in Kraków, Bliżyn Judenrat to AJDC, February 12, 1941.
2. Ibid., district inspector of the AJDC in Radom to the Bliżyn Judenrat, July 12, 1940.
3. Ibid., Bliżyn Judenrat to AJDC Kraków, February 19, 1941.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., Bliżyn Judenrat to AJDC Kraków, March 10, 1941; this letter mentions around 300 Jews arriving from Płock. See also Joseph Kermish, "The Jews of Plotzk under the Nazi Regime," in Eliyahu Aizenberg, ed., *Plotsk: Toldot ke-bilah 'atikat-yamin be-Polin* (Tel Aviv: ha-Menorah, 1967), pp. 70–74. In total, some 6,000 Jews from Płock were deported to various towns in Distrikt Radom in March 1941.
6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, Chaim Razenki (Bliżyn Judenrat) to AJDC Kraków, May 7, 1941.
7. Ibid., AJDC to the Bliżyn Judenrat, May 20, 1941.
8. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 203.

9. Ibid., pp. 252, 270, describes Bliżyn as a collection point (*Sammelort*); see also Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 99–100. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 108–109, list Bliżyn as a ghetto.

10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 108–109; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 325–326, note an influx of Jews into the Suchedniów ghetto from Bliżyn and other towns in August 1942. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw, 1980), p. 21, reports that in 1941 the Gendarmerie shot 23 Jews in Bliżyn.

11. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 270; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 171; and Aizenberg, *Plotsk: Toldot kehilah*, p. 73.

12. Felicia Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), p. 36.

13. USHMM, RG-15.031M, file 129, Stadt- und Kreishauptmann, Kielce, Einziehungsverfügung, Kreishauptmann Kielce, March 17, 1943.

BODZENTYN

Pre-1939: Bodzentyn, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Bodzentyn is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) northeast of Kielce. There were approximately 1,000 Jews living in Bodzentyn on the eve of World War II.¹

The German authorities in Bodzentyn set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) on February 15, 1940. It included Froim Szachter (chairman), Lejzor Grojsman (deputy), Chil Rozenberg, Szmul Wajntraub (chairman from 1942 onward), and Mejlich Zylbersztajn.² A Jewish police force was also organized, but the date of its establishment and its strength are not known. A Polish (Blue) Police force also was stationed in Bodzentyn. The German Gendarmerie post that was responsible for Bodzentyn was located in nearby Bieliny.³

Between 150 and 300 refugees and deportees (estimates vary), mostly from Łódź and around Kielce, arrived in Bodzentyn soon after the start of the war.

On March 3, 1941, 600 deportees from the town of Płock, which had been incorporated into the Reich in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, were transferred to Bodzentyn. By March 10, 1941, approximately 1,500 Jews had arrived in a total of three transports. Most of the deportees had spent up to a week in the transit camp at Działdowo, and they arrived via Kielce sick, exhausted, and with no luggage. All were housed in the synagogue. About 1,200 were relocated to local Jewish families within two weeks, but many families had to be split up among the extremely overcrowded households.

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee established a soup kitchen for the deportees. It was located in a wooden bar-

racks next to the synagogue on Wesoła Street. According to one of the Płock survivors, Michael Zelon, the situation of the Płock Jews was not too bad at the beginning but soon started “going down” for those who had no money or work.⁴

The Płock deportees in Bodzentyn organized a Committee of Płock Compatriots to assist their own. The committee included Dr. J. Bluman (chairman), J. Ajzyk, H. Cytryn, J. Askanas, J. Horowitz, and J. Rubin. By May 1941, both the Płock committee and the JSS office in Kielce were concerned whether the Płock Jews were really getting the help various organizations were supposed to provide them. The committee also described the cooperation with the Judenrat as “loose.” Additionally, the Ringelblum Archives contain correspondence addressed to the committee by individuals citing various forms of discrimination by the Judenrat.⁵

Historians have described the attitude of the Bodzentyn Judenrat towards the Płock deportees as “misguided” (Krzysztof Urbański) and “reprehensible” (Adam Rutkowski). All sources emphasize the extreme hardship faced by the Płock Jews but underline the warmth with which the local Jewish population received them upon arrival. Michael Zelon recalls the largest number of Płock Jews dying in 1942, by which time they were “totally neglected, swollen from hunger, unfriendly, and ready to fight.”⁶

Following the typhus epidemic that broke out in mid-April 1941, the sick were treated in a hospital in Kielce (which admitted a total of 105 patients). On May 20, 1941, the German authorities ordered the Judenrat to set up an epidemic hospital for 25 patients. Although the hospital opened two days later in the synagogue, it lacked basic equipment such as beds, blankets, and medicine. Nevertheless, it treated on average 40 patients who were released as soon as their temperatures dropped. The highest death rate was among the Płock deportees and the elderly.⁷

By the end of June 1941, there were 3,700 Jews registered in Bodzentyn. Out of this number, 72 were registered as working in labor camps outside the gmina. None are registered as working in Bodzentyn. At the time, 102 Jewish businesses were still operating, of which 42 were craftsmen, predominantly tailors and cobblers.⁸

By August 1941, 124 patients of the epidemic hospital in Bodzentyn had recovered. Dr. J. Bluman was the hospital’s manager and the only doctor in town. At the time, disinfections, delousing, and vaccination against dysentery were mandatory for all Jews.⁹ The typhus epidemic did not die out but intensified at the end of September 1941, claiming, however, fewer lives than hunger and—with the winter coming—cold.

In October 1941, a second “general hospital for deportees suffering from cold, swelling, and exhaustion” was set up in the synagogue.¹⁰ A shelter organized at the time solely for refugee and deportee orphans (3 to 12 years old) housed 50 children by January 1942; another 100 were waiting to be admitted. By the end of April 1942, 85 orphans and half-orphans were housed in three rooms. Another 30 were placed with local families to be fed. By February 1942, 5 to 6 Jews were dying daily.¹¹

By mid-March 1942 (or possibly earlier), an open ghetto had been established in the predominantly Jewish neighborhood of Bodzentyn. Jews living in Krajno, Jeziorko, Wzdół Rządowy, Ryczywół, and other settlements in the vicinity were forced to move into the extremely overcrowded Jewish quarter. Poles within the designated area, however, were allowed to stay where they lived.

It appears that the ghetto dwellers were still allowed to move freely within Bodzentyn's limits. Going any further was punishable by death. The same punishment applied to Poles caught sheltering Jewish escapees from the ghettos. Special permission was required for Jews to travel outside of Bodzentyn. Trespassers were transferred to the Bieliny Gendarmerie station or were shot outside of the village; there were cases, however, in which only a fine was applied.

The ghetto residents were tormented with day and night searches conducted by the Gendarmes, sometimes assisted by Polish and Jewish policemen. Jews were beaten, arrested, fined, and sometimes killed for offenses that included smuggling, possession of various materials or commodities, profiteering, and theft. Jews in many cases were able to get away with a bribe and confiscation of the discovered commodity.¹²

By May 1942, roundups of Jews for the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp had commenced, for example, on May 6 and 8, 1942. In response, many Jewish men went into hiding. As the set quota was not fulfilled, the Jewish Police were ordered to deliver men to make up the deficit. In Skarżysko, the Bodzentyn laborers were put to work building railroad trucks and cutting trees. Those diagnosed by a doctor as unfit or who could afford a bribe were sent back to Bodzentyn and exchanged for healthy Jews. Such replacements took place on May 12 and 21 and June 1 and 4, 1942. Trucks carrying the sick were unloaded only after an equal number of new laborers were submitted, for instance, 60 men on June 4, 1942. The Judenrat was charged with the delivery of food—collected from their families—to the laborers.¹³

On the night of July 3–4, 1942, the synagogue that housed both hospitals and several dozen deportees burned down.¹⁴

The Bodzentyn ghetto was liquidated in September 1942. The Gendarmerie and Polish and Jewish policemen chased approximately 3,000 ghetto dwellers down to the Lower Market. Family members carried children and the elderly on their backs. All were marched to nearby Suchedniów (18 kilometers [11 miles] away) via Wzdół Rządowy and Michniów; a number of Jews from Słupia Nowa were also added to the transport. The Jewish Police that remained after the ghetto's liquidation were charged with cleaning and sorting the abandoned Jewish property. There is no information as to their fate.¹⁵

SOURCES The Bodzentyn ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 111; Dawid Rubinowicz, *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1987); and E. Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: LSW, 1983).

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (210/271 [AJDC], 211/242–245 [JSS], Ring I/165, Ring I/794); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 16 [Bodzentyn]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC Bodzentyn]; RG-15.079M [Ring I]); and VHF (# 4272, 31161, 36287, and 47180).

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NOTES

1. Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach: FPHU “XYZ,” 2007); and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/243 (Bodzentyn), p. 46.

2. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 11, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/242 (Bodzentyn), pp. 1, 3, 20, 28.

3. Rubinowicz, *Pamiętnik*, pp. 36, 88–89.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/242, pp. 34, 39, 51–52. In its January 1942 report for 1941, Bodzentyn's JSS reported 1,700 Płock refugees; see Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/245 (Bodzentyn), p. 8. Also see VHF, # 4272, testimony of Tema Lichtenstein, 1995; # 31161, testimony of Lena Michalowicz, 1997; # 36287, testimony of Nathan Smiga, 1997; # 47180, testimony of Michael Zelton, 1998; and Fąfara, *Gebenna*, p. 427.

5. USHMM, RG-15.079M (Ring I/165, Ring I/794).

6. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 99; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 102; and VHF, # 47180.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/243, pp. 5–6, 24–25, 38–39.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

9. *Ibid.*, 211/244 (Bodzentyn), p. 1; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 13 and 29, 1941.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/244, pp. 29–30, 37, 41.

11. *Ibid.*, 211/245, pp. 8–9, 12, 19–20, 26, 45.

12. Rubinowicz, *Pamiętnik*, pp. 10, 65–71, 74, 77, 93, 104, 106, 111. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 116, states that the ghetto was set up in 1941. Also see VHF, # 47180; and Fąfara, *Gebenna*, p. 425.

13. Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), pp. 31–32; Rubinowicz, *Pamiętnik*, pp. 88–98, 104, 107, 109; and VHF, # 47180.

14. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/245, p. 59.

15. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” table 8, p. 149; Fąfara, *Gebenna*, p. 430; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 111.

BOGORIA

Pre-1939: Bogoria, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village of Bogoria is located 55 kilometers (34 miles) southeast of Kielce. In September 1939, Bogoria had 403 Jewish residents.¹

As the result of a Luftwaffe bombardment in the first week of the September campaign, the village was almost entirely razed. This destruction, together with a fear of the approaching German troops, caused many local Jews to flee eastward. They were soon replaced by a flow of refugees who had left from places already occupied by the Germans.²

From the beginning of the occupation, Bogoria's Jews had to collect "contributions" for the Germans in the form of money, silver, gold, or other valuable items. Further monetary payments were imposed on the community in 1940 and 1941, yet some inhabitants still managed to hide some valuables.

The Germans also demanded a daily quota of Jews for forced labor. They would often make them clean horses, trucks, and streets; young men were sometimes dragged out of their homes. The workday started at 6:00 A.M. and, with a short lunch break, ended in the evening. Laborers were given paltry rations, which they received only infrequently.

As work was largely unpaid, the labor pool dried up when Bogoria's young Jews opted to go into hiding. Eventually, the older men were conscripted for forced labor, with the Germans ridiculing their long beards. There is one report of a dozen being humiliated in the market square, where their beards were cut off. Older laborers were often severely beaten by the SS guards who supervised them, as they were unable to work as fast as the young. A special committee was set up to organize the daily labor details and ensure that the quota was met. Before long, the elderly complained to the committee, arguing that it was shameful of the young men to force indirectly their elders to be subjected to such treatment. The committee started sending about 40 young people to meet the labor quota, alternating their workdays. During the winter, labor conscripts were required to shovel the snow off the roads. The winter of 1940 was especially severe; sometimes these young men had to clear up to five feet of snow without proper equipment.³

The date of the establishment of the Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Bogoria is not known; however, Lejb Zymerfogiel is identified as its president in August 1940. At the end of that year, many Jewish businesses were placed under a German, ethnic German (*Volksdeutsche*), or Polish commissioner. In addition to 400 local Jews, there were about 60 Jewish refugees living in Bogoria by January 1941.⁴

On March 27, 1941, a transport of 1,000 Viennese Jews arrived in Kreis Opatow. They came fully equipped with luggage, food, and clothing. Approximately 70 percent were over 60 years old and in ailing health. From that particular transport, 34 people were sent to Bogoria. According to Judenrat records, there were 527 Jews living in Bogoria in April 1941. Of these, 10 were merchants, 17 were craftsmen, and 409 were common laborers. Of those identified as craftsmen, only 12 were licensed to continue their businesses: 4 bakers, 5 tailors, 2 leather stitchers, and a watchmaker.⁵

To assist Bogoria's refugees and deportees in their plight, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), based in Kraków, was created, with a Kreis committee set up in Opatów on December 16, 1940.⁶ Bogoria established an unofficial branch in March 1941 but initially did not receive any funds for its deportee popula-

tion. Rabbi Berek Szwarc chaired the official Bogoria JSS committee, appointed in June 1941. Hersz Gutman was the chairman's deputy; its third member was Lejb Zymerfogiel.

The JSS in Opatów agreed to subsidize a soup kitchen and an outpatients' medical service in Bogoria, once the local branch fulfilled their preconditions in May 1941, taking on debt to do so. The soup kitchen located in the rabbi's private apartment distributed from 100 to 140 meals per day. In May 1941, teenage volunteers set up a youth organization to provide child care for roughly 60 orphaned or poor children. There was no building to house its activities; but the JSS believed that, considering the time of the year, staying outside all day was better for the children's health. Volunteers looked after the children between breakfast and dinner, then bathed them and checked their hygiene. From August 1941 onward, half of the children received additional food rations. This level of social assistance was maintained in Bogoria until March 1942. At that time, 70 percent of the Jews in Bogoria used JSS services.⁷

In April 1942, a ghetto was established, requiring a special permit for Jews seeking to leave it.⁸ Until May 1942, Jews were allowed to live in 150 towns and settlements in Kreis Opatow. Then on May 13, 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter ordered that all Jews would be restricted to five towns and 12 settlements in the Kreis, including Bogoria. Each center was automatically recognized as a ghetto. Jews were given two weeks to move. Those who resettled before May 28, 1942, could take all their belongings with them; after that, they could take only as much as they could carry in two hands. June 1, 1942, was the deadline for resettlement.⁹

Before the arrival of the newest expellees, there were approximately 550 Jews living in the Bogoria ghetto, of which 150 were from elsewhere.¹⁰ Due to the resettlement order, an additional 78 Jews from neighboring villages were transferred to the Bogoria ghetto by June 1. A housing commission was set up to distribute them among private apartments.¹¹

In July 1942, the employment office in Opatów registered 100 Jews from Bogoria to work in agriculture. More than half of them were assigned to work on four estates: Kielczyna (25 laborers), Łaziska (12), Grzybów (11), and Rogoźno (8). Workers departed from the ghetto in the morning equipped with a group travel permit to leave and return to Bogoria in the evening. On the Kielczyna estate, laborers worked from 7:00 A.M. until noon, then again from 1:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. They were paid with food and money based on their performance. On average, a worker would take home half a kilogram (1.1 pound) of wheat and 2.40 złoty per day. Laborers on other estates worked under similar conditions.

At the same time, the JSS in Bogoria tried, with the help of the Kraków headquarters, to obtain permission to set up a tailoring workshop and a straw-shoe workshop. They also tried to find companies who would place orders for these goods. At the end of September 1942, these negotiations were still in progress.

As Jews in Bogoria learned during the summer of 1942 about other towns being cleared of Jews, many expected that they would soon be taken away as well. A number of Jews went

to hide in the forests. Large posters all over the village warned Poles that their houses would be burned down for helping Jews.¹² The liquidation of the Bogoria ghetto took place at the end of October 1942, when around 600 ghetto inhabitants were deported to the extermination camp in Treblinka.¹³

SOURCES Brief articles on the Jewish community of Bogoria can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 80–81; and in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 164–165. References to the destruction of the community can be found in the following publications: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); and Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004). Some information can be found in the German wartime propaganda newspaper for the Jews, *Gazeta Żydowska*.

Most of the archival information in this article is derived from the following sources: USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 16); and VHF (# 42977).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16.
2. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 88, 163 (table 13), 181–182.
3. VHF, # 42977-4, testimony of Harry Gula, 1998.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16.
5. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 140; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN 1979), p. 112; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 93–94; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16.
6. Marek Józwik, “Akta Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem dystryktu radomskiego,” *Biuletyn Kwartalny Radomskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 23:1 (1988): 45–46.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 7, 1941; June 10, 1941; March 29, 1942; and May 1, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16. According to Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 112, the ghetto was set up in the summer of 1942.
9. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 85–86; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 116, 152–153.
10. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 1, 1942.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16.
12. VHF, # 42977-4.
13. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 80–81; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 181. According to Spector and Wigoder’s *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, pp. 164–165, the Jews from Bogoria were deported to “one of the death camps”; according to Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 112, 600 Bogoria Jews were shot during the ghetto liquidation.

BUSKO-ZDRÓJ (BUSKO)

Pre-1939: Busko-Zdrój, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: capital, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Busko-Zdrój is located 47 kilometers (29 miles) south of Kielce. There were 1,300 Jews living in Busko on the eve of World War II.¹

Following the German occupation of the town in September 1939, Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer was appointed as Busko’s Kreishauptmann. Sources mention the following German offices operating in Busko: the Kripo (Criminal Police); the Gestapo, located on Mickiewicz Street and commanded by Emil Fischer; and the Gendarmerie under Captain Koenig’s command, located in the villa “Wersal” on Mickiewicz Street. There was also a unit of Polish (Blue) Police.

By the spring of 1940, German authorities had set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Of its members, the following names are known: Szaja Gertner (chairman), Dawid Promer, Wolf Szpigelman, and Ajzyk Blugrind.

In March 1940, there were 1,700 Jews living in Busko, including 140 refugees. By mid-August 1940, a number of Busko’s able-bodied Jewish men were sent to work in forced labor camps around Biała Podlaska. The Judenrat allocated some of its funds to help these laborers. By December 1940, the number of refugees increased to 250, yet the Jewish population remained at 1,700.

By January 1941, a Kreis self-help committee had been established at 16 Piłsudski Street. Its assistance was limited to the distribution of small benefits and food to the needy in Busko and throughout Kreis Busko. The committee included J. Nadler as chairman, Dr. Aniela Goldschmied (Żwan-Goldshmed, a Pole who through marriage had converted to Judaism), Chaim Rozenwajg (a tailor), Lejb Prajs (a tradesman), and Gerszon Rakowski (a house painter). A few months later, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee was established, to provide welfare for the Jews of Busko and the Kreis; it was located at 9 Stopnica Street (now Partyzantów Street).²

Between December 1940 and February 1941, the Busko Kreis was flooded with Jews deported from larger towns. In December, 1,500 Jews arrived from Radom. On February 24, 1941, a transport of another 966 Jews arrived from the town of Płock, which had been incorporated into the Reich. Both transports were distributed among various localities in the Kreis, causing great overcrowding.³

The Kreishauptmann, Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer, ordered the establishment of several ghettos in the Kreis by April 15, 1941. Around this time, an open ghetto was created in Busko.⁴ According to the postwar testimony of Daniel Fischgarten, the ghetto was unfenced; however, Jews were strictly forbidden to leave it. Fischgarten also testified that the ghetto consisted of two streets. Other sources name three: that is, Stopnica on the northern side of the market square, where the JSS office and the synagogue were located, together with

two parallel streets southwest of the market square—Kościuszko and Kiliński. It is worth noting, of course, that to physically connect these streets at least one more had to be accessible to Jews. It is possible that the area of the ghetto was reduced over time. There is no information as to whether the ghetto was guarded or if a Jewish police force was organized.⁵

The number of Jews remained stable following the ghetto's establishment, and JSS statistics from the summer of 1941 report 1,723 Jews, including 243 newcomers. With only 16.3 percent of all newcomers, Busko had the lowest number of deportees of any town within the Kreis. This was the result of a deliberate decision by the Kreishauptmann to declare his Kreis capital to be as free of Jews as possible.

At this time, there were 235 children under the age of 10 living in the ghetto. Additional food rations were issued for 89 of them by the soup kitchen set up in the synagogue by July 1941 to serve the impoverished. The ghetto also had an epidemic hospital, an isolation ward, and a sanitation committee supervised by two doctors, Aniela Goldschmied (particularly responsible for children in the ghetto) and L. Zarecki. The sanitation committee checked Jewish dwellings for cleanliness; at least 60 Jews had to be bathed daily. By October 1941, out of the ghetto's 1,728 inhabitants, 560 were seeking JSS assistance; 190 Jewish businesses were still open, 70 of which consisted of tailors.⁶

By September 1941, the Judenrat consisted of the following: Gertner (chairman), Binenstock, Szpigelman, Kaziemirski (secretary), and Alter Grojs.⁷

On December 7, 1941, first- and second-grade classes were organized for children by the JSS. Segregated according to their age and level of education, the children spent most of the daytime under the care of tutors who helped improve their behavior and cleanliness. The JSS also began serving soup kitchen meals to nonresident Jews held in Busko's prison.⁸

The registration of 670 able-bodied men aged 12 to 60 took place in the summer of 1942. The workers were to perform drainage works in the vicinity and improve the Busko-Wiślica road. At this time, the JSS sought permission to open workshops producing straw-made items.⁹

According to Fischgarten, the Judenrat was ordered in the summer of 1942 to select 250 families who were then to be resettled to a choice of one of several specific locations. If this transfer actually took place, it would have greatly diminished the number of Jews in the ghetto—possibly by almost half of its population. Other sources, however, do not confirm this account. Historian Adam Rutkowski claims that the number of ghetto residents rose to approximately 2,000 just prior to the deportation, most likely due to the German practice of bringing into the nearest ghetto those Jews living in surrounding settlements, shortly before the deportation of the Jews from a given area.¹⁰

Furthermore, Irena Budzyńska, a local Pole involved in saving the lives of many Jews, testified that in September 1942 Busko's Jews had to relocate and were all forced to live in remarkably overcrowded dwellings. Windows facing streets were bricked up, depriving many people of daylight. This ac-

count suggests that the ghetto's size was probably reduced. Budzyńska, however, dates these events as the ghetto's creation, which would suggest that until then the ghetto had remained more or less open. There are no surviving records of Jews being killed for leaving the ghetto; however, a Polish man, Józef Chudy, was shot for supplying food to Jews in the Busko ghetto.

The deportation Aktion took place on October 1 or 2, 1942.¹¹ One day prior to the deportation, the Germans ordered local Poles to bring some 300 wagons to Busko. This caused great alarm among the ghetto's residents, as the ghetto was also surrounded by Gendarmerie forces commanded by Captain Koenig and Polish (Blue) Police.¹²

The next day, Busko's Jews were ordered to leave their dwellings within five minutes and to form up in lines of 10. Commands were given by loudspeaker. In the course of the evacuation, the Germans shot Josef Topiol, the last Judenrat chairman. Children were being killed on the spot; held by the legs, their heads were smashed against walls and poles. The elderly were shot. The German Gendarmerie searched the dwellings for Jews in hiding; those found were shot immediately.

The remaining column of residents was to be marched to Jędrzejów 38 kilometers (24 miles) away, a town with a railroad, from which the Jews of Busko and other ghettos in the Kreis were to be sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. The column was escorted by SS men, spread out every 50 meters (164 feet) on each side; many marchers were shot along the way. On the way to Jędrzejów, Busko's Jews were stopped in Pińczów, where some were selected for work at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition-factory labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. The remainder, together with the Jews from the then-liquidated ghetto in Pińczów, were taken to Jędrzejów on October 4, 1942. A number of Busko's Jews managed to escape while crossing the Nida River outside of Pińczów. Upon reaching Jędrzejów, all were loaded on trains destined for Treblinka.¹³

SOURCES The Busko ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); E. Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: LSW, 1983); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 122.

The following archives were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/640 [AJDC], 211/271–272 [JSS], 301/254, 301/5697, and 301/5698 [Relacje]); BA-BL (R 52III/30); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS Busko-Zdrój], reel 17; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC Busko-Zdrój]); and YVA (e.g., M-49/E/254, M-49/E/5698, O-3/3500, O-3/3553).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 17, 211/272 (Busko-Zdrój), p. 11.

2. Ibid., 211/271 (Busko-Zdrój), p. 4; 211/272, p. 13; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/640, p. 42; and AŻIH, 301/5697, testimony of Irena Budzyńska, 1960.

3. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 91; and BA-BL, R 52III/30, pp. 1–3.

4. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 83.

5. AŻIH, 301/254, testimony of Daniel Fischgarten, 1945; and Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności*, p. 185.

6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 6, 1941; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/272, reel 17, p. 11; 211/271, reel 17, pp. 13–14, 26, 58, 76–77. Apart from Pacanów, which had a ratio of 18.9 percent newcomers, the other six towns in the Kreis had from 35.3 up to 51 percent deportees.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/271, pp. 26–28, 32.

8. Ibid., 211/272, pp. 55–56, 64–65.

9. Ibid., 211/272, reel 17, p. 71; and *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 12, 1942.

10. AŻIH, 301/254; Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 147 (table 7).

11. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 146–147; AŻIH, 301/5697; and Waław Bielawski, *Zbrodnie na Polakach dokonane przez hitlerowców za pomoc udzielaną Żydom* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1987), p. 19.

12. AŻIH, 301/5698, testimony of Zofia Peretiankiewicz (Zophia Peretiankiewicz), 1960; 301/5697; and Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 100, 108.

13. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 147 (table 7); YVA, M-49/E/254; Ø-3/3500, testimony of Reisl Lemska, p. 2; M-49/E/5698, testimony of Zophia Peretiankiewicz; and Ø-3/3553, testimony of Yosef Rosenberg, pp. 2–3. AŻIH, 301/254, dates the deportation from Busko in September 1942.

CHĘCINY

Pre-1939: Chęciny, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Chęciny, Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Chęciny, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Chęciny is located 15 kilometers (9 miles) southwest of Kielce. In 1939, Chęciny had 7,459 residents, including 3,120 Jews.

Following the September 1939 invasion, German troops were quartered in Chęciny's Franciscan monastery.¹ By the end of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) charged with organizing Jewish labor had been established with J.W. Rajz as its chairman. The local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) statistics for 1940 indicate 145 Jews laboring in Chęciny and 195 in camps outside the town. On June 24, 1940, 250 Jewish youths were sent to a labor camp in Cieszanów (Distrikt Lublin).²

In February 1940, all Jewish property that had not been registered with the new administration was subjected to confiscation as "ownerless." Subsequently, non-Jewish trustees took over Jewish businesses, and although Jews remained officially the owners, they received only a fraction of any profits. This caused many to sell their stores and turn to black marketeering. In 1940, of 235 businesses in Chęciny, 209 belonged to Jews and 26 to Poles. By 1941, Jewish-owned businesses numbered only 100.



Group portrait of the Chęciny ghetto's Judenrat, ca. 1941–1942. USHMM WS #77501, COURTESY OF YVA

In the spring of 1940, several dozen Jews from Chęciny were murdered in the forest near Zamkowa Góra. By June 1940, the number of local Jews was 2,800, but about 1,000 refugees had arrived in the town. In January 1941, only 630 refugees were reportedly living in Chęciny.

On March 11, 1941, a local branch of the JSS was set up in Chęciny to take over the job of providing welfare from the Judenrat. Chaired by Jakub-Ber Laks, it opened a soup kitchen on May 15, 1941, that served 440 Jews, each receiving one meal every other day.³

The economic situation of the Jews worsened significantly in April 1941, following the establishment of an enclosed ghetto in Kielce. As the JSS put it, Kielce was "the only source of income" for Chęciny's tradesmen. This also coincided with a ban on Chęciny Jews leaving the town due to a typhus epidemic and several weeks of Jewish conscription for forced labor in nearby quarries. About 150 Jews worked in Chęciny in 1941, and the same number worked in nearby labor camps.⁴

Planning for the establishment of a ghetto in Chęciny began in January 1941, as part of an envisaged population exchange of 5,000 Jews from Kielce to Chęciny and 2,500 Poles in the other direction. In May, however, the German authorities reported that its implementation had been delayed due to the typhus epidemic, as there had been further new cases in April.⁵

The order for the establishment of the ghetto was issued on July 5, 1941, and the resettlement had been largely completed by July 22. Key streets entering and exiting the ghetto were blocked by gates that could be opened (*Schlagbäume*), and others were blocked off completely. Signs were also put up around the ghetto warning: "Jewish Residential District—Entrance without a Pass Forbidden." However, the enclosure of the ghetto with a 3-meter-high (9.8-foot-high) wooden fence initially was delayed, due to a shortage of suitable materials. Established within the ghetto were a separate Jewish post office and a 14-man Jewish police force, commanded by Henryk Gotlib and subordinated to the Judenrat and the Gendarmerie.⁶

A letter dated July 17, 1941, from the JSS to the Kraków central office, notes that the establishment of the ghetto had “left over 1,000 Jews on the streets with no roof above their heads and without a warm meal for five days.” It had also affected all local Jews, who sustained themselves by bartering with residents in nearby villages.⁷

The ghetto, measuring just over 7 hectares (17.3 acres), was located in the eastern part of Chęciny and composed of 113 mostly single-story houses. Its borders were Kielce, Łokietek, Plac 2 Czerwca, Radkowska, and Szkolna Streets. The synagogue, inhabited by refugees, was the ghetto’s central point. Most Jews were already living within the ghetto limits, but some had to relocate there, leaving most of their belongings behind. Poles were forced to evacuate the area, and some complained about the loss of barns required for their livestock.

Initially, the ghetto had a total of around 3,600 residents. As the number of reported newcomers actually declined from 630 in January to only 547 in August 1941, it appears that plans to transfer a large number of Jews from Kielce to Chęciny were probably abandoned, following warnings of overcrowding in the Chęciny ghetto and the difficulties faced in expanding its area.⁸

Despite a wooden fence surrounding the ghetto and gates that closed its entrances, its Jews were able to leave at first by obtaining a municipality permit for 5 złoty authorizing travel as far as Kielce. Poles also continued to enter the Chęciny ghetto, despite the signs. There is no information regarding the forces that guarded the entrances, but only Polish and Jewish Police were stationed in Chęciny. The task of the Jewish Police was to enforce German orders. Gotlib reportedly abused fellow Jews with frequency. Following the ghetto’s complete closure in February 1942, the German Gendarmerie—which then reportedly guarded the ghetto externally—shot Jews without warning. There were few fatalities, but several dozen Jews were wounded on attempting to leave the ghetto.

Ghetto residents performed forced labor tasks that included road construction, cleaning, and quarry work near Chęciny. Those who could afford to do so paid the poor to assume their conscript duties. By October 1941, there were only 24 Jewish businesses still operating.⁹

A second typhus epidemic broke out in October 1941. In February 1942, when the overcrowded Kielce hospital denied admission to any more Jews from Chęciny, the German authorities declared the ghetto to be quarantined. On the Kreis doctor’s order, two isolation houses were set up for 150 family members of the 30 sick Jews. The JSS reports indicate that the quarantine hit traders the hardest, who until then had still been able to sneak out of the ghetto for business purposes. In total, there were 62 cases of typhus in 1940–1941 and 78 in 1941–1942.¹⁰

In April 1942, the Judenrat was ordered to select 500 Jews for a labor deportation. Those selected were the poorest. They were sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. Another source reports an additional 105 men being sent to the same camp in June 1942. But the August issue of *Gazeta Żydowska* reported only a total of 500

Chęciny Jews laboring in Skarżysko, in nearby quarries (Miedzianka, Rykoszyn, Siedlce, Sitkówka), and in Chęciny itself.

By September 1942, the number of ghetto inmates exceeded 4,000 due to the arrival of 919 Jews from Łopuszno. Jews living in Korzecko, Piekoszów, and Zajączków were also transferred to Chęciny, at some time in 1942 before September.¹¹

Under the command of Kielce’s Gendarmerie chief, Gerulf Mayer, the Chęciny ghetto was liquidated on September 12, 1942. Chęciny’s Jews were chased out onto the market square, formed into marching columns, and escorted 7 kilometers (4.4 miles) to the Wolica train station. Several dozen were shot along the way. From Wolica they were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

The Germans left behind 40 Jews unfit for travel; all were shot on September 14, 1942, and buried in a nearby field. A separate group of approximately 30 Jews (policemen, Judenrat members, and young laborers) was left in the ghetto to search for valuables and other property, which was collected in the synagogue. A few from this group managed to escape. Kielce Gendarmes then shot the remaining Jews in December 1942. Following the final liquidation of the remnant ghetto, the German authorities auctioned off some of the possessions collected. They had already confiscated the synagogue and three prayer houses at the end of November as “ownerless property.”¹²

SOURCES The ghetto in Chęciny is described in E. Kosik and S. Meducki, “Martyrologia Żydów chęcińskich w latach 1939–1942,” *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (1986): 87–95; and Agnieszka Sabor, *Sztetl: Śladami żydowskich miasteczek: Działoszyce-Pińczów-Chmielnik-Szydłów-Chęciny: Przewodnik* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Austeria, 2005), pp. 152–153.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/294 [AJDC] and 211/296–298 [JSS]); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.031M, reels 2 and 13; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 18); and YVA (M-1/Q/64 and 65).

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NOTES

1. Marian Paulewicz, “Osadnictwo żydowskie w Chęcinach,” *BŻIH*, no. 2 (1975): 25–28; Sabor, *Sztetl*, pp. 152–153; Kosik and Meducki, “Martyrologia Żydów,” pp. 87–88.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/294, pp. 2–3; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18, 211/296, p. 29; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 28, 1942; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale/Keter, 2007), 4:585.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/294, p. 7; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18, 211/296, pp. 1, 8, 15, 20; Kosik and Meducki, “Martyrologia Żydów,” pp. 88–89; *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 8, 1942.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18, 211/296, pp. 12, 16, 29.

5. Ibid., RG-15.031M (IPN, Stadt- und Kreishauptmann Kielce), reel 13, file 129, letters dated January 23 and May 5, 1941.

6. Ibid., correspondence July 5, 22, and 27, 1941.

7. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18, 211/296, pp. 51–55; 211/298, p. 32; Sabor, *Sztetl*, p. 153.

8. USHMM, RG-15.031M, reel 13, file 129, Stadtverwaltung Chęciny to Kreishauptmann, August 8, 1941. This letter warns that at most 500 to 600 Jews (in exchange for 300 Poles) could be accommodated but advises against it.

9. Kosik and Meducki, "Martyrologia Żydów," pp. 90–91; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18; 211/296, pp. 22, 29; and 211/297, pp. 16, 39.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 18, 211/298, pp. 8, 21–22, 32.

11. Kosik and Meducki, "Martyrologia Żydów," pp. 90–92; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 4:586; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 28, 1942.

12. Kosik and Meducki, "Martyrologia Żydów," pp. 94–95; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHW, 1980), p. 43; and USHMM, RG-15.031M, reel 2, file 4a, p. 11.

CHMIELNIK

Pre-1939: Chmielnik, city, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Chmielnik is located about 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of Kielce, on the crossroads between Sandomierz, which lies to the east, and Silesia to the west. On the eve of World War II, there were about 6,000 Jews in the city.

On September 5, 1939, a German military unit entered Chmielnik. Soon a wave of killings began that lasted for three days and took approximately 70 lives.¹ The abuse of Jews, their arrest for forced labor, and widespread plunder characterized the new regime from the start.

During the first week of the occupation, the German commander selected Avraham Langvald and ordered him to set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat). It consisted of 18 Jews in addition to Langvald.²

The Judenrat set up a labor division, led by David Zaltsman and Efrayim Zaltsburg. The Judenrat was obligated to provide the Germans with the requested number of workers, as well as paying their wages. As the work was very hard, and accompanied by denigration and abuse, the Judenrat had difficulty in meeting the required quota of workers each day.

According to the administrative organization of the Generalgouvernement, Chmielnik was in Kreis Busko, within Distrikt Radom. After the occupation of the city, a small unit of the Gendarmerie was stationed there that was subordinated to the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Kielce, Ernst Thomas. Werner Munde was head of the local Gendarmerie. The handful of Gendarmes who served in the city could be bribed easily.³

In the summer of 1940, the Germans transferred about 1,150 Jews from various places, including Glinica and Łódź, to Chmielnik, in addition to many refugees who had been driven out of the western areas of Poland that the Germans had annexed to the Reich. The number of Jews in the city increased to about 7,000.

Hundreds of Jews were sent to work in Pacanów, Busko-Zdrój, and Radawiec (near Lublin); a large group was sent to Biała Podlaska, not far from the Soviet border. Due to reports about the harsh conditions, everyone tried to avoid these work details, and the Judenrat did not succeed in enlisting the required number of laborers. At that time, the second half of 1940, a Jewish police force was established, in part to enlist Jewish workers. Moshe Pasternak was appointed head of the Jewish Police; his deputy was Levi Guntsheroski.⁴

In April 1941, a ghetto was set up in Chmielnik, as in most of the towns in Distrikt Radom, and the Jews had to leave their homes and move in there. The ghetto remained open; however, Jews were forbidden to leave it from the beginning, unless they were laborers reporting for work under the supervision of the Jewish Police. Hundreds of refugees arrived; at the end of 1941, the number of Jews concentrated in the city had reached 8,000. The overcrowding was severe, and living conditions continued to deteriorate.

Since most of the refugees arrived lacking all material possessions, the Judenrat, now led by Shmuel Zaltsman, organized an aid council for the refugees. The organization known as Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), which was based in Kraków, transferred funds to the Chmielnik Jewish Council, and a public kitchen was opened in the city to provide food to the hungry on a daily basis. The council also took care of an orphanage in which there were 300 children.

Because of the overcrowding and poverty caused by the relocation into the ghetto, a typhus epidemic broke out, and over 100 Jews died within a few months. With the help of the organization known as the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland, or Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce (TOZ), the Judenrat opened a hospital and a sanatorium with 400 beds, employing doctors and nurses who also cared for Jews living in the vicinity. The sustenance of the city's Jews was based primarily on trade with the surrounding villages; as time went on, many Jews left the ghetto to sell personal and household items in exchange for food.⁵

In the summer of 1941, workshops were opened in the ghetto for tailors, carpenters, cobblers, upholsterers, and leather workers. The authorities encouraged the Judenrat to open small businesses whose products could aid the Reich's war effort, and the Judenrat convinced the Jews that it was better to work in factories in the city than to be sent to work outside.

At the end of August 1942, news came to Chmielnik about the liquidation of the Jewish community in Kielce; in addition, rumors spread about the extermination camps in the Lublin region and the deportation of the Jews of Warsaw to the Treblinka death camp. In September, when reliable reports replaced the rumors, many Jews began seeking hiding places with Poles in the surrounding area, and hundreds of Jews left the city.⁶

On October 1, 1942, 1,200 women and young men were sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna, and 40 Jews were sent to the HASAG Granat camp in Kielce. On October 3, 1,270 Jews who had been deported from the surrounding settlements were transferred to

Chmielnik, and it seemed that the deportation of the Jews of Chmielnik was imminent.⁷

The main deportation of Jews from Chmielnik began on October 5, 1942, when units of SS arrived in the city with an auxiliary force of Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Latvians, commanded by Hans Gaier, head of the Schupo in Kielce. The units that arrived in the city to conduct the deportation Aktion were part of Sonderkommando Feucht, which was established in June 1942 in Radom with the task of carrying out the liquidation of the Jews in Distrikt Radom. The next day, October 6, around 5:00 A.M., gunshots were heard, and Germans armed with rifles and clubs, and accompanied by dogs, swarmed through the streets of the city. With the help of the Jewish Police, the Jews were summoned to present themselves at the livestock market (*Targowica*), located about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the city, near the forest on the road to Szydłów, by 8:00 A.M. The Germans threatened to shoot anyone who delayed, hid, or disobeyed the order, and masses of Jews began leaving their houses for the streets. At the same time, the Germans began carrying out searches in the Jewish houses and shooting the elderly, the sick, and anyone who was found hiding.⁸

At precisely 8:00 A.M., the thousands of Jews who had gathered at the assembly point were ordered to arrange themselves in straight lines. Parents with small children were forced to carry their children in their arms. The Germans walked around with baskets in their hands and ordered the Jews to hand over whatever money, gold, and jewelry they had in their possession. The plundering continued for several hours. There were Jews who were forced to strip so their bodies could be searched. Many were shot, and a number of women who could not bear the situation took their own lives. At 2:00 P.M., the Germans began carrying out a selection, and the head of the Gendarmerie in Chmielnik passed among the Jews with a list of craftsmen. Masses of people threw themselves at him at once to request their inclusion on the list, and because of the chaos that had broken out, the Germans began beating the Jews to restore order. The commander of the Gendarmerie in Chmielnik decided that craftsmen with children and families would not be allowed to remain. Out of thousands of Jews, the Germans selected 72 men and women and instructed them to stand to one side.⁹

From the afternoon to the small hours of the morning, groups of between 1,500 and 2,000 Jews were brought on foot from the assembly point in Chmielnik to the town of Chęciny, about 45 kilometers (28 miles) away, accompanied by guards from the evacuation force. During the course of the day, the Germans and their auxiliaries murdered about 500 Jews, among them Shmuel Zaltsman, head of the Judenrat. There were also some people who collapsed on the way to Chęciny—those who could not keep up with the required pace were shot. Hundreds of corpses were left strewn by the roadside. Those who arrived in Chęciny were brought to a halt near the train station, and when the train arrived, the Germans squeezed between 120 and 130 people into each car and sent them to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹⁰

The local Gendarmerie moved the 72 Jews who had been left in the livestock market back to Chmielnik. They were brought to the former Jewish community building and confined there under guard for the whole night. On the next day, October 7, the women in the group were sent to clean the offices of the Gendarmerie, and the men were sent into the ghetto area and to the livestock market to gather the dead and bury them in the Jewish cemetery in Chmielnik. Not long afterwards several hundred of the Jews of the town who had hidden outside the city before and during the deportation returned to Chmielnik. Despite their fear that they would all be shot, the Germans managed to gather all of them in Pasternak's house on Furmańska Street, where the Jewish Police had previously been located. There, a sort of small ghetto was formed in which there were close to 700 Jews. A communal kitchen was opened, and Leon Koralnik was appointed head of the Judenrat. Scores of Jews went daily to work in places far from the city. They were primarily employed digging ditches and carrying loads. They returned broken and demoralized in the evenings. Those who remained in the ghetto worked emptying the remaining contents of the Jewish houses. Some of them managed to sell various objects to the peasants who came from the surrounding area.¹¹

A month later, on November 5, 1942, a second deportation Aktion was carried out. With the exception of 75 Jews whom the Germans left in the city, hundreds of Jews were put on wagons hitched to horses; the caravan traveled to Stopnica, about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) from Chmielnik. They were supposed to then be transported to Treblinka. Many Jews escaped on the way to Stopnica. About 200 returned to Chmielnik, and others found refuge with Poles or in the forests. Some of the Jews who remained in the city were sent to forced labor in the HASAG Granat camp in Kielce. At the beginning of December 1942, the last Jews were deported from Chmielnik to Sandomierz. The few Jews who remained in Chmielnik after the third deportation lived together and worked performing various services in the local station of the Gendarmerie.¹²

Among the hundreds of Jews in Chmielnik who sought refuge with Poles living in the surrounding towns and villages, many fell into traps that the Poles laid for them. Some were handed over to the Germans, and others went from one Pole to another, trying to convince someone to hide them. Despite the danger that threatened the lives of those who gave food or refuge to Jews, there were a number of acts of rescue in the vicinity of Chmielnik that saved the lives of scores of Jews. One particularly notable act of rescue was performed by Stanisław Kaszuba, his wife, and their children Ryszard, Stefan, and Daniela. In the course of eight months—until the liberation of the city in January 1945—they hid eight Jews from the Shor and Kozlovski families in their house.¹³

SOURCES Information specifically on the Chmielnik ghetto and the destruction of the Jews of Chmielnik can be found in the following three publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7 *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999); Suzan E. Hagstrom, *Sara's*

Children: The Destruction of Chmielnik (Spotsylvania, VA: Sergeant Kirkland's Press, 2001); and Adam Neuman-Nowicki, *Struggle for Life during the Nazi Occupation of Poland*, trans. Sharon Stambovsky Strosberg (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998). There is also the important published source: Ephraim Shedletski, ed., *Pinkes Khmyelnik: Yizker-bukh nokh der borev-gevorener Yidisher kehile* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Hmyelnik be-Yisrael, 1960).

The following primary sources from the Yad Vashem Archives (YVA) were used in preparing this entry—TR-17/83; M-1/E/2364; M-1/Q/69; M-1/E/902/763; as well as file A.520 from the Moreshet Archives (MA), Giv'at Haviva.

Sara Bender
trans. Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. Menashe Montzash, "In di yorn fun der Hitler okupatsye," p. 727; Yehoshuah Shteinfeld, p. 741—both in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*. Also see YVA, TR-17/83, p. 31.
2. Montzash, in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*, p. 728.
3. Israel Feingold, p. 706; Montzash, p. 731—both in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelik*. Also see Hagstrom, *Sara's Children*, p. 58.
4. Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*, p. 730.
5. Neuman-Nowicki, *Struggle for Life*, pp. 34–35.
6. Mapeh, in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*, p. 715; MA, A.272, testimony of Tovah Mali, p. 2.
7. YVA, M-1/E/2364, Kleinhendler testimony, p. 2. Also see "Kach Nikhrevah Ayarati," p. 698; Ya'akov Lemberg, "Fun aktsyeh tsu aktsyeh," p. 751—both in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*.
8. Artur Kleinhendler, "Di 72 nokh der aktsyeh," p. 747; Shteinfeld, p. 745; Mapeh, p. 715—all in Shedletski, *Pinkes Khmyelnik*.
9. Shteinfeld, p. 746; Kleinhendler, p. 748—both in *ibid.*
10. Shteinfeld, p. 746; Lemberg, p. 752; Kleinhendler, p. 749; "Kach Nikhrevah Ayarati," p. 700—all in *ibid.*
11. "Kach Nikhrevah Ayarati," p. 702; Rivkeh Sametband-Mal, "In kamf farn lebn," p. 762; Feingold, p. 710; Mapeh, p. 716; Lemberg, p. 745—all in *ibid.*
12. Z. Lederman, "Pruvn fun vidershtand," in *ibid.*, p. 743.
13. Klaynhert, pp. 813–818; Alteh Shor, "In gerangl farn lebn fun mayn mishpokhe," pp. 824–827—both in *ibid.* Also see YVA, M-31/5826.

CIEPIELÓW

Pre-1939: Ciepielów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ciepielow, Kreis Ilza (later Kreis Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ciepielów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Ciepielów is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) southeast of Radom. When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Ciepielów had 450 Jewish residents (85 families).¹

In mid-September, a number of Jews from Lipsk and Zwoleń, whose houses had been burned down during the in-

vasion, settled in Ciepielów; they were followed by deportees from the city of Łódź. By April 1940, there were 580 Jews in Ciepielów, 130 of them newcomers. Despite the influx of new arrivals during the first years of the occupation, Ciepielów's Jews continued to live under tolerable conditions without excessive persecution by the German authorities.²

The Germans set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to implement their new laws and instructions. The members of the Judenrat included: Lejzor Zylbiergiel (chairman), Fiszel Bluma, M. Korman, Icek Cukier, and Moszek Kirszenbaum. The latter was also a chairman of the town's short-lived self-help committee. Its closure in April 1940 was purportedly connected to allegations against Kirszenblum of pocketing profits made by selling goods intended for distribution among the poor free of charge. Complaints reached the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw and Radom's Judenrat, resulting in an inspection. Afterwards, the Judenrat's social section was again in charge of Jewish welfare in Ciepielów.³

From the onset of the occupation, Ciepielów's Jews were conscripted for forced labor. In April 1940, approximately 160 men (aged 12 to 60) were alternately conscripted three days a week for a full day of unpaid work. This action quickly drained the community's savings, as the men were barely able to feed themselves.

Until June 1940, the Judenrat provided the Łódź deportees with limited financial support, until it was unable to continue doing so. It then assigned them instead to local families that were still well situated and were able to provide them with sustenance. These deportees were housed in private apartments, one room per family. The Judenrat also endeavored to find work for them. In January 1941, those employed received 3.20 złoty per day.

Apart from the deportees, the Judenrat also took care of Jewish refugees, as approximately 20 people were reported as passing through Ciepielów on any particular day. The Judenrat directed those in need to wealthier families for soup or other limited assistance. With Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) support, two separate apartments for male and female refugees were provided.

At the beginning of 1941, the number of Jews in Ciepielów declined slightly to 531; however, none of them had been sent to labor camps or to work assignments outside the Kreis. The Judenrat assessed 397 women, children, and elderly as unable to work. Only 25 Jews—mostly cobblers and tailors—were still permitted to keep their workshops open, employing a total of 37 Jews.

In fear of an epidemic, the German authorities ordered the community to construct a delousing facility that the poor could use free of charge. Most of Ciepielów's Jews were also vaccinated for typhoid and dysentery. Yet despite the precautions, cases of illnesses emerged in 1941. A local doctor treated the town's Jews, charging the Judenrat half price for his services.⁴

A JSS was established to assume from the Judenrat the provision of aid to poor Jews. The Starachowice Kreis committee set up its branch in Ciepielów on June 7, 1941, with Icek Goldbard as the chairman, Berek Sendkowicz as his deputy, and

Mechel Cukier as the committee's third member. They opened a soup kitchen in November 1941.⁵

On the orders of Kreishauptmann Zettelmeyer, an open ghetto was established in Ciepeliów on December 6, 1941.⁶ Ghetto residents were permitted to leave it for work and to obtain food in the daylight hours.⁷ By February 1942, 531 Jews inhabited the ghetto.

The ghetto in Ciepeliów was liquidated on October 24, 1942.⁸ SS officers ordered all of Ciepeliów's Jews to gather in the market square, where approximately 50 men and women were selected and sent to the Dęblin-Stawa labor camp. The remaining 550 to 600 Jews were sent to the ghetto in the village of Tarłów, where thousands of Jews from nearby towns were being assembled.⁹

The Tarłów ghetto was liquidated on October 29, 1942: all its inhabitants were taken on carts to the Jasice train station and from there to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹⁰

A punitive expedition composed of approximately 30 German soldiers commanded by Birner arrived in Ciepeliów following the ghetto's liquidation. It took up quarters in the Ciepeliów Stary manor (known as Ciepeliów Górka) and conducted roundups of partisans and ghetto escapees. On December 6, 1942, this expedition murdered 21 Poles and two Jews in Ciepeliów Stary. The families of Kosior, Kowalski, and Obuchowicz (Obuchiewicz) were burned alive in their houses for helping escaped Jews. The names of the two murdered Jews are unknown. All the victims were buried in the same grave, in a field near the razed houses. That same day, the expedition burned another 10 Poles in neighboring Rękówka. Relatives and coincidental visitors of the Kosiors in Ciepeliów Stary were also burned to death for helping Jews. This did not deter Stanisława Lewandowska, a neighbor of the Kowalski and Obuchowicz families, from protecting Dawid Semkowicz, who later migrated to Israel.

Following the executions, the Germans warned that the death penalty for helping Jews will apply not only to a family hiding them but also to the village elder. In the course of the December 1942 and January 1943 roundups, more Jews—and the Poles suspected of sheltering them—were captured. The Germans brought the victims to their quarters in Ciepeliów Górka to torture, execute, and bury them on the estate's grounds. They also murdered all Roma hiding in the vicinity, including a Polish man named Kupczyk who had given them shelter. In retaliation, Polish partisans killed some German Gendarmes and a local ethnic German, Antoni Potrząsaj, who had betrayed some Jews in hiding.¹¹

SOURCES The Ciepeliów ghetto is mentioned briefly in Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979), p. 138.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AOKBZH w Kielcach, Sygn, Ds 85/69; AŻIH (210/303

[AJDC], 211/276 [ŻSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 17; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Adam Pekalla, "Zespół synagogałny w Ciepeliowie," *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (1988): 115–120; Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach: FPHU, "XYZ," 2007), pp. 31–32; Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 161 (table 12), 180–181; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

2. Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 418; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 17; and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC). Kirszenbaum was presumably excluded from the Judenrat, as his name does not appear in later documents.

4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 17; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).

5. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 108; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 17.

6. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 85; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 116, 150; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 261; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 138.

7. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 418.

8. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 161–162 (table 12), 180–181.

9. Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 261; and Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 138. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 418, mention the "Demblin-Stawa" labor camp, which presumably was located in or around the nearby town of Dęblin.

10. Eugeniusz Fafara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 136–137; Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 161–162 (table 12), 180–181.

11. The sources differ as to the type of forces (Schupo, SS, or Gendarmerie—it was probably the 1st Motorized Gendarmerie Bataillon) and the number murdered on December 6, 1942 (33 to 35): Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewinówna, eds., *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej: Polacy z pomocą Żydom, 1939–1945* (Kraków: Znak, 1969), pp. 862–865; Wacław Zajączkowski, *Martyrs of Charity* (Washington, DC: St. Maximilian Kolbe Foundation, 1987), entries 107–110, and 418, pp. 138–139, and 213; A. Jankowski, L. Kaczanowski, and S. Meducki, "Terror hitlerowski na wsi kieleckiej: Wybór dokumentów źródłowych z AOKBZH w Kielcach," *Rocznik Świętokrzyski* 15 (1988): 73–75; A. Jankowski, "Pacyfikacje i terror na wsi na Kielecczyźnie 1939–1945," *Rocznik Świętokrzyski* (1988): 24; Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo radomskie* (Warsaw, 1980), pp. 34–36, 156; and Barbara Stanisławczyk, *Czterdzieści twardych* (Warsaw: ABC, 1997), pp. 233–234.

ĆMIELÓW

Pre-1939: Ćmielów (Chmielów), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Chmielow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ćmielów województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Ćmielów is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) southwest of Lublin and northeast of the town of Opatów. In the fall of 1939, on the outbreak of World War II, about 500 to 600 Jews were living in Ćmielów.

Beginning in September 1939, the German occupation imposed the same restrictions on Ćmielów's Jews as in other parts of Distrikt Radom. The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was forced to pay monetary "contributions" to the Germans, and the community was brought to the brink of its economic existence. The situation worsened when refugees from other towns started to arrive in Ćmielów in December 1939. On May 1, 1940, the Ćmielów Jewish Council reported to the office of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw that about 1,000 Jews were living in the town, among them a group of 128 Jews from Konin, Golin, and Warta. These Jews were assigned to live with local families, and this resulted in

considerable overcrowding, with entire families having to live in one room. None of the Jews had a chance to make a living, and the situation was especially grim for the refugees, who had arrived hungry and without a penny in their pockets. German authorities had requested that public baths be built, and the Jewish community had no funds to pay the estimated 4,500 złoty needed for this construction. The Jewish community also had to provide bed linen, towels, and other textiles for the opening of a hospital for infectious diseases. These expenses were a severe burden on the community.¹

At that time, Abraham Gutman was the chairman of the Jewish Council, and Icek Brykam was his deputy. Other members of the Judenrat were Izrael Malcman, Lejmus Frydental, Jankiel Frydman, Icek Erlichzon, Szmul Kohn, and Chil Goldman. H. Wajgenszperg, who inspected the Ćmielów Jewish community in June 1940, reported that the chairman Gutman was not well liked within the community and that the other members of the council did not trust him.² Even without these problems, the Jewish community faced harsh conditions: 268 people aged between 16 and 60 had to report for forced labor, and each day about 130 were actually sent out to work. Their tasks involved mainly cleaning the streets and public areas of Ćmielów, road construction, work in the porcelain factory, and hard labor in a quarry.³ For the work in the quarry, which took place from the summer of 1940 to the summer of 1942 and was part of the "Otto" program, dedicated to improving the roads and railway traffic, the Jews were paid 20 złoty per week and a few kilograms of bread.⁴ According to research by Robert Seidel, in February 1941, a labor camp was established to employ Jews in building dikes under the supervision of the Water Regulation Administration (Wasserwirtschaftsverwaltung) of Distrikt Radom. The camp in Ćmielów was the second of its kind in the Distrikt,⁵ but it is not clear whether local Jews also were exploited in this camp.

Especially harsh was the situation of the deportees who had arrived in Ćmielów from other towns. In July 1940, they sent a report stating that they had not received any help from the local Jews except for housing and that they had to substitute for the Ćmielów Jews who were assigned to forced labor. They accused Gutman of withholding money and deliveries of food sent for their support. According to their statement, they had refused to go to work unless they were paid by the Jewish Council and were eventually paid for a few days, but the payment was soon discontinued.⁶

No doubt the situation of the Jewish community was critical, and food deliveries did not ease the situation very much. Organizations like the AJDC and Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) tried to help by sending money for the soup kitchen and food. For instance, in July 1940, the Jewish Council received 52 kilograms (115 pounds) of grits, 9 kilograms (20 pounds) of sugar, 46 kilograms (101 pounds) of flour, 6 kilograms (13 pounds) of lard, and 13 cans of condensed milk from the AJDC's Kreis Radom Inspectorate.⁷ Still, the impoverishment of the Jews increased rapidly. In February 1941, the Ćmielów soup kitchen had to provide food for 106 people,



A Jewish youth, Toivia Grunbaum (Teddy Greenbaum), peers out the window of a soup kitchen in Ćmielów, 1941. The small, faded sign in Polish above Toivia's head reads, "Kitchen."

USHMM WS #78932, COURTESY OF TEDDY GREENBAUM

most of them refugees. In March it provided meals for 171 refugees.⁸ Especially grim was the situation of a group of Jewish deportees from Vienna. Although the Viennese Jewish Community tried to send money and food for their support, the German authorities did not permit its transmission.⁹ The survival of the refugees depended completely on the Ćmielów Jews, whose funds were exhausted.¹⁰ To supplement meager food supplies, some Jewish youths would remove their Jewish Stars and sneak out into the fields to steal vegetables.¹¹

A ghetto was erected in Ćmielów on June 1, 1942, following an order issued in mid-May by Nazi Kreishauptmann Ritter.¹² The Ćmielów ghetto was enclosed, and about 900 to 1,500 people had to live there under very overcrowded conditions. A typhus epidemic broke out and claimed many lives. The Ćmielów ghetto was liquidated in the second half of October 1942.¹³ In the months prior to its liquidation, or possibly at the time of the deportation Aktion, a number of male and female Jewish youths were selected for labor, with some being sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) forced labor camp at Skarżysko Kamienna. A few of the small number of survivors from the Ćmielów ghetto passed through this camp.¹⁴

According to one source, 24 people were killed during the liquidation Aktion and were buried at the Jewish cemetery. The remaining Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp by train, and the ghetto itself was destroyed.

Afterwards, in January 1943, a camp was set up in Ćmielów, which served as a remnant ghetto for Jews who had escaped the liquidation Aktion in October and were caught or who had tried to survive in hiding. It is not known when this camp was dissolved and what happened to its inmates.¹⁵

SOURCES The most important sources on the Jewish community and the ghetto in Ćmielów include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 420–421; Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006); and Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007). The Ćmielów ghetto is listed in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 149.

Archival sources on the fate of the Jews of Ćmielów during the Holocaust include the following: USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/312; and RG-10.369 and 376); and VHF (e.g., # 7759, 19286, and 44455).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, letter of Jewish Council to AJDC, May 1, 1940; and VHF, # 19286, testimony of Esther Tabatchnik, a Jewish refugee from Konin, who arrived in Ćmielów in December 1939.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, report of inspection of the Jewish Council in Ćmielów by the secretary of the Jewish Council in Ostrów, June 11, 1940.

3. Ibid.; and VHF, # 7759, testimony of Teddy Greenbaum.

4. Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 154.

5. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 206, based on Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1988), pp. 37–38.

6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC), 210/312, report of deportees from Konin and Golin, July 23, 1940.

7. Ibid., AJDC, Distrikt Radom Inspectorate, to Jewish Council in Ćmielów, July 12, 1940.

8. Ibid., activity report, February and March 1941.

9. Ibid., AJDC to Komitee der Wiener Juden in Ćmielów, June 18, 1941, and Dr. Josef Israel Löwenherz, Amts-Direktion der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde in Wien, to JSS in Ćmielów, August 26, 1941.

10. Ibid., JSS Ćmielów to AJDC Kraków, September 3, 1941.

11. VHF, # 19286.

12. According to Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 420–421. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 149, date the ghetto's establishment in early 1942.

13. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 149, give the date of October 16; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 420–421, the end of October 1942.

14. VHF, # 44455, testimony of Arie Greenbaum; and # 19286.

15. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 420–421.

CZĘSTOCHOWA

Pre-1939: Częstochowa (Yiddish: Tshenstokhov), city, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1940–1944: Tschenstochau, Kreisfreie Stadt, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Częstochowa, województwo śląskie, Poland

Częstochowa is located about 200 kilometers (124 miles) southwest of Warsaw. In 1939, there were 28,486 Jews living in Częstochowa out of a total population of 130,000.¹

German motorized units entered Częstochowa on September 3, 1939. On the next day, later referred to as “Bloody Monday,” a three-day assault was unleashed on the Jewish population. The attacks were marked by the murder of 300 Jews and widespread looting. Jewish economic life was paralyzed, and the community's cultural, social, and political life was totally disrupted. A series of repressive measures were put in place, including an 8:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M. curfew, kidnapping for forced labor, seizure of personal and business property, collective fines (“contributions”), evictions from the better apartments, and compulsory wearing of the Jewish badges (“the marks of shame”).²

On September 19, 1939, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a 15-member Judenrat, headed by Leon Kopinski. As it sought to cope with German demands, the Judenrat constantly expanded. By December 1940, it had 21 departments with a staff of senior and junior officials that to-



View of Kozia Street, situated in the center of the former "small ghetto" at Czestochowa, ca. 1944.
USHMM WS #08791, COURTESY OF BIBLIOTEKA PUBLICZNA W CZĘSTOCHOWIE

taled 676 people. The Judenrat's enforcement of German decrees—confiscation of Jewish possessions, recruitment for forced labor, arbitrary investigations and arrests, and transfers to labor camps—led to a thoroughly negative attitude toward it on the part of the Jewish population.³

Alongside the Judenrat, a Jewish police force was established, originally tasked as "Inspectors of Street Traffic." The policemen worked without pay. They guarded the Judenrat offices and warehouses, maintained order in the streets, and enforced the evening curfew. They initially numbered 50 men, but by December 1940 their number had increased to 80. Later an enlarged and tougher police force was created. Armed with rubber truncheons to enforce German orders, the Jewish Police fulfilled their duties with coercion, house searches, arrests, and beatings. They received a salary for their efforts and were said to include only the most unscrupulous people.

In August 1940, about 1,000 men aged 18 to 25 were sent to a forced labor camp in Cieszanów, Distrikt Lublin, where conditions were very harsh. Many others were sent subsequently to the camps run by Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG), the privately owned armaments manufacturer that operated in Czestochowa and elsewhere.⁴

Ghettoization in Czestochowa proceeded in stages. As soon as the Germans entered the city, they evicted Jews from the better and more comfortable residences and forced them to move together into a Jewish quarter. Jews were still permitted to do business with non-Jews, move about the city, and use the trains. The conversion of the Jewish quarter into a ghetto took place in April 1941. An order issued by Stadthauptmann SS-Brigadeführer Richard Wendler, established a ghetto on April 9, 1941, in the eastern, older part of the city. The ghetto consisted of 28 streets. All Poles were required to move out of the designated area by April 17; like the Jews who moved in, they were permitted to take with them only up to 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of luggage per person. The Jewish Council had to assign living space to the Jews moving into the ghetto.

By April 23 the resettlement was completed, and the ghetto was clearly delineated. Jews were now forbidden to leave the ghetto's confines without an official pass. Initially the penalty for disobeying this order was a fine of 10,000 złoty or imprisonment.⁵ Subsequently the death penalty was applied to those caught outside the ghetto illegally.

Business ties with the Polish population were forbidden. The Jews were completely isolated from all commercial, social, political, and cultural life. The numerous demands for forced contributions and repeated confiscations left them impoverished. Conditions of cold and hunger led to the spread of epidemic diseases.⁶

The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence, and certain designated streets still connected with the surrounding non-Jewish sectors of the city. The "Aryan" population was permitted to pass through these ghetto streets, but interaction with the Jews was illegal. Within the ghetto precincts, small shops and street vendors offered a limited supply of goods—clothing, buttons, a few food products, sweets, tea, and soap. Polish passersby would purchase small items, always on the lookout for policemen who would chase them off and, sometimes, seize the merchandise. Jewish individuals with specific skills—for example, fine tailors and shoemakers—were given monthly passes that allowed them to work on the Aryan side. Some



Metal badge of a Jewish policeman in the Czestochowa ghetto, 1942. In German and Polish, the abbreviation in the center of the badge reads, "Council of Elders, Czestochowa."

USHMM WS #08796, COURTESY OF BIBLIOTEKA PUBLICZNA W CZĘSTOCHOWIE

Jewish entrepreneurs formed silent partnerships with non-Jewish colleagues to continue their businesses outside the ghetto.⁷ Male Jews in the city were registered for forced labor by the Judenrat. The daily average of those taken rose steadily from 2,624 in 1940 to 7,597 in 1942. The Jewish Police escorted the forced laborers to and from various work sites outside the ghetto each day, especially the armaments factories on Krótka Street.⁸ The Judenrat also operated a workshop for carpenters to fill German orders.

The first ghetto, which subsequently came to be known as the "Large Ghetto," existed up until the mass expulsions that took place between September 22 and October 8, 1942. During the course of its existence, about 20,000 Jews from other cities (e.g., Łódź, Płock, and Kraków) and towns (e.g., Łęczycza) were sent to the Częstochowa ghetto, which eventually held over 48,000 people. The refugees arrived with few if any personal belongings and in a state of exhaustion. They were housed in mass lodgings with no facilities for washing or cooking and were the first victims of typhus and other diseases. Hunger and hardship forced everyone onto the street to sell their remaining possessions for a bit of food. Life was a constant battle against starvation and cold, a struggle to survive until the longed-for defeat of the foe.⁹

One of the distinctive institutions of the ghetto was the Workers' Council, a spontaneous movement of forced laborers. More well-to-do ghetto inhabitants avoided forced labor by paying the Judenrat a bribe, leaving the poorer strata to suffer the hardship of working as forced laborers. On May 12, 1940, the leaders of the Workers' Council occupied the offices of the Judenrat and demanded relief from their burdens and suffering. The Judenrat partly acceded to their demands for a public kitchen and the distribution of bread. The Workers' Council also instituted political, cultural, and professional activity through the establishment of a sickness fund, public kitchens, a mutual-aid society, a disabled workers fund, children's homes, schools, evening courses, drama groups, and choirs. They also published *Rasta*, an illegal newspaper that was hostile to the Judenrat.¹⁰

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews were required to surrender all fur coats to the Germans for the benefit of the German army. Many Jews died of disease, hunger, and cold in this harsh winter. In May 1942, anticipating the mass deportations to come, the Germans seized and killed prominent Jewish cultural, social, and political activists.

The large-scale deportation Aktions from Częstochowa began on September 21–22, 1942. The SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Radom, Dr. Herbert Böttcher, entrusted command of the Aktions to Hauptmann Paul Degenhardt, the commander of the Schupo in Częstochowa. In the night, SS and Ukrainian forces from Trawniki surrounded the ghetto and installed large searchlights. During the ensuing Aktions, these forces were supported by members of the local Schupo, Reservepolizei-kompanie Köln, and more than 200 Polish (Blue) Police. In the morning of September 22, the Jews were forced out of their dwellings for a selection. About 7,000 were marched to the

railway ramp at Zawodzie and were taken to the Treblinka extermination camp. About 200 were shot during the roundup and another 300 selected for forced labor. The next Aktions took place on September 25–26 and September 29–30. The Jews assembled voluntarily, having received assurances that they would be going to the work camps, where the first group was happily settled. Another deportation on October 4 swept up almost all the members and families of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police. The last transport, on October 7, stopped in the small town of Koniecpol, where another 1,500 Jews were added to the train. Altogether between 33,000 and 40,000 Jews from Częstochowa were sent to Treblinka, and up to 2,000 were killed in the city during the roundups.¹¹ Several Jews from Częstochowa were retained as workers in Treblinka and subsequently participated in the Treblinka uprising.

After the deportations, the northeastern remnant of the ghetto, called the "Small Ghetto," held about 5,000 able-bodied Jews. The Small Ghetto was located along Nadrzeczna, Kozia, Mostowa, Spadek, and Garncarska Streets. It was surrounded by barbed wire and had only one gate. Some of the workers sorted out the remaining Jewish property. Others worked in the HASAG factories and workshops. Those selected to remain as laborers were soon joined by many others, who came out of hiding in the days following the deportations. The Germans even permitted the Judenrat to operate a day-care center for 120 children, to further reassure the Jews and lure more from hiding.

The first selection in the Small Ghetto took place on January 4, 1943. Some 350 women and children were deported to Treblinka, and 200 others were executed on Kawia Street. In March 1943, another 130 were shot in the Jewish cemetery. On June 25, 1943, a group was sent to labor camps. The final selection took place in July with the execution of the last chair of the Judenrat and others deemed unfit for work.¹²

During the time that the Small Ghetto existed, some of the young activists from the Workers' Council banded together to form a Jewish Fighting Organization (JFO, using the same name as the resistance unit in Warsaw). Former party and ideological differences were set aside. It consisted of around 300 members in five cells and was commanded by Moshe Zylberg. During its existence the JFO carried out a significant number of armed actions. In the days of the liquidation of the Small Ghetto, some members of the Jewish underground escaped to the forests, and others died offering armed resistance against the Germans.¹³

The total number of Jews in the Częstochowa Large Ghetto, Small Ghetto, and the various forced labor camps has been estimated at around 58,000. Some 50,000 were killed, and more than 5,000 were liberated by the Allied armies. Of these, however, probably only around 1,500 were originally from Częstochowa itself.

In 1949, Dr. Herbert Böttcher was sentenced to death and executed by the Polish authorities. Paul Degenhardt was tried by a West German court in Lüneburg in 1966 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jewish community in Częstochowa during World War II include the following: M. Schutzman, ed., *Sefer Tshenstokhov*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora, 1967–1968); Raphael Mahler, ed., *Tshenstokhov Yidn* (New York: United Czechochower Relief Committee and Ladies Auxiliary, 1947); S.D. Singer, ed., *Tshenstokhov; nayer tsugob-material tsum bukh “Tshenstokhov yidn”* (New York: United Relief Committee in New York, 1958); Shelomoh Vaga, ed., *Hurbn Tshenstokhov* (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentina, 1949); Harry Klein, *Czenstochov, Our Legacy* (Montreal, 1993); W.M. Glicksman, “Daily Record Sheet of the Jewish Police (District I) in the Częstochowa Ghetto (1941–1942),” *Yad Vashem Studies* 6 (1967): 331–358; L. Brener, “Ruch podziemny w częstochowskim getcie,” *BŻIH*, nos. 45–46 (1963): 159–163; F.J. Pietrzykowski, *Hitlerowcy w Częstochowie w latach 1939–1945* (Poznań, 1959); “Czechochowa,” in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 422–461; “Czechochowa,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), 5:1212–1214; and “Czechochowa,” in Israel Gutman, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 336. Relevant Web sites consulted include the following: HolocaustResearchProject.org and jewishgen.org.

Documentation concerning the fate of the Jews in Częstochowa during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AAN; AŻIH (e.g., collections 301 and 211); BA-L (e.g., B 162/5074, 6920, 14205); IPN (ASG); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.153; RG-15.061M [Jewish Council in Częstochowa]; Acc.2008.258.1); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/8412).

Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. Mahler, *Tshenstokhov Yidn*, pp. x–xi, 9, 16.
2. Singer, *Tshenstokhov*, p. 39.
3. Ibid., pp. 39–40.
4. Ibid., p. 40; and HolocaustResearchProject.org.
5. USHMM, RG-15.061M (Records of the Jewish Council in Częstochowa), 213/16.
6. Singer, *Tshenstokhov*, p. 40.
7. Vaga, *Hurbn Tshenstokhov*, pp. 107, 114 (cited from the translation at jewishgen.org).
8. USHMM, RG-15.061M, 213/15.
9. Singer, *Tshenstokhov*, p. 42.
10. Ibid., p. 43. See also Yoram Lubling, *Twice-Dead: Moshe Y. Lubling, the Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 80.
11. BA-L, B 162/5074, p. 282; Pietrzykowski, *Hitlerowcy w Częstochowie*, p. 186.
12. HolocaustResearchProject.org.
13. Singer, *Tshenstokhov*, p. 44.

DENKÓW

Pre-1939: Denków, village, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski powiat, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Denkow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Denków, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Denków is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) southwest of Lublin. In 1939, the Jewish population was 386.¹

The German army occupied Denków in September 1939. Soon after their arrival the German military authorities demanded extortionate “contributions” from the Jewish community. On October 26, 1939, the Germans established the Generalgouvernement, and authority was handed over to a civil administration. Denków was located in Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom. The Kreishauptmann in Opatów was Dr. Heinz Ritter. On January 18, 1940, the German authorities ordered Jews in the region to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David on their right arm. Failure to comply was threatened with the death penalty.²

From 1939 to 1941, the German authorities in Denków implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. They seized the Jews’ businesses and possessions and obliged them to register with the authorities. They required them to perform various kinds of heavy physical labor. From December 1940, there was a Jewish self-help committee for Kreis Opatow, which also had a branch in Denków. The self-help committee sought to aid the poor by the provision of food and other assistance.

The detachment of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Ostrowiec organized the anti-Jewish Aktions in Kreis Opatow, including in Denków. The German Gendarmerie and the Polish auxiliary police also participated in these Aktions. From October 1941, Jews were not permitted to leave their residential areas on pain of death. According to a postwar German investigation, in the winter of 1941–1942 the German Order Police in Ostrowiec reported the shooting of two Jews on the meadow near Denków. The bodies were collected by two members of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) from Ostrowiec.³

On May 13, 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter issued an order for the establishment of 17 ghettos in his Kreis, including one in Denków, beginning on June 1.⁴ In July 1941, 503 Jews were living in the village, including about 150 Jewish refugees. These Jews had been resettled into the Generalgouvernement mainly from parts of Poland annexed by Germany or from Vienna.⁵ The Denków ghetto was liquidated on October 13, 1942. German police forces deported most of the remaining 500 or so Jews, together with the Jews of Ostrowiec, to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁶

On the liquidation of the ghetto the German authorities separated from the rest a number of Jews capable of work and sent them to the newly established forced labor camp in nearby Bodzechów. Among those sent to the Bodzechów camp were the brothers Chaim and Moshe Frimel. The two brothers managed to escape on the liquidation of the camp in April 1943 and returned to Denków. Here they were assisted by the family of Jan and Marianna Adamczyk, who hid them in their house at great risk until the Germans were driven from the area in January 1945.⁷

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Denków and its destruction during the German occupation can be

found in: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 143–145. The ghetto in Denków is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 355.

Documents concerning the fate of the Jews of Denków during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: ITS; and YVA (e.g., O-3/3722, O-21/6, 16, 17, and 19).

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NOTES

1. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” BŻIH, nos. 15–16 (1955), table 13.

2. Leybush Milshtein Zeyl, “Di Likvidazie fun Ostrowzer geto,” in M. Sh. Geshuri and Gershon Zilberberg, eds., *Sefer Ostrovtshe: Le-zikaron ule-ed* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Ostrovtshe be-Yisrael, 1971), pp. 277–293, here p. 277.

3. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 592, pp. 722–723.

4. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 85–86; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 152–153.

5. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” table 13. According to Zeyl, “Di Likvidazie fun Ostrowzer geto,” pp. 278–279, in March 1940 a transport of mostly elderly Jews from Vienna arrived in Ostrowiec, and most were distributed to the surrounding villages, probably including Denków. Some of the refugees had arrived earlier from Konin at the end of 1939.

6. P. Matusak, *Ruch Oporu na Ziemi Optatowsko-Sandomierskiej w latach 1939–1945* (Warsaw, 1976), pp. 55, 57.

7. Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 53; the entire Adamczyk family was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations in two separate ceremonies on October 7, 1975, and January 6, 1997. On the Bodzechów camp, see also YVA, O-3/3722.

DRZEWICA

Pre-1939: Drzewica, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Drzewica is located 47 kilometers (29 miles) west-northwest of Radom. By 1939 there were 750 Jews living in Drzewica.¹

Some time after their arrival, the Germans established a seven-man Jewish Council (Judenrat) that included three pre-war community leaders (Hersz Ajzenman, chairman; Dawid Szyszler; and Herszel Cytrynowicz); two Jews from Łódź (including manufacturer Rubin); and bookkeeper Aron Siwak from Płock. Archival sources also name A. Szejer, P. Rozenbaum, and Josef Wald as members.

The German forces stationed in Drzewica departed at the onset of the German-Soviet war in the summer of 1941.

Thereafter, German Gendarmes based in Nowe Miasto supervised the Jews in Drzewica. Gendarmes Hofman, Servin, and Makowski are mentioned by name. Survivor J. Szyszler described Makowski as especially cruel.²

Deportees arrived between October 1940 and March 1941 from Mława (100), Tomaszów Mazowiecki (500), Skierniewice, Grójec, and Płock (200). After their arrival, the Judenrat reported 2,100 Jews in Drzewica, of whom 800 were deportees.

The Judenrat established an affiliated self-help committee, which opened a soup kitchen. It estimated that 450 newcomers were in need of aid. The committee included: A. Rubin, A. Dąb, Aron Wald, H. Cytrynowicz, Abram Szejer, D. Balsam, and M. Łomaniec.

The Płock Jews were in the worst situation, as there was little housing available on their arrival. The majority of them were quartered en masse in the synagogue on bunk beds and straw mattresses.³

The Płock Jews organized their own committee and, in May 1941, accused the local committee and the Judenrat of appropriating help sent for them “for other purposes.” Their two representatives who initially were added to the local committee were not invited to its meetings and so were unable to see how outside help was distributed. Some 130 Płock Jews used the soup kitchen—located in the same room where they slept—on a daily basis.

The Kreis office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Tomaszów reported to the Kraków headquarters that the Płock Jews lived in “completely abnormal conditions, caused by the behavior of the Judenrat and its Self-Help Committee.” Ghetto survivor Celina Widawski recalls that some Płock deportees were covered with lice, hungry, and dying of disease. At the end of September 1941, there were 2,226 Jews in Drzewica. It was in that month that an epidemic broke out; 66 people were sick with typhus and 31 with typhoid.⁴

Secondary sources report that the ghetto was established in the spring of 1941; however, primary sources indicate that it was established in the autumn of 1941. The August 1941 self-help committee report shows 690 złoty were spent “in connection with the ghetto’s establishment.” On October 29, 1941, the *Gazeta Żydowska* reported changes implemented with the “recent” establishment of the ghetto.

The ghetto was located on Berek Joselewicze Street and included a stretch of Piłsudski Street, where the Judenrat offices were now based. A post office was established in the ghetto. A Jewish arbitration court affiliated with the Judenrat functioned to resolve disputes among the inhabitants.

Although the ghetto was never fenced and guarded only by the Jewish Police, the residents were forbidden to leave it as of December 1941. No one in the ghetto had the Germans’ permission to leave, not even members of Jewish institutions. Now and then, the Nowe Miasto Gendarmerie would enter the ghetto unexpectedly and shoot people randomly. There were occasions when the Germans took bribes for the release of those caught outside the ghetto.

Nevertheless, according to Szyszler, the Jews still traveled into the countryside to obtain and smuggle in food. Aron-Aba

Kubart remembers beggars swollen from hunger who, on seeing smoke from a chimney, would knock on the door to ask for leftover water from boiled potatoes. Kubart used to smuggle himself out of the ghetto through the window of his house, which overlooked the Aryan side.

The nine-man Jewish police force commanded by Szmul Moszkowicz included his two brothers and Jankiel Perelmuter. In September 1941, its members were equipped with special hats and batons, for which the community paid 546 złoty. Their wages that month were 812 złoty out of a total monthly budget of 22,000 złoty. In October 1941, 100 Jews from the ghetto worked on the Opoczno-Przysucha road.⁵

Despite the fact that 8 to 10 people shared a room, the Germans regularly reduced the ghetto's parameters. Lajbke Kuczyński, who "strayed three meters [9.8 feet] to the toilet" into an area the Germans had excluded from the ghetto, was shot and wounded. Smuggled back to the ghetto by his Polish friends, Kuczyński later died of his wounds.⁶

In November 1941, an official branch of the JSS was established in Drzewica, with local landowner Josef Zameczkowski as its chairman. Two Judenrat members, the above-noted bookkeeper from Płock, Aron Siwak, and tradesman Josef Wald were also included. In January 1942, Zameczkowski reported to Kraków that some members of the Judenrat, including Wald and Siwak, were pocketing income from the arbitration court, the post office, and the Sanitation Committee. Taxes imposed by the Judenrat on the ghetto inhabitants for the purpose of welfare, as well as the income from the sale of small portions of Jewish rations—again deducted by the Judenrat for the same purpose—were also misused. "The chairman of the Judenrat, a craftsman skilled in making shoe uppers and illiterate, allows this system to operate," wrote Zameczkowski. He also insisted on separating JSS bookkeeping from the Judenrat's, so as "not to allow them to hide the real income under a blanket of expenses for the soup kitchen." At the end of the year, the number of meals supplied by the kitchen had declined to 135, at which point the Judenrat closed down the kitchen. It was reopened by the JSS in January 1942.⁷

By mid-January 1942, 63 people had died of contagious diseases in the ghetto. Although the epidemic was losing force, Zameczkowski reported, "There is hardly any house without a sick person, and the epidemic spreads mostly amongst the Płock deportees, who live in deplorable conditions. On average there are 3 to 4 deaths per day." The only pharmacy was outside the ghetto. A Polish doctor, Malinowski, and an elderly Jewish hospital attendant treated the sick. Some were sent to the Opoczno hospital.

With time the conflict between Zameczkowski, other members of the JSS, and the Judenrat only intensified. In March 1942, Zameczkowski wrote to the Kraków JSS that Ajzenman "threatened me that his son will perforate my lungs with a shoemaker's knife." In July 1942, the Kreis branch of the JSS in Tomaszów Mazowiecki assured Kraków that Zameczkowski was "the only conscientious and solid worker of the Committee" and released Siwak of his duties.⁸

According to Szyszler, in July 1942, a partisan unit attacked the Judenrat office, stole money, and cut its telephone line. The Gestapo, with the help of the Jewish Police, searched for the Judenrat members to investigate the matter. All were found "guilty of a partisan attack" and shot. Szyszler added, "After the shooting of the Judenrat the [Jewish] Police took care of Jewish affairs."

In July 1942, a number of ghetto inmates were taken to the Skarżysko Kamienna labor camp.⁹

On October 22, 1942, approximately 500 Jews from the recently liquidated ghetto in Kłwów were brought into the Drzewica ghetto and left out on the streets. The ghetto inhabitants were ordered to be ready for resettlement to a labor camp the next morning and to report to the market square. That night, the ghetto was surrounded by the Germans, and fires were lit around it to prevent escape.

On October 23, 1942, the Gendarmerie marched all the Jews to nearby Opoczno. Those who could not keep up with the column were shot; among them was Zameczkowski.

Approximately 50 Jews (including some policemen) were left behind to sort out Jewish possessions. Shortly afterwards, the Germans announced that those who had evaded the deportation were safe to come out. Consequently, 30 Jews came out of hiding. During daily roll calls, the Jewish Police kept assuring the Jews that they would be unharmed—as the Germans instructed them—but some Jews escaped this remnant ghetto. The remainder were most likely sent to the Ujazd ghetto, established in December 1942 as the only legal place for the Jews to stay in the Kreis. The Ujazd remnant ghetto was liquidated at the beginning of January 1943, when its inhabitants were deported to the Treblinka killing center.¹⁰

SOURCES References to the Drzewica ghetto can be found in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 102, 133, 185–189; Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 84, 99, 153, 177–178.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (301/3132); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/322; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/365–367, 211/1035–1038; RG-15.019M [ASG]); and VHF (# 20106, 20871, 33497).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/366 (Drzewica), p. 21.
2. AŻIH, 301/3132, testimony of Josel Szyszler; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/365 (Drzewica), p. 22; 211/366, p. 25; VHF, # 33497, testimony of Aron-Aba Kubart, 1997.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 29, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/322 (Drzewica), pp. 1, 7, 15, 18, 21; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1035 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), p. 25.
4. VHF, # 20871, testimony of Celina Widawski, 1996; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/365, pp. 6–8; 211/366, p. 21; 211/367 (Drzewica), p. 30; 211/1032 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), pp. 11, 23.

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG Drzewica), file 120, reel 16; *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 29, 1941; AŻIH, 301/3132; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/366, p. 29; 211/367, pp. 1, 5; VHF, # 20106, testimony of Ruth Scheuer, 1996; # 20871; and # 33497.

6. VHF, # 33497; AŻIH, 301/3132.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1036 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), p. 66; 211/366, p. 32; 211/367, pp. 7–10, 48.

8. Ibid., 211/366, p. 6; 211/367, pp. 14, 20, 30, 41–43; 211/1038 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), p. 17.

9. AŻIH, 301/3132; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/367, pp. 65–66.

10. Celina Widawski, *The Sun Will Shine Tomorrow* (Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Essien, 1993), pp. 41–51; AŻIH, 301/3132; VHF, # 20871; # 20106.

FIRLEJ

Pre-1939: Firlej, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

In 1921, there were 53 Jews living in the village of Firlej, just north of Radom. In March 1940, the Judenrat reported 200 Jews residing in the village, including 15 refugees. Under German occupation, a few individuals were able to earn over a dozen złoty per week, but most Jews had no source of income. Approximately 40 men were assigned daily for—presumably—unpaid forced labor. Motek Szpajzman was one of the Judenrat members.¹

In April 1940, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw informed the Judenrat in Firlej that it could collect 200 kilograms (441 pounds) of matzot for free distribution to the poorest members of the community, especially refugees. The matzot had been imported from abroad with the permission of the German authorities, and it was for consumption during the upcoming Passover holiday.²

By 1941, the number of Jews in the village had increased to 230. In March 1941, a handful of Jews from the recently depopulated village of Przytyk were transferred to Firlej.

As part of a larger process of ghettoization for the Jews still living in the villages of Kreis Radom, Firlej was designated as one of the rural Jewish communities that the Germans intended to liquidate by transferring them to a larger ghetto, at the end of 1941. However, according to the Radom office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS): “Thanks to efforts of the Main Senior Council of the Jewish Community of Distrikt Radom,” the Germans allowed several rural communities to remain in place by creating Jewish quarters for them.

An order to establish a ghetto in Firlej was issued by Radom’s Kreishauptmann and implemented by early January 1942. Jews from smaller settlements were ordered to move into the ghetto, thereby raising the number of residents to approximately 250. Firlej’s Jews were further ordered to set up an epidemic hospital and a soup kitchen.³

No information is available concerning living conditions in the ghetto. Seamstress Fajga Zeleg (39 years old) was regis-

tered as having been arrested for leaving the Firlej ghetto on July 20, 1942. Zeleg was transferred to the Radom ghetto and then “deported” to a camp on August 18, 1942.⁴

The Firlej ghetto was liquidated in July 1942 when approximately 200 Jews were sent to the Radom ghetto.

SOURCES Figures for the Firlej ghetto population are cited from Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 156, 179.

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (210/330 [AJDC], 211/854 [JSS]) and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/330 (Firlej), p. 1. Note that the majority of the information in this file refers to another Firlej, located near Lubartów, województwo podkarpackie.

2. Ibid., 210/330, p. 2, AJDC Warsaw to Judenrat in Firlej, April 15, 1940.

3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211//854 (Radom), pp. 5, 7.

4. Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe, 1997), p. 80.

GARBATKA-LETNISKO

Pre-1939: Garbatka-Letnisko, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Garbatka-Letnisko is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) east-northeast of Radom. When the war broke out, approximately 300 Jews were residing in Garbatka, comprising 8.5 percent of the total population. Soon after the Germans’ arrival, the Jews of Garbatka became subjected to the anti-Jewish regulations enforced in the Generalgouvernement. A Judenrat was established to represent the local Jewish community, which was chaired by J. Perelsztajn.¹ The number of Jews in Garbatka rose rapidly. By 1940 there were 571 Jews, of which the Judenrat registered 100 as being impoverished.² By October 1941, there were 1,300 Jewish men, women, and children in Garbatka-Letnisko.³ This large influx resulted from the conviction that Garbatka was a relatively “safe place,” off the beaten track, and rarely visited by the Germans. The imposition of forced labor by the occupiers (Jewish labor details worked in forestry, road repairs, and clearing snow off the roads around Garbatka), and increasingly harsh living conditions, brought on mass pauperization among the Jews. At the beginning of 1942, it was ascertained that 90 percent of the Jews in Garbatka were living in poverty.⁴

Garbatka is mentioned as one of the places where Jews were to be concentrated in the order issued by the Kreishauptmann,

Dr. Egen, in late December 1941, regarding the establishment of ghettos in Kreis Radom-Land.⁵ Therefore, in the first days of January 1942, as recalled by Jewish survivor Simon Brajtman, a ghetto was established in Garbatka.⁶ It included 22 houses along with some farm buildings on Kochanowski Street, from which all Poles were expelled. Brajtman maintains that the ghetto was unfenced and unguarded, but other sources offer conflicting evidence on this point.⁷ By this time, the Jewish population had become infected with typhus, and the Germans demanded that the Judenrat open an epidemic hospital, a public bath, and a delousing facility, to prevent the spread of the disease. The establishment of the hospital was probably delayed due to a lack of funds, but a Polish postwar report indicates that a small hospital with eight beds was set up inside the ghetto.⁸

On July 12, 1942, the German police conducted an anti-partisan reprisal Aktion in Garbatka, following an attack on a German supply train by forces of the Polish resistance in the vicinity. In and around Garbatka, approximately 300 people were arrested, and countless Poles were murdered. In the course of the Aktion, German units also entered the ghetto and killed approximately 30 Jews. A large group, numbering around 60 people, was driven into a nearby forest and shot in a mass execution.⁹ Afterwards, Jews from the ghetto were forced to bury the bodies of those who had been murdered. Of those arrested, 143 Poles and 74 Jews were selected and sent via a special transport to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Within a few weeks, almost all the prisoners on this transport had been killed in the camp, and their relatives in Garbatka were notified.¹⁰

Following the pacification Aktion, approximately 1,000 Jews remained in Garbatka. Of the few Jews from the ghetto who survived the war, several report that they were transferred to Pionki, shortly after the pacification Aktion in Garbatka.¹¹ According to Brajtman, all the Jews of Garbatka were taken to Pionki, where the local ghetto became so crowded that Jews had to sleep in the streets. Here some Jews from Garbatka were among those selected for work in the Pionki labor camp. Then on August 20, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Pionki ghetto and, according to Brajtman, force-marched all the Jews to the ghetto in Zwoleń, including those who had recently arrived from Garbatka. Brajtman was fortunate to survive, as he returned to Pionki to work in the labor camp in early September, shortly before the liquidation of the Zwoleń ghetto.¹² The arrival of the Garbatka Jews in Zwoleń is confirmed by a Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) report, dated September 18, 1942.¹³ From Zwoleń, the Garbatka Jews were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, ironically via the train station near Garbatka, at the end of September or in early October 1942.

SOURCES Published sources regarding the ghetto in Garbatka-Letnisko include Sebastian Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna i działalność charytatywna w gettach dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942),” in Marek Przeniosło, ed., *Dobroczynność i pomoc społeczna na ziemiach polskich w XIX, XX i na początku XXI wieku* (Kielce, 2008), pp. 172–177; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich,

and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 124–127; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 170, 208.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (211/430, 1164 [ŻSS]; NMO, nos. 60 and 63); IPN (ASG, sygn. 47, p. 98); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG]); and VHF (e.g., # 16065, 21336, 44958).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/430.
2. Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna,” p. 173.
3. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 156.
4. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/430.
5. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122, citing AŻIH, NMO, nos. 60 and 63 from late December 1942.
6. VHF, # 44958, testimony of Simon Brajtman; AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/430; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 170, 208.
7. VHF, # 44958. See also Maria Dziedzicka, “Holocaust w Garbatce,” *Dziennik Radomski*, no. 208 (1996): p. 10; and IPN, ASG, sygn. 47, p. 98; however, both indicate there was a fence.
8. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/430; IPN, ASG, sygn. 47, p. 98.
9. Ryszard Śmietanka, *Szkice z dziejów Garbatki* (Garbatka-Letnisko, 1992), p. 36; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo radomskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), p. 54.
10. Franciszek Piper and Irena Strzelecka, eds., *Księga Pamięci: Transporty Polaków do KL Auschwitz z Radomia i innych miejscowości Kielecczyny 1940–1944* (Warsaw, 2006), 2: 733–760; VHF, # 16065; # 44958.
11. VHF, # 16065; # 21336; # 44958.
12. *Ibid.*, # 44958.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), 211/1164, pp. 61, 67.

GIELNIÓW

Pre-1939: Gielniów, village, Opoczno powiat, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Gielniów, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Gielniów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Gielniów is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) east-southeast of Łódź. On September 1, 1939, 190 Jews were registered in Gielniów.¹

German troops occupied Gielniów on September 9, 1939. Two days later the synagogue was burned down. At that time, about 56 Jewish families, approximately 250 people, were living in the village.² Over the next three years, due to the arrival of refugees and deportees, the number of Jews increased to about 450. In March 1941, about 100 Jewish deportees arrived from

Płock. Other Jews were resettled there from Radom, Skierniewice, Żyrardów, Mogielnica, and Grójec. On January 1, 1942, Jews from the neighboring village of Kunieczki and in February 1942 about 100 more from other villages were brought into Gielniów, as it became one of the collection points in Distrikt Radom, used to concentrate Jews in preparation for their ultimate deportation.³

At some time during the first months of the occupation, a Jewish Council of Elders (Jüdischer Ältestenrat) was established. Its head was Icek Cygielfarb, and its members included Zelman Zalctrejger, Alter Chomontowski, and Wulf and Lejb Fajfer. Apart from organizing forced labor details, its main task was to try to alleviate the harsh living conditions for the town's Jews. On April 1, 1940, the Jewish Council reported to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) that many buildings in town had been destroyed and many Jews had lost their homes. At that time, 10 Jewish families had been taken in as refugees from other villages and were living in conditions of extreme poverty. As the local community had no funds to assist the refugees, it asked for financial and material support to open a soup kitchen.⁴ In response, on July 12, 1940, the AJDC organized the delivery of 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of grits, 8 kilograms (17.6 pounds) of sugar, 42 kilograms (92.6 pounds) of flour, 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of lard, and 22 cans of condensed milk.⁵ Further help came subsequently from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), which had been established in Tomaszów Mazowiecki by 1941 and opened a branch office in Gielniów.⁶

During 1941, living conditions deteriorated further as Cygielfarb, the head of the Jewish Council, reported to the AJDC in Kraków. The AJDC delivered more groceries in May—grits, flour, lard, and condensed milk—and 600 złoty in the summer, to support the soup kitchen that supplied daily meals to 93 people. Most of them were Jews who had been forcibly resettled to Gielniów. Due to lack of funds, the soup kitchen had to be closed in the summer of 1941. Dysentery was raging in the community, one person had died already, and there was no physician or hospital to take care of the sick. Cygielfarb made an urgent request for medical assistance.⁷

According to various sources, Gielniów's Jews were also conscripted for forced labor. As Jacek Młynarczyk reports, Jews worked under the supervision of the Water Regulation Authority (Wasserwirtschaftsverwaltung), repairing dams, building ponds, and regulating rivers and creeks. This source indicates that the Water Authority also established a Jewish forced labor camp (*Julag*) in Gielniów in 1940, holding probably between 200 and 400 Jews.⁸ Jews from Gielniów also performed construction work on the road between Przysucha and Opoczno.

Information about the establishment of a ghetto in Gielniów remains sparse. Following the concentration of Jews there from neighboring villages in January and February 1942, the ability of Jews to leave the village became severely restricted by the spring of 1942 with the enforcement of the "Shooting Order" (*Schiessbefehl*) within Kreis Tomaszow, which instructed German police officials to shoot all Jews found outside their

residential areas without permission.⁹ Survivor Sylvia Kasten mentions the existence at some time in 1942 of a ghetto in Gielniów, which consisted of one street from which the Polish inhabitants were removed.¹⁰

The only detailed account of the ghetto was given shortly after the war by Zelman Zalctrejger. He recalled that just before Yom Kippur (September 21) in 1942, one Jew working on road construction was arrested by the Polish (Blue) Police and subsequently murdered for fleeing his workplace. When the Gielniów Jews heard this news, they panicked and hid in their houses. Seven more Jews were then arrested and shot. The German Gendarmerie then ordered the establishment of a ghetto in the town, which was not enclosed by a fence and not guarded. It was located on Bielińska Street and consisted of nine wooden houses. Each house had two or three rooms, which meant that 450 Jews were crammed together into about 18 to 22 rooms, with more than 20 people on average sharing a room. Due to the overcrowding, some people initially slept outside. Sanitary conditions soon deteriorated, and at least 10 people died from typhus.¹¹

Only six weeks after the ghetto was established, the Germans liquidated it. On October 22, 1942, three German policemen came from Opoczno and ordered the Polish (Blue) Police to prepare 20 horses and carts to take the Jews to the Opoczno railway station. That night, about 60 Jews were able to escape to the woods before the Polish (Blue) Police cordoned off the town. On October 23, 1942, German police forces assisted by Ukrainian auxiliaries liquidated the ghetto. All the Jews had to gather and form a column, with children and the elderly at the head of the line. From the ghetto they were escorted to the market square, where horse-drawn wagons waited for them. There, Ukrainians searched them and took their watches, jewelry, and other valuables. According to one source, 19 Jews were killed during the Aktion.¹² The Jews were taken to Opoczno, where at least 4,000 Jews from the surrounding area were gathered. The same day or shortly afterwards, all of them were put into freight cars and deported to the Treblinka killing center.¹³

The group of 60 Jews who escaped the liquidation of the ghetto survived in the woods for three days. Hunted by Germans, Poles, and Ukrainians, they split up and went in different directions. Hidden in primitive dugouts in the woods, they awaited the arrival of the Red Army. In this manner, Zalctrejger, one of the members of the Jewish Council, survived until the end of the occupation.¹⁴ Two Jewish girls survived with the assistance of Wiktoria Nowosielska, who took them in on the night before the ghetto's liquidation. She helped them obtain "Aryan papers," and subsequently the girls were sent to Germany as foreign laborers.¹⁵

SOURCES The history of the Jewish community in Gielniów is briefly described in Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 81. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 175, contains a brief summary on the ghetto with source citations.

Primary sources on Gielniów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/338 and 301/2533); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/338; and RG-15.084M [AŻIH—Relacje], 301/2533); and VHF (# 2080 and 23418).

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NOTES

1. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ba-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 81.
2. USHMM, RG-15.084M, 301/2533, statement of Zelman Zalctrejger.
3. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ba-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 81; USHMM, RG-15.084M, 301/2533; and Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 252.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/338, Aeltestenrat der Juden in Gielniów to AJDC Kraków, April 1, 1940.
5. Ibid.
6. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, pp. 203–204.
7. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/338, Icek Cygielfarb to AJDC Kraków, August 31, 1941.
8. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, pp. 152–153.
9. BA-L, B 162/14521, Verdict of LG-Darm, 2 Ks 1/69, December 7, 1972, pp. 20–30.
10. VHF, # 23418, testimony of Sylvia Kasten.
11. USHMM, RG-15.084M, 301/2533.
12. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 175, no. 1051.
13. USHMM, RG-15.084M, 301/2533.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 301/2533, appendix, report of Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna, July 1947.

GŁOWACZÓW

Pre-1939: Głowaczów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Głowaczow, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Głowaczów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Głowaczów is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. In 1921, the village had 1,411 Jewish residents. By the end of the 1930s, Jews constituted 57 percent of its residents. A large part of Głowaczów was destroyed in the fighting during the September Campaign of 1939. Following the village's occupation, young Jews were rounded up and sent to labor camps in Radom. They were released by the year's end. Others, coordinated by the Judenrat, performed forced labor in the area around Głowaczów, mostly in the lumber industry.

The Judenrat included the following members: Lajbusz Cukerman (chairman), Mosze Kozłowski, Nachman Chanciński, Lajzer Strowjeszczik, and Awisz Zilberman.

Apart from forced labor and a housing shortage, initially the Jews of Głowaczów were able to live their lives much as before the war.¹

In 1940, in preparation for the establishment of a large military training ground north of Radom—along the Radomka



Jews perform forced labor at a lumber mill under German supervision near the Głowaczów ghetto, 1940. The original German caption reads, "Głowuscow [*sic*]. 1940 . . . In the prisoners' camp!" USHMM WS #65620

River—the Germans evacuated all residents (including Poles) who inhabited the western part of the village.² Since a ghetto was set up in Głowaczów that same year, it is possible that this evacuation was part of the process that led to its establishment. Archival sources indicate that in the second half of 1940, two groups of Jewish residents were deported from Głowaczów on the orders of the Kreishauptmann, for the "purposes of the Reich."

A total of 364 Jews (88 families) were transferred between June and December 1940 to nearby Magnuszew. A list naming the heads of 78 of the deported families (324 persons) can be found in the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) files; however, the names of the 10 families who were not registered by the Magnuszew authorities remain unknown. Because 30 percent of those deported were homeless in the wake of the 1939 invasion, they left for Magnuszew with no resources. A second group of approximately 40 people was deported to Skaryszew in November 1940.

According to the testimony of one survivor, Hanka Grynberg, the Głowaczów ghetto was set up by "deporting all Jews from one part of the town to the other." A ditch demarcated the ghetto's borders, and Jews were forbidden to cross it. Poles were barred from entering the ghetto. Nevertheless, they managed to order products from ghetto craftsmen, as Jews living there were free to practice their occupations. The ghetto was guarded by the Jewish Police and rarely visited by Germans.³

In 1941 (most likely in the fall), the Germans completed the depopulation of Głowaczów. Historian Adam Rutkowski cites a letter by the mayor of nearby Luta addressed to the Radom Kreishauptmann that reported the deportation of 160 Jewish families from Głowaczów and its vicinity to the gminas of Mariampol, Magnuszew, and Skaryszew on September 20, 1941. From the survivors' testimony, it is clear that the majority of the ghetto residents were resettled to the closest locality, this being fallow lands 4 to 5 kilometers (2.5 to 3 miles) northwest of Głowaczów within the same gmina of Mariampol.

According to the survivor Abraham Kaspi, “the ghetto of Głowaczów’s Jews was situated between Mariampol (known by locals as ‘Marianki’) and Jasieniec; its border was demarcated by a small lake.” Owners of Jewish houses in Głowaczów were allowed to pull them down and move them to the new location. Most of Głowaczów’s Poles were resettled to the village of Jasieniec and fallow lands near Mariampol village. Now deserted, Głowaczów was used as a training site for German artillery.⁴

Housing and sanitation in the new ghetto—referred to as Mariampol—were deplorable. Many Jews lived in overcrowded conditions in primitive huts, which resulted in malnutrition and deaths from various illnesses. The ghetto had one bakery, but the Germans provided insufficient flour to satisfy even a fraction of the community’s needs. There was not a single shop. Kaspi believes that “if it had not been for the help of Polish neighbors, all of the Jews would have died of hunger,” as restrictions regarding movement remained the same in the new location. Despite the ghetto’s poverty, Gendarmes from Kozienice and Grabów demanded the delivery of various goods from the Judenrat, beating its chairman as a warning.

During the winter of 1941 and in April 1942, all men aged 50 and younger were rounded up by the Gestapo and SS and were taken to the nearby Kruszyna labor camp.⁵

In the summer of 1942, the ghetto was enclosed by a fence, yet its inhabitants still used to sneak out at night to forage for food.⁶

The Mariampol ghetto was liquidated in the second half of August 1942, when all of its residents were transferred to the Kozienice ghetto, which was located approximately 30 kilometers (19 miles) away, where the residents of other small ghettos were also gathered. The Kozienice ghetto was liquidated on September 27, 1942, when almost all of its Jews were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁷

SOURCES A short description of the Głowaczów ghetto can be found in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 137.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/480 and 210/630 [AJDC]; and 301/2296 [Relacje]); USHMM (RG-15.084M [Holocaust Survivor Testimonies]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 20410 and 23383).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 23383, testimony of Sol Rozenzweig, 1996; # 20410, testimony of Abraham Kaspi, 1996; www.zchor.org/glowaczow/glowaczow.htm.

2. A. Kutkowski and I. Boratyn, “Zapłaćcie za wojnę!” *Słowo Ludu, Magazyn Obok Nas*, September 10, 2004, available at www.slowoludu.com.pl/gazeta/codzienna/2004/IX/10/8.pdf; Euzebiusz Małański, “Moje wspomnienia,” www.glowaczow.republika.pl/chor.html.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/480 (Mag-nuszew), pp. 19–26; and 210/630 (Skaryszew), pp. 24–25, 29–32; AŻIH, 301/2296, testimony of Hanka Grynberg; VHF, # 20410.

4. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 156–157 (table 11), 178–179; Małański, “Moje wspomnienia”; and Kutkowski and Boratyn, “Zapłaćcie za wojnę!” VHF, # 20410, or possibly a pond, as no lake is visible currently using Google maps. Note also that there is a village by the name of Marianki located approximately 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) west of Głowaczów.

5. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 137; VHF, # 20410; # 23383.

6. AŻIH, 301/2296.

7. Ibid.; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 156–157 (table 11), 178–179; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 315. Rutkowski and Pilichowski et al. in referring to the Mariampol ghetto give its population, respectively, as 1,500 and 2,200 residents at the time of its liquidation. Both numbers seem to be too high, at least for the Jews originally brought there from Głowaczów—unless additional Jews were brought in from other localities.

GNIEWOSZÓW

Pre-1939: Gniewoszków (Yiddish: Gnivoshov), village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Gniewoszew, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Gniewoszków, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Gniewoszków is located 55 kilometers (34 miles) east of Radom, on the Vistula River. On the outbreak of World War II, 1,580 Jews were residing in Gniewoszków.

Gniewoszków was bombed by the Luftwaffe on September 1, 1939. About two weeks later the German army captured the village, and immediately the Germans started arresting Jews. Gniewoszków was not large enough to have a permanent German garrison, but soldiers often came to Gniewoszków to round up Jews for forced labor and have “sadistic fun,” as Charles Feldman recalled. Jews were required to wear the Star of David on their left arms, and Jewish children no longer went to school.¹ Jacob Goldstein remembers that the Germans stole fabrics and other goods from his father’s textile business. Luckily, his father had hidden some leather goods with Polish acquaintances.²

The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to represent the local Jewish community. In the winter of 1939–1940, Jews had to perform forced labor tasks such as shoveling snow from the roads. The Judenrat decreed that anyone who did not want to work would have to pay a fee and another man would be sent in his place. A curfew was imposed on the Jews, they were given strict rations, and they were not permitted to leave the village. The Germans housed their horses in the local synagogue and desecrated religious objects.³

The number of Jews in Gniewoszków began to increase sharply in 1940 for a number of reasons. The most important cause was the location of the village on the Vistula River, at a point where it was possible to cross. As a result, many refugees and deportees came to the area in order to cross the border

between Distrikt Lublin and Distrikt Radom. Other Jews decided to settle there, as living conditions appeared to be more favorable in the village of Gniewoszków than in the larger towns or cities. This caused many Jews from Kazimierz, Puławy, and Ryki to move to Gniewoszków, as well as refugees from Warsaw and deportees from Łódź and Kraków. Many of these new arrivals had almost no remaining financial reserves. In the spring of 1940, there were 2,750 Jews in Gniewoszków, of which 1,142 were receiving food assistance from the Judenrat because of their poverty.⁴

In March 1941, the Jewish community in Gniewoszków numbered 2,300 people. By October of that year the Jewish population had increased to approximately 3,000, partly due to a further influx from Distrikt Warschau, as Jews there were being concentrated in the Warsaw ghetto. Hunger and the confined space led to the emergence of a typhus epidemic, which the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) strived to control by opening—“with great effort”—an epidemic hospital in November of that year. The hospital could help only a small number of the sick.⁵ Local activists tried to provide additional nourishment to Jewish children. According to the yizkor book, a Christian doctor named Kelczinski continued to treat the Jews until the establishment of the ghetto, after which this was forbidden.⁶

Jewish survivors from Gniewoszków give two separate dates for the establishment of the ghetto there. Some date it in 1940, reflecting the influx of refugees, the imposition of a curfew, and other restrictions on the Jews. Feldman notes that they made a ghetto, which segregated the Jews from the Polish population. The Jews were forced into one part of the village (Granica), where they lived in overcrowded conditions, with two or three families sharing each house. At this time a Jewish police force of about six people was created, which was forced to do the dirty work—such as selecting Jews for forced labor.⁷ Goldstein recalled that the fronts of the houses facing the street were boarded up—the Jews could only use the back entrance.⁸

In the period from 1940 to 1942, able-bodied Jews in Gniewoszków were rounded up periodically and sent away to forced labor camps in Radom and elsewhere. Gniewoszków is mentioned as one of the places where Jews were to be concentrated in Kreishauptmann Dr. Egen's order of December 22, 1941, which confirmed its status as a ghetto. As a result, in early 1942, some Jews from the surrounding villages were required to move there.⁹ Bernard Kerschenbaum recalls this date, in early 1942, as the establishment of the ghetto. The ghetto was an open ghetto without any demarcation—no walls and no barbed wire.¹⁰ Due to the lax guarding, some Jews took off their Jewish stars and left the ghetto to buy food from the Polish population. The Germans announced to the Polish population that they would be rewarded with goods, such as sugar, salami, or vodka, if they captured Jews found outside the ghetto and brought them to the Gestapo. Jews who were caught faced the death penalty. However, this did not deter some Jews from sneaking out when they were hungry, and while many Poles were hostile, others continued to give or sell them food.¹¹ Ac-

cording to the yizkor book, a number of Jews lost their lives when they were caught outside the ghetto.¹²

During the first half of 1942, the food supply and sanitation in the ghetto steadily worsened. At this time “the Germans ordered all Jews to shave their heads. Religious Jews . . . suffered miserably. Those who disobeyed had half their beard shaved and were forbidden to do anything about it, such as covering their faces with kerchiefs.”¹³ Leo Kuperman recalls that his father decided to shave his beard, to avoid being picked on and humiliated by the Germans. He mentions also that on one occasion they singled out the rabbi, mocked him, spat at him, shaved his beard, and then killed him.¹⁴

In early August 1942, conditions deteriorated sharply again, when the Germans selected Gniewoszków as a concentration place for the residents of smaller ghettos in the region. Among others, the Jews from the ghettos in Ryczywół and Sieciechów were transferred to Gniewoszków, more than doubling the number of Jews there, raising it to 6,580.¹⁵ Most of these newcomers had no sources of income, and due to the lack of accommodation, many of them were forced to find shelter in barns or sheds or simply live in the streets. The same month the Germans resettled approximately 600 men and women to the Dęblin-Irena ghetto in Distrikt Lublin, and on August 19–20 they sent approximately 5,000 Gniewoszków ghetto residents to the Zwolen ghetto. The approximately 1,000 people who remained in the village were sent directly to the Treblinka extermination camp on November 15, 1942.¹⁶

SOURCES Published sources regarding the Gniewoszków ghetto include the following: David Sztokfisz, ed., *Sefer Gnivoshov* (Tel Aviv: Irgune Gnivoshev be-Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1971); Sebastian Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna i działalność charytatywna w gettach dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942),” in Marek Przeniosło, ed., *Dobroczynność i pomoc społeczna na ziemiach polskich w XIX, XX i na początku XXI wieku* (Kielce, 2008), pp. 172–177; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 181.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (301/8; 211/405, 430 [JSS]; NMO, nos. 60 and 63); ITS; and VHF (# 4071, 18628, 33250, 42916, 26536).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 4071, testimony of Charles Feldman.
2. Ibid., # 18628, testimony of Jacob Goldstein.
3. Ibid., # 33250, testimony of Bernard Kerschenbaum.
4. Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna,” p. 174.
5. AŻIH, JSS, 211/430.
6. Sztokfisz, *Sefer Gnivoshov*, p. 406 (Yiddish).
7. VHF, # 4071.
8. Ibid., # 18628.
9. Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 122, citing AŻIH, NMO, nos. 60 and 63 from late December 1941.

10. VHF, # 33250. VHF, # 42916, testimony of Leo Kuperman, also dates the ghetto's establishment in 1942.

11. Ibid., # 4071; # 26536, testimony of Frederick Weinstein.

12. Sztokfisz, *Sefer Gnivoshev*, p. 406 (Yiddish).

13. Ibid., p. 16 (English).

14. VHF, # 42916.

15. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 181, 208; Sztokfisz, *Sefer Gnivoshev*, p. 9 (English).

16. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 181; Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej dystryktu radomskiego podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 156, 179; Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 274; VHF, # 4071; Sztokfisz, *Sefer Gnivoshev*, pp. 9 (English) and 407 (Yiddish).

ILŻA

Pre-1939: Ilża, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ilża, town, initially the center of Kreis Ilża (later Kreis Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ilża, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Ilża is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) south of Radom on the Ilżanka River. There were some 1,900 Jews living in Ilża in 1939, comprising about 37 percent of the entire population.¹

The Wehrmacht conquered Ilża early in September 1939, and on September 11, Jews were already gathered in the street and forced to work for the occupiers, cleaning up the ravages of war. By the end of October, the Nazis had established a civil administration in Poland, and Ilża became the seat of the Kreishauptmannschaft Ilża, which was located in Distrikt Radom of the Generalgouvernement. Kreishauptmann Hans Zettelmeyer took his seat in the town, until he moved his office to Starachowice, which then gave its name to the Kreis on January 12, 1942.² Up to this time, some German SS and Police forces were based in Ilża; later only a Gendarmerie post under the command of Polizeimeister Hofmann remained.³

Antisemitic measures followed soon after the conquest of Ilża. On October 22, 1939, Zettelmeyer requested a list of Jewish entrepreneurs in industry and trade; their businesses were gradually expropriated over the following months. In combination with the prohibition on selling timber to Jews, harsh economic measures impoverished the community.⁴ Additionally, from November 29, 1939, all Jews had to wear an armband bearing the Star of David, so that everyone could recognize them as the Nazi's racial enemies.⁵

Zettelmeyer ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) with 20 members in November 1939; its leader was Baruch Kaminski. The council had to register all the Jews of Ilża and try to convince as many of them as possible to migrate to the Soviet Union. All those leaving voluntarily could take their more easily transportable possessions with them, whereas Jews grabbed without identification papers were deported to the Soviet territories at gunpoint; the Polish (Blue) Police were charged with implementing these measures.⁶ Moreover, in the autumn of 1939, the Judenrat was forced to deliver

two large "contributions" of gold to the German authorities, and while collecting these funds, several Jews were shot in the streets.⁷

In April 1940, a quarrel broke out between Jews and Poles due to disagreements over the use of a well. In consequence, with the aid of German occupation personnel, Jews were beaten and dragged through the streets.⁸ In the summer of 1940, the Nazis rounded up a number of male Jews and sent them to various camps in Distrikt Lublin near the border with the Soviet Union to construct fortifications. The conditions for these laborers were very bad. Most of those sent to Distrikt Lublin returned by 1941, but the raids to round up forced laborers continued.⁹

The Judenrat was responsible for the social and welfare issues of the Jews in Ilża. This was accomplished in cooperation with the newly founded Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee, which was based first in Ilża and later in Starachowice.¹⁰ Thus, the Judenrat was able to receive some funding from Kraków, totaling 4,500 złoty in February 1941 alone, which together with 16,000 złoty collected locally helped to sustain basic food distribution to needy community members.¹¹

An open, but nevertheless closely guarded, ghetto was established in Ilża by an order of Zettelmeyer issued on December 6, 1941.¹² The number of Jews in the town had steadily increased from 1,837 in May 1941 to more than 2,000 in July, as a result of the influx of refugees and deportees. In February 1942, there were 2,067 inmates of the Ilża ghetto, who lived in cramped conditions on a few streets east of the marketplace.¹³ As the available space seemed too sparse even to the Nazis, they initially intended to distribute one third of the Jewish population among surrounding rural villages. But since this plan clearly would have run counter to the aim of concentrating the Jews, it was soon abandoned and not implemented.¹⁴ Due to hunger in the ghetto, some Jews risked leaving it illegally to scavenge for potatoes, but the penalty for leaving the ghetto area was death.¹⁵

In June 1942, 210 Jews from Ilża were working for German industry.¹⁶ However, this contribution towards the German war effort did not protect the ghetto from liquidation. In the months prior to its liquidation, and possibly also during the deportation Aktion, a number of male and female Jewish youths were selected for labor, with some being sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) forced labor camp at Skarżysko-Kamienna. A few of the small number of survivors from the Ilża ghetto passed through this camp.¹⁷ On Thursday, October 22, 1942, German SS and Police units, with the assistance of local Polish (Blue) Police, surrounded the ghetto, marched some 2,000 Jews to the nearby railway station, and then deported them to the Treblinka extermination camp. Only a few inmates were able to escape. The Germans and their collaborators searched the ghetto for Jews in hiding, killing on the spot those they found.¹⁸

During the deportation Aktion, one group of Jews was selected and kept behind to clear out Jewish property from the ghetto. To these Jews were added some others who were captured subsequently, bringing the total up to about 100. When

their work was completed the remaining Jews were marched about 40 kilometers (25 miles) to the Starachowice forced labor camp.¹⁹

SOURCES A brief account of the fate of the Iłża Jewish community during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 75–76. Further information is contained in the town almanac by Jerzy Karol Madejski, *Iłża zapamiętana* (Radom, 2004), pp. 51–55.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR (Gouverneur des Distrikts Radom/39 and 100); AŻIH (NMO 55; JSS 211; 301/4339); IPN (Ob/177); VHF (# 8028 and 14497); and YVA (O-3/6764; M-1/E/1837; and JM/3489).

Stephan Lehnstaedt

NOTES

1. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 75–182, here p. 161.
2. Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 49.
3. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), p. 82.
4. APR, Gouverneur des Distrikts Radom/39. Tagesbe-
fehle Iłża, October 21 and 22, 1939.
5. Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, p. 228; and VHF, # 14497, testimony of Rose Wegman, who never risked removing her armband.
6. APR, Gouverneur des Distrikts Radom/39. Decrees of November 16 and 28, 1939.
7. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 76.
8. Ibid.
9. VHF, # 14497; Wegman’s brothers were taken to perform forced labor in Distrikt Lublin.
10. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 203.
11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 76.
12. AŻIH, NMO 55, decree of Kreishauptmann Zettelmeyer, December 6, 1941. Also see VHF, # 14497; Wegman confirmed that at least until her transfer to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp in the summer of 1942, the ghetto remained unfenced.
13. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 161.
14. APR, Gouverneur des Distrikts Radom/100. Report of JSS Radom-Land for January 1942, March 17, 1942.
15. VHF, # 14497; while Wegman did not risk leaving the ghetto herself, she mentioned that others did.
16. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 156.
17. VHF, # 14497.
18. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 85, 161; Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 275; and VHF, # 8028, testimony of Abraham Bleeman.
19. VHF, # 8028.

INOWŁÓDZ

Pre-1939: Inowłódz, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Inowłódz, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Inowłódz, Łódź województwo, Poland

The village of Inowłódz is located 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) east of Tomaszów Mazowiecki. Archival sources report 519 Jews living in the village in 1939 and 490 in September 1939.

In the course of the September Campaign in 1939, the village was partially burned, and many of the Jewish homes and shops were razed. On December 10, 1939, the Jews were deported from Inowłódz. It is not clear as to where the estimated 120 Jewish families were displaced at that time, but many returned after January 7, 1940, when the Germans permitted them to do so.¹

The German authorities organized a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by the 38-year-old tradesman Hilel Kociński, which included Szmul Desau and Berek Cymerman, among other members.

By March 1940, a Jewish self-help committee had been organized in the village with the intention of procuring some aid for the impoverished community. The committee included the above-mentioned Judenrat members (with Desau as chairman) as well as Dawid Indner, Fajwel Szajnfarter, and Jusek Cymerman (treasurer). A two-member review commission controlling the distribution of welfare was composed of Jankiel Donner and Szmul Telerman. The committee managed to open a soup kitchen, but due to lack of funds, it was closed on October 30, 1940.²

Despite the difficult housing conditions, 20 Jewish deportee families from the Łódź area and Distrikt Warschau settled in Inowłódz sometime in 1940. Throughout 1940, 26 Jews worked in a labor camp outside the village.

By May 1941, there were 450 Jews living in Inowłódz, of which 206 applied for social assistance and were registered as “without occupation.” Six cobblers (financially supporting 20 family members) and two tradesmen (supporting 11 family members) were still permitted to keep their businesses open. At this time, 52 Jews were registered as forced laborers in Inowłódz. Their assignments included fixing roads and village sanitation.³

A ghetto in Inowłódz was most likely established initially as an open ghetto, but shortly afterwards—that is, by November 8, 1941—it was designated as sealed, imprisoning 600 Jews within it. On that day, Tomaszów’s Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch reported on the situation in Inowłódz to JSS headquarters in Kraków: “The recent decree forbidding Jews to leave the Jewish quarter has deepened the misery of those few Jews who still traveled around the villages and earned their living by crafts or trade.”⁴

The ghetto was located in the center of Inowłódz, encompassing terrain between the market square and the Pilica River, where the synagogue was located. This was a predominantly Jewish neighborhood before the war. The ghetto was

unguarded, but the Jews were forbidden to leave it. The German Gendarmerie from Tomaszów paid visits to Inowłódz.⁵

By April 1942, the ghetto's 545 inhabitants—including 172 refugees—were housed in 28 houses, which provided 78 rooms. The JSS estimated that at least 6.5 persons shared each room. The ghetto had no sewage system, and its residents drew water from wells.

After the ghetto was sealed in November 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out, lasting until March 1942. There was no hospital in the ghetto, but the Judenrat tried to provide free medical assistance and reopened the soup kitchen.⁶

An official branch of the JSS was organized in Inowłódz that same month. It included the Judenrat chairman Kociński, the 33-year-old bookkeeper Chaim Hersz Doner, and the 39-year-old tradesman Szmul Telerman. This composition of the JSS was soon criticized by a number of Jews in Inowłódz, who complained to the Kraków office in December 1941: "The Judenrat, which includes two poor cobblers, one poor tailor, and one tradesman does not fulfill the requirements of any JSS branch or Judenrat. They do not increase the income of our institution from local sources and they do not guarantee the proper use of our subventions." The Tomaszów JSS office investigated the matter but nonetheless supported their initial nominees.⁷

Secondary sources, including *Pinkas ha-kehillot* and the historians Krzysztof Urbański and Czesław Pilichowski, report that the Inowłódz ghetto was liquidated in August 1942, when its residents were transferred to the Tomaszów ghetto.

However, primary sources indicate that the ghetto lasted much longer, for example, possibly until October 1942. Around that time the Inowłódz JSS petitioned the Kreishauptmann for permission to open workshops there. Also, the Inowłódz JSS branch in its initial composition appears on a list of Kreis JSS branches in a letter dated October 12, 1942, addressed to the Tomaszów Kreishauptmannschaft Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge (BuF). Branches of the JSS in such small ghettos were typically dissolved on the ghetto's liquidation.

The October 1942 liquidation is also supported by another primary source: Ankieta Sądów Grodzkich, (ASG—Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos), which states that the Inowłódz Jews were deported at that time to Tomaszów's train station and from there to another unknown destination. The Gendarmes in the course of the liquidation shot two elderly Jewish women, who were unable to walk, and a child.

Accordingly, it is possible that the Inowłódz ghetto was liquidated in the second half of October 1942. Its residents would have been then transferred to Tomaszów, where Jews from the Kreis were concentrated.

The Germans conducted a large-scale deportation Aktion against the Jews assembled in Tomaszów from October 31 until November 2, 1942, in the course of which thousands of Jews were deported to the Treblinka extermination center; such a deportation would have included Inowłódz's remaining Jewish population.⁸

SOURCES The following publications mention the Inowłódz ghetto: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 129, 134, 185; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 199; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 54.

The following archival sources include reference to the Inowłódz ghetto: AŻIH (210/365 [AJDC]; 211/449, 211/1035-1036, 211/1039 [JSS]); IPN (ASG); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and RG-15.019M [ASG]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/365 (Inowłódz), pp. 2, 10–11; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/3035 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), p. 22; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/449 (Inowłódz), pp. 1, 3.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/365, pp. 6–7, 10.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/449, pp. 1, 3, 11.
4. Ibid., 211/1035, p. 22.
5. Ibid., RG-15.019M (ASG Inowłódz), p. 194.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1035, p. 22; and 211/449, p. 3.
7. Ibid., 211/1036 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), pp. 30, 60, 66–67; and 211/1035, p. 22.
8. Ibid., 211/1039 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), pp. 48–49, 69. Also see RG-15.019M (ASG Inowłódz), p. 194; this source mistakenly dates the liquidation in October 1943.

IWANISKA

Pre-1939: Iwaniska, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village of Iwaniska is located 55 kilometers (34 miles) southeast of Kielce. Immediately before the outbreak of World War II, 1,663 Jews were living in Iwaniska.¹

After the Germans entered Iwaniska on September 7, 1939, the village and its inhabitants initially remained unharmed. A small Wehrmacht unit was stationed in the village. The Polish local authorities—including the Polish (Blue) Police—remained in their posts, and the Germans did not interfere much in Jewish affairs. The leader of the Jewish community was Israel Hirsh Teperman. The German authorities later replaced Teperman with Szamszon Feder, who became chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was established to transmit German instructions to the Jewish community. Until mid-1941, when the Germans imposed heavy taxes on the community, Iwaniska's Jews were generally able to protect themselves from deportations to labor camps through bribes.²

Orthodox and liberal Jews continued political infighting to such an extent that both groups assisted the Germans by

preparing lists of their opponents, whom they claimed were not complying with German orders. A number of these individuals were arrested and later transferred to labor camps.³

There were extensive interactions—both positive and negative—between young Jewish resisters and units of the Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army, AK).⁴

On March 27, 1941, a transport of 1,000 Viennese Jews arrived in Kreis Opatow. They came fully equipped with luggage, food, and clothing. Around 70 percent of them were more than 60 years old and in poor health. From this transport, 75 people were transferred to Iwaniska.⁵

In May 1941, the Judenrat—led by its president, Szamszon Feder—constituted an unofficial Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee (based in Kraków; the Kreis committee in Opatów was established in December 1940) and opened a soup kitchen. It distributed free meals to all the deportees from Vienna and to a small part of the local poor. Apart from the Austrian Jews, there were also about 200 refugees from Łódź, Konin, Aleksandrów, and Kraków in Iwaniska, but the JSS did not provide a soup kitchen for them. By June 1941, there was a total of 1,574 Jews living in Iwaniska.

The official Iwaniska JSS committee (chairman: Feder) was established in June 1941. In February 1942, Feder was dismissed, and Szlama Goldwasser was nominated as the chairman. The JSS continued feeding deportees from Vienna and a smaller number of impoverished, local Jews. It also provided 40 poor children with additional food rations.⁶

Until May 1942, Jews were permitted to live in 150 towns and settlements in Kreis Opatow. On May 13, 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter ordered that Jews were to be restricted to five towns and 12 villages in the Kreis—including Iwaniska. The Kreis's Jews were given only two weeks to move; after that, the 17 centers were all recognized as ghettos. Following this concentration, the number of Jews in Iwaniska's ghetto was 1,900.⁷

Although the ghetto was formally established in June 1942, the Jews were banned from leaving the (then) Jewish quarter sometime earlier. By the beginning of May, they were already obliged to obtain a paid permit to leave it. Due to this restriction, trade with local farmers declined to a minimum. The consequences were severe, and the material situation of the Jews in Iwaniska became "critical."⁸

At the end of 1941, the German construction company Organisation Todt (OT) came to Iwaniska to conscript young Jews for forced labor. On the advice of Rabbi Rabinovitz and Zionist leaders, the young men hid in the nearby forest.⁹

In 1942, as the news arrived of other ghettos in the area being cleared out, Iwaniska's Jews, regardless of political orientation, came together and attempted to reach a consensus on their situation. The Hasidim were strongly opposed to the activities of the Jewish underground and chose instead to comply with German orders. The Jewish youths decided to avoid deportation by dividing into small groups and hiding in bunkers in the forest. According to survivor Yitzchak Goldstein, the resisters purchased guns and ammunition from former Polish soldiers and policemen and prepared additional bunkers and food supplies.¹⁰

According to Goldstein, immediately after the Sukkot holiday in 1942, a German Gendarme informed the Jewish underground that the Jews of nearby Raków would be deported the next day. The Jews in Iwaniska were convinced that their town would be next, and soon approximately 300 men, women, and children began fleeing to their forest bunkers, while some sought protection with Polish acquaintances.¹¹

The liquidation of the Iwaniska ghetto took place on October 15, 1942. Gestapo officers and Ukrainian auxiliaries first surrounded the town.¹² A Polish witness reports that the Germans arrived in Iwaniska in the morning. Shouting and yelling, they began pushing and beating Jews with their gun barrels, driving them terrorized from their houses to the marketplace. Parents fought to hold babies in their arms, while some people managed to snatch small bundles. A witness also saw Germans shooting Jews during this roundup.¹³ According to Goldstein, about 100 Jews were shot on the day of the deportation.¹⁴

In total, the Germans drove approximately 1,600 Jews into the market square.¹⁵ The houses were then searched; those found hiding were shot on the spot. Iwaniska's Jews were marched in a column for about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) to Ćmielów. From there, together with the Jews from the Ćmielów ghetto, they were taken to Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, where they were loaded on to cattle trains and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Only 1 Jew from Iwaniska, Israel Seltzer, is known to have survived the camp, by escaping from it.¹⁶

According to Goldstein, out of the 300 Jews who hid in the woods, he was the only survivor. These Jews divided themselves into small, leaderless groups that fought back only in self-defense against hostile patrols. In his 1979 article, Goldstein stated that the youth of the Polish underground, including his former Communist Party friends, assisted in capturing those Jews who fled from the ghetto. All those caught were turned over to the Germans. In his Yad Vashem testimony, Goldstein states that both the Germans and local Polish peasants were engaged in capturing Iwaniska's remaining Jews. Initially, Poles were rewarded with a bag of sugar and a liter of vodka for their help; subsequently, taking the clothes of the unfortunate Jews became their only reward.¹⁷

SOURCES Most of the information in this article is based on the following two sources: YVA, O-3/1252, testimony of Yitz'chak Goldstein; and Goldstein's published account "The Funeral," *Letzte Neiyes*, April 24, 1979 (English versions of both can be found in *The Iwansk Project e-Newsletter*, no. 3 [March–April 2004]). Although by the same author, there are several discrepancies between the two reports. The entry's third main source is Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 70–72, which is based mainly on Goldstein's accounts. References to the fate of Iwaniska's Jews can be found also in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and in an article by Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

Documentation regarding the destruction of the Jewish community of Iwaniska can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/366 [AJDC], 211/452 [ŻSS]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 25; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (# 20037); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 70–72; Jerzy Tomaszewski and Andrzej Żbikowski, eds., *Żydzi w Polsce: Dzieje i kultura: Leksykon* (Warsaw: Wydawn. Cyklady, 2001), p. 189; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 163 (table 13), 181–182. According to YVA, O-3/1252, testimony of Yitz’chak Goldstein, Iwaniska’s pre-war population was approximately 6,000, of which 60 percent were Jews.

2. YVA, O-3/1252; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 25; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 70–72.

3. YVA, O-3/1252; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 71.

4. See Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 225; and YVA, O-3/1252.

5. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 140; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 25; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 93–93. According to Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 71, the Viennese Jews arrived without basic necessities.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 25. According to Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), p. 339, two Judenrat members were representatives in the JSS branch, one of them the chairman.

7. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 200; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 116, 152–153; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 163 (table 13), 181–182.

8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 25.

9. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 70–72.

10. Ibid.; YVA, O-3/1252.

11. YVA, O-3/1252; Goldstein, “The Funeral.” The mass escape is also briefly mentioned in Dariusz Libionka, *Akcja Reinhardt: Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), p. 285; Trunk, *Judenrat*, pp. 466–467; and Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 129.

12. Paweł P. Reszka, “Pyta wojewoda świętokrzyski, pyta wójt gminy Iwaniska: Jacy kolaboranci?” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 31, 2007. In Goldstein, “The Funeral,” Goldstein, who was already in the forests, claims that the town was surrounded a day earlier, on October 14, 1942, by other units: namely, German Gendarmes and Polish firefighters.

13. Andrzej Martykin, “Widziałem zagładę Żydów w Iwaniskach,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, October, 10, 2007.

14. Goldstein, “The Funeral.”

15. Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 200; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 163 (table 13), 181–182; Tomaszewski and Żbikowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, p. 189; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 179; and VHF, # 20037–2, testimony of David Gutman, 1996.

16. YVA, O-3/1252. According to Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp.

420–421, the ghetto in Ćmielów was liquidated at the end of October 1942. In “The Funeral,” Goldstein reports Jews being sent straight to Ćmielów and from there to Treblinka. According to Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001) p. 552, Iwaniska’s Jews went to the ghetto in Ćmielów and from there to Treblinka.

17. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 70–72; YVA, O-3/1252; Goldstein, “The Funeral.”

JANOWIEC NAD WISŁĄ

Pre-1939: Janowiec nad Wisłą, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Janowiec is located on the Wisła (Vistula) River, approximately 45 kilometers (28 miles) east of Radom. On the eve of World War II, approximately 300 Jews resided in Janowiec, comprising about 25 percent of the total population.¹

The town was occupied by units of the German armed forces on or around September 9, 1939. Owing to a lack of sources, it is impossible to determine the nature of the initial repressive measures taken against the Jewish community in the first weeks of the German occupation. However, in the area that became part of the Generalgouvernement by the end of October 1939, the Jewish population was the target of antisemitic attacks shortly after the start of the occupation. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, which served as the representative of the local Jewish community. During the winter of 1939–1940, Jews were obliged to perform heavy, manual labor: for example, they had to shovel the snow off the main roads that led into town. In the early spring of 1940, the situation of the Janowiec Jews worsened dramatically. In part, this was due to the closure of the bridge across the Vistula River that had hitherto been open to the public. As a result, the isolation of the residents increased. Still, the town attracted a large number of refugees and other individuals who arrived from other parts of German-occupied Poland. Many of them, particularly the Jews fleeing Warsaw, hoped to stay in Janowiec for a longer period, as the chances of survival there were better than in the rural areas.² This situation severely hampered the activities of the Jewish Council, as each individual who arrived in the town sought at least some modest financial support. In addition, each person who remained in Janowiec needed housing and regular subventions.³

In the spring of 1940, a total of 800 Jews were residing in Janowiec. The living conditions for the Jewish population were already severe, and they continued to deteriorate. Jews faced widespread hunger, starvation, a lack of clothing and shoes, terribly overcrowded housing, and the spread of disease. The poor and those in need received some support from the People’s Committee for Refugees and People in Need, a welfare insti-

tution under the leadership of a man named Grosman. This organization was subordinated to the Jewish Council. In May 1941, a total of 184 of the Jews in most need of support (65 locals and 119 refugees) were registered in their files. However, these numbers increased steadily. Despite a lack of financial resources, the People's Committee maintained a public kitchen that was able to deliver 17 meals (a thin soup and a slice of bread) per day. In July 1941, the People's Committee founded a branch office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), with Dawid Hilf as its leader.⁴

In October 1940, the Nazis set the synagogue ablaze, burning sacred books and documents. The Bet Midrash, which was next to the synagogue, survived the fire, only to be destroyed later in 1942. The Jewish cemetery was razed, and the tombstones were used to pave roads and for other construction projects. The only building that survived the war was the *mikveh* (ritual Jewish bath).⁵

The precise date of the establishment of the ghetto in Janowiec is not known. The large influx of refugees by 1940 led to considerable overcrowding and ghettolike conditions, but at this time the rigid separation of Poles from Jews had not yet been implemented. According to historian Jacek Młynarczyk, Kreishauptmann Dr. Friedrich Egen in Radom ordered in December 1941 the concentration of the Jews from the villages in a number of specified places, including in Janowiec, which were to be designated as *Judenwohnbezirke* (Jewish residential areas, or ghettos).⁶ As a result, the occupation authorities declared the entire town of Janowiec to be a Jewish residential area, and every person that left this area without permission faced arrest and even the death penalty.

The influx of large numbers of refugees from Distrikt Lublin via the Vistula River and the resettlement of the Jews from the environs of Janowiec into the town caused the size of the Jewish population in Janowiec to rise to around 1,200 people by June 1942, a number about four times greater than in the years prior to the German occupation. Acute poverty characterized the life of Jews now crowded into the small town of Janowiec.

Since Janowiec was located quite far from a major railroad, the German authorities decided to relocate the Jews on foot or in horse carriages to Zwoleń, in preparation for their deportation to the extermination camps as part of Aktion Reinhard. It is also likely that some of the Jews of Janowiec were selected as forced laborers to be sent to the labor camps in Skarżysko-Kamienna, Dęblin, and Kurów. On August 3, 1942, 1,200 Jews from the Janowiec nad Wisłą ghetto arrived in the Zwoleń ghetto.⁷ Here they shared the same fate as its other residents. On September 29, 1942, almost all the Jews in Zwoleń were deported in a single transport to the extermination camp in Treblinka to be gassed on arrival.⁸ It is not known how many Jews from Janowiec returned to their hometown after the war, but very few survived.

SOURCES Information regarding the Janowiec ghetto can be found in the following publications: Sebastian Piątkowski, "Żydzi Janowca, Kazimierza i Puław w latach wojny i okupacji

(1939–1945)," in Filip Jaroszyński, ed., *Historia i kultura Żydów Janowca nad Wisłą, Kazimierza Dolnego i Puław. Fenomen miasteczka—sztetl* (Janowiec nad Wisłą: Tow. Przyjaciół Janowca nad Wisłą, 2003), pp. 205–206; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955). The figures given by Rutkowski for the number of Jews in Janowiec ("Janowice," 2,000) and also for the number deported from the Zwoleń ghetto are probably too high. Additional information on the fate of the Jewish community in Janowiec can be found on the Web at www.sztetl.org.pl.

The following archival sources contain information on the Jewish community of Janowiec during the German occupation: AŻIH (211/456 and 1164 [ŻSS]; 210/369 [AJDC]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS]; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

Sebastian Piątkowski and Martin Dean
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 158. It should be noted that the name of the gmina was Oblasy, a neighboring village, but the county administration was located in Janowiec. Janowice is a tiny hamlet directly adjacent to Janowiec.

2. AŻIH, JSS, 211/456; Piątkowski, "Żydzi Janowca, Kazimierza i Puław," pp. 205–206.

3. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/369.

4. *Ibid.*, JSS, 211/456.

5. F. Jaroszyński, "Bóżnica murowana w Janowcu nad Wisłą," in Jaroszyński, *Historia i kultura*, p. 226.

6. AŻIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazanordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122.

7. AŻIH, JSS, 211/1164 (Zwoleń), pp. 61, 67; on transfers to Skarżysko-Kamienna from Zwoleń, see Felicia Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), p. 36.

8. Piątkowski, "Żydzi Janowca, Kazimierza i Puław," pp. 212–213.

JEDLIŃSK

Pre-1939: Jedlińsk, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jedlinsk, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jedlińsk, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Jedlińsk is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) north of Radom. The 1921 census registered 762 Jewish residents, constituting 51.1 percent of the total population.

German persecution of the Jews in Jedlińsk was comparatively moderate until 1941. Their forced labor was limited to 10 days a month in agriculture or various services for the

Germans. With their remaining time, Jedlińsk's Jews worked to make a living. By the end of 1940, most of their businesses had been confiscated.

The Judenrat set up by the Germans included Joseph Diamante (chairman), Leslau, Ajger, Geiger, and Wiener. It later organized a soup kitchen for the poor. A Jewish police unit was also set up.

The German Gendarmerie in Białobrzegi and some Schupo members detached to that unit paid visits to the village. There was also a small Polish (Blue) Police force in Jedlińsk.¹

In March or April 1941, 30 Jewish families from nearby Przytyk were transferred to Jedlińsk, as this village was cleared of its Jewish residents.² One of those transferred, Henry Aizenman (at the time 10 years old), believes his family was moved into the Jedlińsk ghetto. This period—the spring of 1941—is considered by several sources to be the time of the Jedlińsk ghetto's establishment.³ This also coincides with an order issued by Karl Lasch, the governor of Distrikt Radom, to his Kreis- and Stadthauptmänner to establish ghettos by April 1941.⁴

Other sources date the ghetto's establishment at the beginning of 1942, when restrictions on leaving the ghetto were intensified, including the application of the death penalty for those caught outside it without permission.⁵ For example, Idesa Bajtel and Frajda Bryner were arrested on February 28, 1942, transferred to the Radom prison, and sentenced to death for leaving the Jedlińsk ghetto. Bajtel was executed on July 7, 1942; Bryner, on August 1, 1942. In Jedlińsk, Schupo members Pfalzgraf and Klos reportedly shot other Jews in February and April 1942 for the same reason.⁶

Following the introduction of the death penalty, food became scarce, which in turn forced Jews again to risk leaving the ghetto to buy rations illegally from Poles. With a local priest's knowledge, some Jews used a church passageway that bordered onto the ghetto as a smuggling point.⁷

The unfenced ghetto was located in the center of the village. Survivor Cwi Lenemann places it "on the left side of the country road leading to Radom, across from the commissariat" of the Polish (Blue) Police. All Jews living outside the ghetto's designated borders were forced to relocate. Poles were allowed to remain in their households on the ghetto's terrain. Signs warning Jews of the death penalty for leaving the ghetto were posted at its exits. They could leave it only for forced labor and with a German escort. Those exiting unescorted had to present a special ID with a photo. There is no information as to who guarded the ghetto. All Jews had to wear armbands with a Star of David emblem.⁸ With the transfer into the ghetto of the Jews from the village of Błotnica, the number of Jews living there exceeded 1,000.⁹

The ghetto was liquidated in July or August 1942, when its Jews were transferred to the Białobrzegi ghetto. A number were selected, while others volunteered for labor in the nearby Kruszyna and Wsoła camps. Reportedly 68 old and sick Jews were murdered during the liquidation Aktion.¹⁰

On October 1 (or possibly September 1), 1942, German-led forces liquidated the Białobrzegi ghetto by deporting its Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹¹

Following the Jedlińsk ghetto's liquidation, by December 1942, a labor camp for Poles and Jews had been established on the site of a camp used previously for Soviet prisoners of war (POWs). It is possible that some of the Jews from Jedlińsk were prisoners there.¹²

SOURCES The Jedlińsk ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 254–255; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 208.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (302/290, *Memoirs of Jews*); BA-L (B 162/6305); USHMM (RG-02.208M [*Memoirs of Jews*]); and VHF (# 2192, 2194, 16345, 21670, and 39189).

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NOTES

1. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 254–255; BA-L, B 162/6305 (testimony of Genia Weisberg), pp. 200–203. There are contradictory testimonies regarding the German presence in Jedlińsk. Survivor Jack Waksal claims that Jews were able to leave the ghetto for work only under German escort; see VHF, #2192, testimony of Jack Waksal, 1995. In addition, a camp for Soviet POWs was established in Jedlińsk, presumably after the German-Soviet war started in June 1941.

2. Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 94–95.

3. VHF, # 16345, testimony of Henry Aizenman, 1996; BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 200–203; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 254–255; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 570. It should be noted, however, that precise dating is not possible on the basis of these sources.

4. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 82–83.

5. BA-L, B 162/6305 (testimony of Cwi [Herszek] Lenemann), pp. 241–243; Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 84.

6. Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe w Radomiu, 1997), pp. 13–14; BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 200–203, 241–243, 247–249 (arrest order for Josef Pfalzgraf, May 19, 1965); Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 254–255.

7. USHMM, RG-02.208M (*Memoirs of Jews*), 302/290 (Icek Heider), 1946.

8. BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 241–243; VHF, # 2192.

9. The number of ghetto inmates reported by Pilichowski et al.'s *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 208, seems most probable, taking into account the 1921 census results and information on the Jews transferred to Jedlińsk by the German authorities. Another historian, Rutkowski, maintains that there were 2,400 inmates prior to the ghetto's liquidation, which he dates on August 15,

1942 (1,400 persons) and August 25, 1942 (1,000); see “Martyrologia,” p. 156 (table 11). None of the other sources, however, report two separate phases to the deportation.

10. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 254–255; BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 200–203, 241–243; VHF, # 2194, testimony of Sabina Waksal, 1995; # 16345; # 2192.

11. October 1, 1942, is given by most Jewish survivors. See BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 191, 196, 205, 209, 223, 226, 234. Others, however, date it on September 1; see pp. 213, 217.

12. To learn more on the Jedlińsk labor camp, see also Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 208; VHF, # 21670, testimony of Esther Birnbaum, 1996; and # 39189, testimony of Samuel Dresner, 1998.

JEDLNIA KOŚCIELNA (AKA JEDLNIA, POŚWIĘTNE, AND JEDLNIA-POŚWIĘTNE)

Pre-1939: Jedlnia Kościelna, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jedlnia-Koscielne, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jedlnia Kościelna, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Jedlnia Kościelna is located northeast of Radom, 7 kilometers (4.5 miles) west of Pionki. During the 1930s, it was 1 of 19 settlements under the name of Jedlnia spread across an approximately 7-square-kilometer (2.7-square-mile) clearing within Kozienice Landscape Park. The two main sections of Jedlnia—Poświętne and Kościelna—are approximately 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) apart within this clearing.

The exact number of Jews living in Jedlnia after the German occupation is unknown. Wehrmacht forces were quartered in a local school, and according to survivor Chaya Luksenberg, the local Jewish men were forced to clean the German quarters.¹ Archival sources show that by August 1940 a Judenrat had been established in the village, which was chaired by Mendel Flumenbaum, with Nachman Kaplan as the secretary.²

As a part of a larger process of ghettoization of the Jews still living in the villages of Kreis Radom-Land at the end of 1941, Jedlnia was one of the smaller rural communities the Germans intended to liquidate by transferring its Jewish residents to a larger ghetto. However, according to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch in Radom: “thanks to the efforts of the Main Council of Elders of the Jewish Community of Distrikt Radom,” the Germans allowed several rural communities to remain in place by creating official Jewish living quarters for them. For the Jedlnia Jews, the area of Kościelna was chosen as the location for a ghetto.³

The Kreishauptmann’s decree of December 22, 1941, and his verbal instructions of January 9, 1942, served as the basis for establishing “the Jewish residential district (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in Jedlnia-Kościelna.” The ghetto borders were delineated by another order issued and enforced on April 23, 1942, which established the borders as follows: “In the west, by the eastern construction limits of the Kozienice-Radom road. In

the south, by the wooden fence of the Zcaban Maria property and adjoining 1.30 meters [4.3 feet] further in a straight-line extension. In the north, by the property of the church community. . . . Insofar as a fence does not yet mark the border of the Jewish residential district, the fencing will be completed. In addition, the border will be marked with signs. In cases of doubt, the actual fencing, in combination with the signs listing prohibitions, will be definitive [in marking the border].” The order excluded from the ghetto an “Aryan bakery of Józef Szlachcic,” already surrounded by a wooden fence.⁴

At this time the Jedlnia Jews were forced to comply with German requirements to be ghettoized in their current place of residence. On February 13, 1942, the Judenrat reported to the JSS headquarters in Kraków that “it was ordered to construct delousing and disinfecting facilities, as well as to construct several houses—all of this under the threat of the deportation of the Jewish population.” At the time, there were 23 Jewish families in Jedlnia Kościelna; however, according to the Judenrat, each day more families arrived from settlements where ghettos had not been established. Most of the newcomers were forced laborers without a source of income.⁵

In April 1942, according to the JSS in Radom, there were only 80 Jews living in Jedlnia Kościelna.⁶ The German authorities pressured for the opening of the requested facilities, at a cost estimated by the Judenrat of 10,500 złoty. On April 27, 1942, the Jedlnia Judenrat sent to the JSS in Kraków another plea for assistance, informing them of the new “ultimate deadline”—May 15, 1942. By that time, the Judenrat had managed to collect 3,700 złoty, of which 1,700 had already been spent on housing. There was no chance to collect more money, as many of the local Jews performed forced labor in the nearby Siczki labor camp. On May 21, 1942, Kraków sent 600 złoty to help meet the German demands.⁷

A survivor of the ghetto, Jokhewed Norman, recalls that there were only three long houses included within the ghetto, which was surrounded by a wooden fence. Jews lived in overcrowded conditions, and there were many conflicts. Every day Norman’s father and two siblings were taken by truck to work in a gunpowder factory in Pionki; four members of the Luksenberg family also performed forced labor in Pionki. The Luksenbergs had not been resettled, as presumably they were already living within the designated ghetto borders. However, they were required to take in other Jewish families. Although Chaya Luksenberg does not directly mention explicitly the existence of a ghetto, she refers to the restrictions on Jews’ mobility: “we could not go out to buy food.” In the Norman family, most of the smuggling was done by the children. At one point, everyone in the Norman family contracted typhus.⁸

In the summer of 1942, the Germans informed those working in Pionki that they had to stay in Pionki, while the elderly, the women, and the children would be transferred to a different labor camp.⁹ Secondary sources confirm that 100 Jews were permanently transferred to Pionki in August 1942. That same day, the remaining residents of the Jedlnia ghetto were sent to Zwolen. The Zwolen ghetto was liquidated at the end of September or the beginning of October 1942.

SOURCES The following publications make reference to the fate of the Jewish community in Jedlnia during the Holocaust: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 165; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 132, 155 (table 10), 156–160 (table 11), 177–180.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/382, 211/478, 211/854-855); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 38958 and 42273).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 42273, testimony of Chaya Luksenberg, 1998.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/382 (Jedlnia-Poświętne), p. 2; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/478 (Jedlnia-Kościelna), p. 1.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/854 (Radom), p. 5.
4. Ibid., 211/478, p. 5.
5. Ibid., p. 2.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/855 (Radom), p. 12.
7. Ibid., 211/478, pp. 4–6.
8. VHF, # 38958, testimony of Jokhewed Norman, 1997; and 42273.
9. VHF, # 38958, and # 42273.

JĘDRZEJÓW

Pre-1939: Jędrzejów, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jędrzejów, Kreis center, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jędrzejów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Jędrzejów is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) southwest of Kielce. An estimated 4,000 Jews lived in Jędrzejów in 1939. The Jędrzejów Kreishauptmann was initially Dr. Karl Glehn (September 1939–October 1940); he was succeeded first by Dr. Fritz von



A column of Jews who have been rounded up for deportation march out of Jędrzejów, n.d.

USHMM WS #33450 COURTESY OF GFH

Balluseck (November 1940–April 1942) and then by Bernhard Höfer (April 1942–January 1945).

An open ghetto in Jędrzejów was set up as one of the first in the Generalgouvernement in the spring of 1940, possibly as early as February. Located in the eastern part of the town, it included Kiliński, Pińczów, 3 Maja, Duch-Imbora, and Łysakowska Streets. Most Jews living outside the designated ghetto area had to relocate, although more than 20 families were allowed to live outside for some time. Guards watched the ghetto exits, but initially the Jews could come and go.

By this time Jędrzejów already had received 500 refugees, and more were coming. The newcomers were mostly from Zagłębie Dąbrowskie, in Silesia, and the towns of Zgierz, Łódź, Pińczów, and Szczekociny.¹

Dr. Hirsch Beer of Głogów organized the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee and opened a soup kitchen. On August 16, 1940, he was appointed a member of the Jewish Relief Committee for Kreis Jędrzejów (Żydowski Komitet Opiekuńczy Powiatowy, ŻKOP), which the Kreishauptmann established to take over the provision of welfare from the Judenrat. A number of Judenrat members, especially Pinkus Teitelbaum, tried to undermine Beer's activities.² Thus began a struggle for power that continued throughout most of the ghetto's existence.

The 14-member Judenrat and their families lived in the largest house in Jędrzejów, while the balance of nearly 4,200 Jews were squeezed into rooms that three or four families shared. Many accused the Judenrat of corruption.³

A Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) of fewer than 10 men was set up to keep order in the ghetto and to assist the sanitation committee responsible for the ghetto's cleanliness. It is not clear if they were also charged at that time with guarding the exit posts from the ghetto. Their commander was one of the Judenrat members, Jakób Mermelsztajn. According to survivor Renya Kukielko: “[T]here were very few men in the militia [Jewish Police] who had any humanity in them. Most of them behaved like beasts of prey, some even worse than the Germans.”⁴

On January 15 and 16, 1941, the Germans deported 600 Jews (105 families) from Jędrzejów to several other locations within the Kreis. The poor housing conditions caused many to return secretly to Jędrzejów over the following weeks. This operation decreased the number of Jews in the ghetto to 3,600. According to historian Adam Rutkowski, the Judenrat initiated the resettlement to avoid having to provide social services to these Jews; most of those deported were either poor refugees or other impoverished members of the community.⁵

In January 1941, 400 to 600 Jews, including women, cleared snow daily. By February, 100 were tasked with clearing snow, while many also worked loading wood. Later on, 220 young men were sent for forced labor in the vicinity of Lwów. A few of these men survived by escaping from the labor camp and returning to Jędrzejów.

By June 1941, the Judenrat had opened a hospital with 25 beds to serve all the localities in the Kreis (apart from Włoszczowa), under Dr. Beer's supervision. The hospital later treated Poles and Jews, although the latter bore most of the costs of its or-

ganization. The Judenrat also organized its own postal service at this time, as the local post office was forbidden to dispatch Jewish mail.

On the Kreishauptmann's order, the number of Jewish Police grew to 18 in June 1941. The following duties were added: guarding the ghetto, together with the Wehrmacht; enforcing the curfew; and combating smuggling and begging. In the summer of 1941, the Jewish Police conducted a series of round-ups of beggars, who were ordered to relocate immediately away from Jędrzejów.

By October 1941, the so-called Six, comprising the "most energetic" officials of the Jewish Police, were assigned solely to rounding up and escorting Jewish laborers, as well as checking the state of the ghetto's sanitation. In December 1941, the Jewish Police post was moved to 12 Pińczów Street, and its members received instructions to tighten their guard at the ghetto exits, as from October Jews could be shot for leaving the ghetto without a permit.⁶

A few members of the Judenrat were murdered in August 1941. Their names remain unknown. Shootings of Jews in the ghetto without pretext were frequent.

By April 1942, the ghetto leadership had been informed unofficially of the approaching evacuation of the Jews within the Kreis, but it believed the Aktion might be limited to the resettlement to the larger towns of Jews living in the villages.⁷

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, the ghetto was enclosed in March 1942, when it was surrounded with a barbed-wire fence. Contact with non-Jews from then on was prohibited.⁸ In May 1942, 21 Jewish families previously holding official permission from the Germans to live outside the ghetto's limits were forced to relocate within it.⁹

By June 1942, Georg Wall had become the commander of the Jewish Police in Jędrzejów, now 20 strong. The ghetto had 3,807 inhabitants.¹⁰

Between August 17 and 24, 1942, the labor office (having been transferred to the ghetto) conducted the registration of Jewish women aged between 15 and 50. In June 1942, the Kraków JSS encouraged Jędrzejów's Jewish population to organize workshops; however, only shoemakers were interested in the project, as other craftsmen believed they could earn more working independently. At the time, there were 150 craftsmen and the same number of apprentices in the ghetto.¹¹

On August 28, 1942, Jews from the following localities were resettled to Jędrzejów: Sobków (800 persons), Małogoszcz (830), Brzegi (48), Węgleszyn, Oksa, Nagłowice (152), Przysław (136), Mierzwin (120), Nawarzyce (193), and Raków. By September 4, 1942, 2,200 newcomers were concentrated in Jędrzejów,¹² bringing the total number of ghetto inmates to approximately 6,000.

The Germans liquidated the ghetto on September 16, 1942.¹³ That morning, all Jędrzejów's Jews were gathered in the market square. The selection was conducted following the arrival of Gestapo officer Ernst Thomas. Approximately 240 Jews were sent back to the ghetto; this included the Judenrat, Jewish Police, and their families. Fewer than 200 able-bodied Jews were selected for work at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG)

ammunition labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. An additional number of men were selected for labor at the Sędziszów railway depot. The remainder was herded to the train station and from there sent to the Treblinka killing center.

By the beginning of October 1942, the ghetto was reduced to three buildings. All the Jews—including women—were engaged in cleaning out the former ghetto and the train depot. They were able to keep their possessions; the authorities confiscated the possessions of the evacuated Jews.

There were rumors that by the end of the year all Jews would be evacuated from Jędrzejów. Although the soup kitchen was relocated there, there was nothing to cook because the Germans assigned only very small rations to the ghetto inmates. Beer doubted that the ŻKOP could continue its existence with less than 1,000 Jews remaining in the Kreis and no help available. He and Abram Solowicz (Szolowicz) were the only remaining staff. Beer, however, transferred some of the hospital furnishings into the ghetto and set up a seven-bed hospital, which he ran with his wife Regina and one helper.¹⁴

On November 4, 1942, Beer reported the following remnant ghettos existing in the Kreis: Jędrzejów (240 persons), Wodzisław (90), Szczekociny (40), Włoszczowa (250), and several dozens Jews in Sędziszów; another 500 or so Jews were in labor camps.¹⁵

The final liquidation of the Jędrzejów ghetto took place between February 22 and 24, 1942. Approximately 200 Jews were transferred to the HASAG camp in Skarżysko. Thirty-five were shot on the spot.¹⁶

SOURCES The Jędrzejów ghetto is described in the following publications: Renya Kukiello, *Escape from the Pit* (New York: Sharon Books, 1947); Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 81, 96, 101, 145; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 259–261. Additional information can be found in Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006); and Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004).

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/386; 211/483–494); and USHMM (RG-15.019M [court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 17; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (Jędrzejów); Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/483 (Jędrzejów), pp. 1–2, 6, 9, 15; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/386 (Jędrzejów), p. 1. Also see *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 13, 1940, and May 6, 1942.

2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/483, pp. 15–17.

3. For names, see *ibid.*, pp. 15–16, 27; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/386 (Jędrzejów), p. 2.

4. Kukielko, *Escape from the Pit*, p. 10; *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 8 and December 31, 1940, and August 27, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/483, pp. 15–17.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/484, pp. 25, 28–30; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 96.

6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 3, August 27, and October 26, 1941, and January 9, 1942; and Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 84.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/492, p. 30.

8. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 261; see also Kukielko, *Escape from the Pit*, p. 8.

9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 6, 1942.

10. Ibid., June 28 and July 12, 1942; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 145 (table 6).

11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 23 and 26, 1942. Also see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489, p. 16; and 211/494, p. 24.

12. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 101, 145–146 (table 6); USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489 (Jędrzejów), p. 38.

13. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 145 (table 6).

14. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 175; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489, pp. 41–43, 45, 48–49, 51–53, 54–55.

15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489, pp. 55–56.

16. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 145 (table 6), 172. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 262, date the final liquidation Aktion on September 2, 1943.

KAMIEŃSK

Pre-1939: Kamieńsk, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kamiensk, Kreis Petrikau, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kamieńsk, town, Łódź województwo, Poland

Kamieńsk is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) south of Łódź. According to the Judenrat, there were 834 Jewish residents in the village in 1939. In June 1940, Załma Opoczyński was the Judenrat chairman, and Abram Kimelman was the Judenrat secretary.

The Judenrat estimated that 90 percent of the town's Jewish houses were razed in fires caused by air raids in the initial days of the war. As a result, many Jews moved to nearby Gorzów and Gomunice. Fearing the spread of diseases in deplorable housing conditions, the Judenrat organized a sanitation committee and a public bath “for delousing purposes” in August 1940. Doctor Leopold Betler (Better) was the Judenrat person responsible for sanitation issues. Until the ghetto's liquidation, there was no outbreak of contagious disease.¹

In September 1940, on the German Kreishauptmann's order, the Judenrat's composition changed. Herszel Szajnfarber was appointed as the new chairman, while Załma Opoczyński was degraded to his deputy. The 16-member Judenrat also included Pinkus Dłużnowski as treasurer, A. Kimelman as

secretary, Herszel Opoczyński, and Nachman Żelichowski. Lejbusz Goldberg and Kasryel Mokrzański were responsible for provisions, Alter Szlamkiewicz and Moszek Lichtensztajn managed finances, and Chaskiel Gliklich was in charge of Jewish labor. One refugee from Vienna, Otto Natowicz, was “the secretary in German language.” The Judenrat headquarters were located on 6 Zjednoczenia Street.²

There were 517 Jews living in Kamieńsk in January 1941. By February 1941, there were reportedly 76 newcomers. Most of the Jews lived around the Market Square and on one of the main streets leading north of it (Piotrków), as well as nearby Głowacki, Konopnicka, and Zjednoczenia Streets.³

On February 23, 1941, the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen distributing 100 to 150 meals daily. The soup kitchen was closed on July 18, 1941, from then on working only intermittently. Icchok Wajnman, Abram Sucher Gliklich, and Chaim Szmul Rozencajg organized social assistance provided by the Judenrat. Kasryel Mokrzański replaced Rozencajg in January 1941. At the beginning of 1942, an official branch of the Jewish Social-Self Help (JSS) was established in Kamieńsk under Brygiel Lipman, Hilel Faktor, and Jakub J. Opoczyński.⁴

The number of refugees rose to 95 after more settled in Kamieńsk in May and June 1941. In August 1941, there were 558 Jews, of which 73 still held private sector jobs. In July 1941, 25 Jews were performing forced labor, and by August their number had risen to 65. In October 1941, the number of Jews still able to support themselves had dropped to 26, as had the number of forced laborers (to 20). The Jewish population stood at the time at 570.⁵ Daytime child care managed by Gutermanówna was organized in the fall of 1941 for 34 children.

The German authorities established a ghetto in Kamieńsk by the beginning of February 1942. In a letter of February 1, 1942, the local JSS branch expressed their “astonishment” on receiving less-than-usual financial help from its Kraków headquarters, “when the living conditions of all our residents have greatly deteriorated due to restrictions on all Jews' movement.” The JSS expected that more than half of the Kamieńsk Jews would be forced to apply for assistance in the near future. In May 1942, the JSS reported on the deteriorating situation of the ghettoized Jews “of whom the larger part made their living from going village to village—the route that was now closed.”⁶

The ghetto's borders were delineated. The Jews were most likely allowed to stay in their destroyed neighborhood or a section of it. In February 1942, the JSS engaged in organizing agricultural training for 30 volunteers. It planned to use “three strips of land within the [Jewish] Quarter that are owned by the Judenrat” but was also interested in Jewish-owned land outside the ghetto. The farmers themselves offered the JSS to cultivate their fields, but the Kamieńsk JSS branch feared the possible consequences and asked Kraków for advice: “Can we cultivate that land? Will not any harm come of it?”⁷

In May 1942, the community reported that it had received “Jewish land for our disposal” and had planted it with potatoes, beans, and millet. In July 1942, the Arbeitsamt refused to per-

mit the employment of Jewish laborers on nearby farms. It also made “the Judenrat responsible for immediate release of those who were already working in agriculture.”⁸

The Kamieński ghetto was liquidated in October 1942. Its residents, approximately 500 prisoners, were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 141 (table 4), 169, lists population numbers during the war.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/395, 211/519–521) and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/395 (Kamieński), pp. 6, 11, 17, 26, 29; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/519 (Kamieński), p. 27; and 211/520 (Kamieński), pp. 19, 24–25.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/395, pp. 19–20; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/520, pp. 5–6.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/395, pp. 26, 29–30, 35–50; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/518 (Kamieński), p. 22.
4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/395, pp. 29–30, 33; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/519, p. 17; 211/520, pp. 5–6, 24, 37; and 211/521 (Kamieński), p. 11.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/520, pp. 5–6, 19, 33, 40–41.
6. Ibid., 211/521, pp. 4, 19.
7. Ibid., pp. 4, 6.
8. Ibid., pp. 23–24, 39.

KIELCE

Pre-1939: Kielce, city and center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The city of Kielce is located about 175 kilometers (109 miles) south of Warsaw on the Silnica River. By 1939, almost 20,000 Jews lived in Kielce, out of a general population of 60,000.

The Germans conquered Kielce on September 5, 1939. A curfew was imposed on the city, and every contact between the German military administration and the Jews was marked by violence, persecution, and humiliation. Within a short time Jews were being kidnapped on the street for forced labor, evicted from their homes by force, and ordered to clean public buildings and toilets, clear rubble, fill ditches, and repair roads. Kielce, which was in the area of the Generalgouvernement, became the center of 1 of the 10 administrative units (Kreise) in Distrikt Radom. On October 26, 1939, the administration of the city passed from the military to civilian authorities.¹ In November 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established under the leadership of Dr. Moshe Pelc, a surgeon who had close connections to Polish circles and was fluent in German.² In accord with a regulation that everyone had to work, Jews were taken on a daily basis to sites for various sorts of forced



Members of the Kielce ghetto administration pose around a desk in the Judenrat office. This photograph was part of an album prepared by the Jewish Welfare Committee in Kielce for presentation to the Judenrat chairman, Hermann Levi, January 1942.

USHMM WS #03282, COURTESY OF RAFAL IMBRO

labor, such as digging ditches, clearing rubble, repairing train tracks, cleaning, and hard labor in the quarries. In the summer of 1940, Jewish youth from Kielce were sent on forced labor assignments to the area of Bełżec, in Distrikt Lublin, where they were put to work along the Soviet border, digging trenches, building fortifications, felling trees, and performing other tasks such as diverting rivers, drying swamps, and paving roads.

In 1941, thousands of Jewish refugees from German territories that were to be cleansed of Jews arrived in Kielce. Among them were Polish Jews and over a thousand Jews from Vienna. By February 1941, the Jewish population of Kielce had grown to 27,000. The Judenrat initiated the creation of a number of jobs, especially for members of the free professions and Jews from the intellectual class, who could not perform hard labor. However, only a small proportion of the city's Jews found regular employment. The refugees struggled to earn a living, but debilitating hunger led to illness, and the number fit for labor continually declined. Pelc was occupied primarily with matters related to health and welfare. He struggled to communicate with the occupation authorities and finally concluded that he was not suited for the task. In the summer of 1940, as the impoverishment of the Jews reached its peak, Pelc decided, with the agreement of the Germans, to resign. His deputy, Hermann Levi, took his place, a well-to-do industrialist who owned property in Kielce and elsewhere and a man with connections and influence. Levi reorganized the Judenrat and tried to improve the living conditions of the Jewish population.³ But before he could show any results, the decree to establish the ghetto was issued.

On March 31, 1941, the town's German Kommissar, A. Drechsel, issued a signed document ordering the establishment of a “Jewish quarter” (*Jüdisches Wohnbezirk*)—a ghetto. Attached to the order was a list of 500 to 600 buildings, on 26 streets, which had been selected for the ghetto area and could hold at most about 15,000 people. The area of the ghetto was

15 percent of the general area of the city, and most of the houses were one-story high, with no running water or sewers. After five days (on April 5) the ghetto area was declared to be a closed zone infected with contagious diseases; it was surrounded by a fence made partly of stone and partly of wood and topped with barbed wire. Signs were posted along the fence in German, Yiddish, Polish, and Hebrew: "Sealed Area—Entrance Forbidden."⁴

With the transition to a ghetto, authority over the Jews passed from the civilian administration to the German police and the SS. Six weeks after it was closed, the ghetto was opened for passage by Jews with work permits issued by the Protection Police (Schutzpolizei, Schupo) and signed by Hans Gaier, the Schupo commander in Kielce and the dominant figure during the ghetto's existence. Movement into and out of the ghetto was through two gates, guarded by German, Polish, and Jewish policemen. Along with the establishment of the ghetto, a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) of several dozen men was recruited. Most were refugees who had arrived from Austria and the areas annexed to the Reich. Bruno Schindler, a German Jew, was appointed as the police chief, and his deputy was Gustav Spiegel from Austria. The Jewish Police were subordinated to the Judenrat. However, in the case of Kielce, they received orders directly from the Schupo and felt protected by their authority. Most Jewish policemen regarded the native Jews of Kielce as *Ostjuden*—miserable Polish Jews. They did more than what was demanded of them, and the head of the Judenrat was unable to prevail over them. Within the ghetto they were regarded as corrupt opportunists who blackmailed money from the Jews. They lived a life of luxury, and the entire Jewish community feared them.⁵

During the first months in the ghetto, everyone tried to adjust. The schools were shut down. An epidemic of typhus was one of the severe problems threatening the lives of the inhabitants, and the Judenrat established a special section for sanitation. Affluent Jews continued their charitable giving, and Hermann Levi faithfully fulfilled German orders. Everyone working in the Judenrat sought to find a place in its large administration for his own family members to work. By the beginning of 1942, the number of Judenrat employees had reached 4,000. They did not conceal the benefits they received from the other ghetto inhabitants. The entire ghetto knew that the Judenrat and the Jewish Police were not lacking for anything, even as many were dying from starvation and disease. In the summer of 1941, the Gestapo uncovered a Polish underground cell in Kielce, which included a number of Jewish doctors, including Dr. Moshe Pelc. In July 1941, they were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp where, within a few days, while working in a punishment brigade inside the camp, Pelc was murdered by an SS guard who stomped on his neck and strangled him to death.

Inside the ghetto there was no employment for the masses, and the work on the outside was so arduous that only a few heeded the call. This created a severe economic problem, which the Judenrat was unable to overcome. Beginning in February

1942, all Jews in Distrikt Radom, including in Kielce, received on average one quarter of the previous food ration. One could not survive on the monthly ration coupons. A black market developed, and the prices for food shot up. The ghetto inhabitants sold their last articles of clothing for a piece of bread, and children scoured the garbage for food. The task of finding food outside the closed ghetto fell on little children, who overcame fear and sneaked like petty thieves to the "Aryan" side to steal a few potatoes to smuggle into the ghetto. All the written testimonies, without exception, recall the terrible hunger that prevailed in the ghetto, the smuggling, and the difficulties in finding food.⁶

The winter of 1941–1942 was harsh and especially cold. There was no electricity in the ghetto, and it was impossible to put on furs for fear they would be confiscated. In most of the dwellings, they burned whatever they could, including cloth, furniture, floorboards, and doorposts. To provide some relief from the cold the Judenrat opened three coffee centers in the ghetto, at which about 1,200 liters (317 gallons) of coffee were served on a daily basis without charge, enough for at least 5,000 people. In addition to the soup kitchen opened in November 1941, the Judenrat opened another soup kitchen at the beginning of 1942, which served about 3,000 lunches a day. There was also a shop with food to purchase, subsidized by the Judenrat, and a local committee of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), which provided weekly food portions to Jews in the local prison, to Jews discharged from the hospital, and starting in May 1942, to about 1,000 impoverished Jews.⁷

The collection of taxes in the ghetto, on which the Judenrat's revenue and budget were based, was one of the greatest difficulties facing the Judenrat. By the beginning of 1942, most of those on the tax rolls could not meet their obligations. The burden fell on the well-to-do, who were not always impressed by the threats of the Judenrat, which resorted to force to collect the taxes. During the entire period of occupation, the Germans carried out acts of punishment, special Aktions



Portrait of ghetto administrators and Viennese Jews standing in front of a home for the elderly in the Kielce ghetto. This photograph was part of an album prepared by the Jewish Welfare Committee in Kielce for presentation to the Judenrat chairman, Hermann Levi, January 1942. USHMM WS #03276, COURTESY OF RAFAL IMBRO

against the Jews, planned in advance for all of Distrikt Radom. Ernst Thomas, the head of the Gestapo in Kielce, commanded these Aktionen. Among these Aktionen were the “Communist Aktion” (summer 1941), the fur confiscation Aktion (December 1941–January 1942), the “intelligentsia Aktion” (April 1942), and others. There was no system of education or cultural activity in the Kielce ghetto, nor any religious life or organized programs for underground youth groups. Everyone was occupied with searching for a way to make it to the following day. In August 1942, 17 months after the ghetto was established, the expulsion of the Kielce Jews began as a total surprise, as part of the general liquidation of the Jews in Distrikt Radom.

It may be assumed that in August 1942 there were a few more than 24,000 Jews in the ghetto. On August 19, during the evening hours, a train with 50 closed freight cars arrived at the platform of the railroad station. The floors of the cars were covered with lime and chlorine. That night the ghetto was surrounded by scores of police of Sonderkommando Feucht, which arrived from Radom to carry out the expulsion. Among them were Ukrainian auxiliaries, and they were assisted by members of the Kielce Schupo. In three Aktionen between August 20 and 24, 20,000 Jews were sent to the extermination camp at Treblinka in three transports, averaging 6,000 to 7,000 people in each transport, with about 120 people in each freight car. The expulsion was directed by Gaier and Thomas, who were also responsible for the “selections” that were carried out. The evacuation was especially cruel. Since it was obvious to the Germans that the number of freight cars could not hold all of the evacuees, about 2,500 children, women, elderly, and sick people were murdered on the spot. They were torn to pieces by dogs or shot in the back, and the streets of the ghetto were strewn with corpses. More than 10 percent of the Jews being evacuated were shot to death immediately in the course of the expulsion.⁸

At the end of the five days, about 1,700 Jews were left at the site where the selection was carried out, next to the great synagogue, with about 150 women and 60 children among them. The men were people with work permits, doctors and Jewish policemen with their families, and some members of the Judenrat, including Hermann Levi and his family. All of them were taken to a number of streets in the ghetto, which was turned into the “small ghetto.”

There was no Judenrat in the small ghetto. Since Bruno Schindler, the commander of the Jewish Police, had been shot to death in the third Aktion, his deputy, Gustav Spiegel, a Jew from Vienna and a bloodthirsty informer and collaborator, was put in charge of the Jews in the small ghetto, which was essentially turned into a work camp. Most of the Jews remaining in the small ghetto worked at cleaning and sorting all the property and contents of the large ghetto; the others were taken to work at essential installations in the city and at the Kadzielnia quarry. From time to time several dozen Jews were sent to forced labor camps in the area. Many tried to acquire “Aryan” documents from Poles, and there were actu-

ally attempts, which failed, to establish an underground in cooperation with the Armia Krajowa (AK), the underground Polish Home Army.⁹

In January 1943, Gaier and some Gestapo men took Hermann Levi, his wife, sons, and daughters-in-law to the Jewish cemetery in Kielce, where they murdered them. In March 1943, about 40 Jews, mostly doctors and their families, were taken to the cemetery and murdered on the spot.¹⁰ On May 29, the small ghetto was surrounded, and the Jews were ordered to assemble at the site of the mass expulsion of August 1942. Then 50 children were torn from their parents (except for 3 who went into hiding) and were shot to death on the same day in the Jewish cemetery.¹¹ About 500 Jews were sent to the work camp at Pionki, and about 200 were sent to the Bliżyn camp. The remaining 800 were scattered among the Kielce work camps at Henryków, Ludwików, and HASAG (Hugo Schneider AG) Granat, where they were housed in shacks. Ludwików was a steel mill where they made frames for horse-drawn wagons. At Henryków, a carpentry plant, they made wooden parts for the wagons. HASAG Granat was a munitions factory. Conditions at these three camps were tolerable relative to other work camps in the area. Even here, however, several dozen Jews were executed by hanging, mostly men who tried to escape and were caught.¹² As the Soviet front drew closer, the Germans were forced to evacuate the camps in Kielce. During the first days of August 1944, Henryków and Ludwików were evacuated, and the Jewish prisoners were sent on transports to Auschwitz. The Jewish inmates at HASAG Granat were evacuated in stages between June and August and sent to various places, including Przedbórz, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Częstochowa, Buchenwald, and Leipzig.¹³ With a few isolated exceptions, there is no evidence of acts of rescue in Kielce, and there were no Jews in hiding at the time of liberation.

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jews of Kielce during the Holocaust include the following: Sara Bender, “The Extermination of the Kielce Ghetto—New Study and Aspects Based on Survivors’ Testimonies,” *Jewish History Quarterly*, no. 2 (218) (2006); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Adam Masalski and Stanisław Meducki, *Kielce w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej 1939–1945* (Łódź: Ossolineum, 1986); Jacek Młynarczyk, “Bestialstwo z urzędu. Organizacja hitlerowskich akcji deportacyjnych w ramach Operacji Reinhard na przykładzie likwidacji kieleckiego getta,” *Jewish History Quarterly*, no. 2 (203) (2002): 354–379. There is also the yizkor book, edited by Pinhas Tsi-tron, *Sefer Kielce: Toldot kehillat Kyelts mi-yom bivasadah ve-ad burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun ole Kyelts be-Yisrael, 1957); and the M.A. thesis by Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, “Der Holocaust in Kielce/Distrikt Radom” (Universität Essen, 2000).

Accounts by survivors in book form include the following: Mildred (Mania) Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed* (U.S., 1979); Daniel Wiener, *Daniel’s Story: February 19, 1916–April 3, 2001* (Canada: Bill Wiener, 2001); and Alice Birnhak, *Next Year God Willing* (New York: Shengold, 1992).

Relevant documents and testimonies can be found in the following archives: APK; AŻIH (301/66, 254, 1309, 1705, and

3012); BA-L; BA-MA; IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-15.031, Stadt und Kreishauptmann Kielce); and YVA (e.g., O-2/516; O-3/2985, 7433, 8911, 9147, 10792, and 11630; O-4/405; 58/2083; TR-10/673 and TR-10/911; M-49/E/1309 and 1704; M-1/Q/174).

Sara Bender
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NOTES

1. APK, 2652; and YVA, M-49/E/1705.
2. Birnhak, *Next Year God Willing*, pp. 6–11.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska* (German newspaper in Polish that served as the propaganda instrument of the German authorities in the Generalgouvernement) (1940) no. 32.
4. *Anordnungsblatt für die Stadt Kielce Nr. 7/1941*, pp. 2–5; USHMM, RG-15.091M, reel 14.
5. Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, p. 21; and YVA, TR-10/911, pp. 26–76.
6. *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement* (1941), p. 595; *Anordnungsblatt für die Stadt und Kreishauptmannschaft Kielce* (January 1, 1942), APK; YVA, O-3/2640, p. 1; YVA, O-3/6782, 8911, 12285, 11630, 9147; also O-33/6442.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska* (1941) nos. 42, 45, 51, 78, 87; (1942) nos. 78, 83, 94.
8. YVA, TR-10/911, pp. 31, 79, 80–81; M-49/E/1309; M-49/E/1704; O-3/2985; O-3/7433; 58/2083; and O-2/516. Also see Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, p. 34.
9. YVA, TR-10/911, pp. 34–38; TR-10/673, p. 42; O-3/2985, 8911, 9147, 10792, 11630; O-4/405; 58/2083; M-49/E/1705; M-1/Q/174; Birnhak, *Next Year God Willing*, pp. 219–234; Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, p. 51.
10. Wiener, *Daniel's Story*, p. 34.
11. Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, p. 51; Birnhak, *Next Year God Willing*, pp. 225, 249–250; Wiener, *Daniel's Story*, p. 34; YVA, O-4/405; M-1/E/75; TR-10/911, p. 38.
12. Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, pp. 54–55; Tsila Liberman, *Tselinkab: Yaldah she-sardah et Oshvits* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002), pp. 39–44; “Di letzte 45 kinderlekh in Kelz,” *Fun letstn burbn* (Munich), no. 3 (October–November 1946): 34–35.
13. Feferman-Washoff, *The Processed*, pp. 55–62; Birnhak, *Next Year God Willing*, pp. 225, 279–281, 312–316.

KLIMONTÓW

Pre-1939: Klimontów, town, Sandomierz powiat, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Klimontow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Klimontów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Klimontów is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) southwest of Lublin on the Koprzywianka River. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, about 3,100 Jews resided in the town.¹

The first German patrol entered Klimontów during the second week of September 1939. Soon after their arrival, German forces assembled all the men, Jews and Poles, on the market square. They warned the local population not to offer any resistance and later released the detainees, shooting three people (two of them Jews) as the crowd dispersed. Over the

following days, German troops passed through the town, plundering Jewish stores and houses and beating Jews in the process.²

At the beginning of October 1939, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of eight members. The men were nominated by the Polish wójt (civil administrator), Stanisław Losata, and initially Chaim Himmelfarb became the chairman. However, he was replaced after a short time by E. Tepperman, who was better suited to this position. At the end of October 1939, the German authorities demanded a large “contribution” from the Judenrat, and 10 hostages were taken until the sum was paid.³

In November 1939, when the Generalgouvernement was established, Klimontów was incorporated into Kreis Opatow, within Distrikt Radom. Deportation Aktions against the Jewish population in Kreis Opatow, including Klimontów, were organized and carried out by the Security Police detachment (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. The German Gendarmerie and Polish auxiliary police also participated in these operations.

In March 1940, the Germans ordered the reconstitution of the Jewish Council, now headed by Motl Shuldman. A Jewish police force was also formed to assist the Judenrat. In the period 1939–1941, the German authorities implemented a series of discriminatory policies against the Jewish population in Klimontów. The occupying forces confiscated Jewish property, ordered all Jews to register and wear distinguishing patches, and prohibited them from moving outside designated areas. The Jews were also forced to perform various kinds of heavy physical labor. Some 100 men had to be provided every day by the Judenrat. The most grueling labor was in a stone quarry at Międzygórz, 18 kilometers (11 miles) to the northeast of Klimontów. About 60 Jewish workers were escorted there each week under close guard from April 1941. The overseers beat the workers if they failed to meet their work quotas. There was some criticism of the Judenrat and Jewish Police, as they and their families were generally exempted from the most onerous forced labor tasks. It was also possible for the more wealthy Jews to pay for substitutes to avoid forced labor, which produced an income for the welfare measures organized by the Judenrat.⁴

In January 1941, the Jewish population was 3,746, and by April 1941 it had risen to 3,872.⁵ Despite transfers for forced labor, the Jewish population increased due to the arrival of refugees from other places and the resettlement of Jews from the surrounding villages. There were also movement restrictions within the town: Jews were no longer permitted to use the market square, and those who lived on the square could only enter their houses from the rear.⁶ From mid-October 1941, German announcements threatened the death penalty for Jews caught outside the town without permission. In December 1941, the Germans demanded that Jews surrender all fur items and winter clothing for the use of the German army. Failure to comply with this order could mean the death penalty.

On May 13, 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Opatów issued orders for the creation of 15 ghettos in the Kreis by June 1,

1942. Among those created was the ghetto of Klimontów.⁷ The ghetto was located on the market square and the adjoining streets. It remained an open ghetto, with no fence surrounding it. At each exit from the town large signs warned: “No Jews permitted past this point.” German patrols with dogs caught at least 3 Jews outside the town and shot them.⁸ The ghetto contained about 3,900 Jews, including a few hundred Jewish displaced persons (some of whom had been deported from Vienna).⁹ In the summer of 1942, about 300 Jews were sent to the forced labor camp at Skarżysko-Kamienna. When one of them illegally returned home, in August 1942 the German police shot all of his 14 relatives and another 22 Jews in a punitive reprisal.¹⁰

On October 30, 1942, the ghetto in Klimontów was liquidated. At 5:00 A.M. German police and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the town and ordered all the Jews to gather in the market square. The German authorities selected 150 of them for the purpose of specialized labor and sent them to a labor camp. Another 65 people, including members of the Judenrat and Jewish Police, initially remained in Klimontów to collect and sort out Jewish property. The bulk of the Jewish population—about 3,700 people—was escorted to the train station at Nadbrzezie near Sandomierz, where they were loaded onto freight cars (120 people in each) destined for the extermination camp at Treblinka. As the Jews were marched to the railway station, the German police shot about 80 elderly and sick people who could not keep up. After the liquidation of the ghetto in the village, the remaining 300 or so Jews, including a number who emerged from hiding, were taken to the ghetto in Sandomierz on November 15, 1942. Polish (Blue) Police and firefighters searched the former Jewish houses for Jews in hiding or any remaining property for weeks afterwards.¹¹ Only a few Jews from the town survived the German occupation in the forced labor camps, in the forests, or in hiding.

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of Klimontów can be found in L. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov Dertzeilt* (Warsaw, 1947); Mordechai Pentshiner, “Churban Klimontov,” *YIVO Bleter* (New York) 30: 1 (1947): 147–152; and in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 505–508. An annotated English translation prepared by Alex P. Korn of the article in *Pinkas ha-kebilot* has been published electronically by JewishGen (October 7, 2005).

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Klimontów can be found in the following archives: IPN; USHMM (RG-15.019M; RG-03.020; and Acc.1995.A.1187); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-16/379; O-21/15, 16, 17, and 19; M-1/E/1115; M-1/Q/36 and 196).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 505–506.

2. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov*, pp. 11–12; USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1187, Mordechai Penczyner, “The Destruction of Klimontow,” testimony to the Historical Committee in Stuttgart (English translation). This is probably another version of his published testimony; see Pentshiner, “Churban Klimontov,” pp. 147–152.

3. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov*, p. 14; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 507.

4. USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1187.

5. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955), table 13.

6. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov*, p. 31.

7. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 85–86; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 152–153.

8. USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1187.

9. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 14 (IPN, ASG, sygn. 47, p. 180).

10. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov*, pp. 36–39. USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1187, gives slightly different details regarding this event.

11. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov*, pp. 42–50; USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1187; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 507–508.

KLWÓW

Pre-1939: Kłwów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kłwów, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kłwów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Kłwów is located 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) northwest of Radom. The 1921 census registered 297 Jewish residents, constituting 30.7 percent of the total population.

According to survivor Mosheh Goldblat, soon after occupying the village in September 1939, the German Gestapo ordered all Jews aged 17 to 80 to dismantle their wooden synagogue, saw the wood into small pieces, and load it onto buses. Under severe beatings, Goldblat was forced to destroy the synagogue’s Ten Commandments.

Next, forced labor was introduced for the Jews of Kłwów. Dragged from their homes, they were assigned to carry water and coal, as well as chop wood for the German forces quartered in a local school.¹

At the time 50 local Jewish families were living in the village. The Germans organized a Judenrat chaired by J. Poznański.

Many of the refugees who soon settled in Kłwów were from the town of Mława, which was incorporated into the Reich at the end of 1939. By the end of 1940, they had organized their own refugee committee—Komitet Ziomkostwa Mławskiego.

By February 1941, the small, local Jewish community was supporting a total of 120 refugees from Tomaszów Mazowiecki and Mława. The Judenrat spent at least 1,200 złoty to maintain a soup kitchen serving the poor and refugees. On

February 28, 1941, 28 refugee families arrived in Kłwów from Mogielnica and Jeżów, located in Distrikt Warschau. At the time, Poznański, who was actively trying to procure assistance from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), reported that there were already a few cases of death from starvation.² In May 1941, there were 546 Jews living in Kłwów.

The date the ghetto was established in Kłwów is unknown, but the first executions of those attempting to leave the ghetto were reported in 1942. Ten Jews (names unknown) were shot in a nearby forest for an escape attempt sometime in 1942 and possibly all at once.³ In addition, Estera Kac, née Rapaport, is registered as having been arrested in Radom on May 1, 1942, on charges of smuggling and leaving the Kłwów ghetto without permission. She was incarcerated in Radom and executed on July 17, 1942.⁴

As for the ghetto's organization, it is not known whether the Jews were resettled to a specific area—and if so, whether it was physically enclosed. It is possible that they remained in their own homes, but they were forbidden to leave the village limits. An estimated 500 Jews lived in the Kłwów ghetto.

The ghetto was liquidated on October 22, 1942, when its residents were deported to the nearby Drzewica ghetto (23 kilometers [14 miles] southwest of Kłwów). From there, with all other Jews gathered in Drzewica, they were deported by train to the Treblinka extermination camp either on the same or on the next day, that is, October 23, 1942.

SOURCES Information regarding the Kłwów ghetto is scarce. Published sources of relevance include Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 234; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 131, 134; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 153–154 (table 10), 177.

The following archival sources include information on the fate of the Jewish community in Kłwów: AŻIH (210/406 [AJDC]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 24765).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. VHF, # 24765, testimony of Mosheh Goldblat, 1996.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/406 (Kłwów), pp. 1–2.
3. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo radomskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), p. 83.
4. Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe w Radomiu, 1997), p. 18.

KOLUSZKI

Pre-1939: Koluszki, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: town, Łódź województwo, Poland

Koluszki is located 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) east of Łódź. In 1939, 475 Jews lived there. On September 9, 1939, Wehrmacht troops entered Koluszki.

The first months of the occupation were marked by daily roundups of local Jews for forced labor to clear rubble from the town, fix the railroads, and also drain swamps in the vicinity of Koluszki.

German authorities soon established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to organize the conscription of forced labor. Sz. Tyrangiel was appointed as its chairman, and Zalman Frydlander from Łódź became the secretary.¹

When the western parts of Poland were incorporated into the Reich in October 1939, Koluszki remained just to the east of the new border and exposed to a stream of refugees and expellees, either settling in the town or passing through it. In August 1940, the Judenrat registered 1,017 Jews, 636 of them newcomers (171 families) mainly from Łódź and Brzeziny (located approximately 4 miles [2.5 miles] from Koluszki), both of which had been incorporated into the Reich. The Judenrat concluded that the proportion of Koluszki's original Jewish inhabitants to newcomers was now approaching 40 to 60, respectively.

Given this situation, the efforts of the four-member self-help committee—created by the Judenrat on August 4, 1940—provided little relief. The committee included Sruł Moszkowicz, Simcha Binem Wolberg, Jakob Szymkiewicz, and Mordka Lajbusz Tyrangiel. The committee kept pushing to be officially recognized by the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Kraków, as this could lead to more sustainable financial assistance. In the meantime, the minimal financial support received amounted to little more than a drop in the bucket.²

Koluszki's ghetto was set up on April 10, 1941.³ The Jews were forced to move to the other side of the village. At the beginning, the ghetto was not overcrowded, and the residents were able to smuggle food in fairly easily, usually during the night; even cows were smuggled in for ritual slaughter. Available information regarding the enclosure of the ghetto is contradictory; however, the residents were not permitted to leave its borders on pain of death.⁴ With time, killings of Jews for leaving the ghetto limits became frequent, and an estimated 40 inhabitants were murdered as a result. Many of the victims were buried next to the railroad tracks in Felicjanów Stary, near Koluszki. It is known that 11 of them were buried at the Jewish cemetery in Felicjanów, where members of the Gendarmerie executed them.⁵

A five-man unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) commanded by Riwen Berliner from Tomaszów Mazowiecki was organized to maintain order in the ghetto. According to one testimony, Berliner always beat his fellow Jews during his daily rounds of the ghetto.⁶

The creation of the ghetto coincided with the arrival of dozens of families from Warsaw and its environs.⁷ By May 1941, the ghetto had 1,177 residents, 873 of them newcomers. This resulted in a rapid deterioration of living conditions. On June 1, 1941, the self-help committee resigned and ceased all activity. Some ghetto residents found themselves living in the streets or in wooden huts, barns, and attics. Others had to share a single room with more than 10 people. In the summer of 1941, almost 300 ghetto inhabitants were children under 18 years old, for whom no social assistance was provided. Disease spread quickly; 182 Jews were treated for typhus in 1941.⁸

A new, but still unrecognized, self-help committee was set up in July 1941. Aside from reporting to Kraków on the situation in the ghetto, the committee was powerless. By this time, Koluszki's Jews were left with few sources of income, and begging became widespread. All Jewish enterprises had been closed. Only 25 artisans were able to run their workshops.

In September 1941, 140 Jews were registered as performing forced labor "in the Kreis," most probably in Słotwiny, located approximately 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Koluszki. According to one testimony, approximately 200 men from the ghetto performed forced labor six days a week. They were paid low wages and were given some soup at lunchtime. The work was not too hard. A Jewish man registered all workers; however, they were supervised by German and Polish managers, who treated them well. The laborers left the ghetto at 6:00 A.M., walking approximately 0.8 kilometer (0.5 mile) to the train station where they would unload railroad cars. (While working, they often witnessed cattle trains filled with Jews passing through, as they could hear voices in Yiddish; sometimes they found letters or notes scattered on the tracks.) Then the laborers would walk to Słotwiny to work in agriculture. In the summer of 1942, about 250 Jewish forced laborers worked in Słotwiny in two shifts. Koluszki's Jews were ordered to provide their sustenance and set up a soup kitchen.

By the end of September 1941, about 3,000 Jews were squeezed into the ghetto. An official JSS branch was established in November 1941 and included the following officials: Binem Wolberg, Mordka Einfeld (Ajnfeld), and Jakub Szymkiewicz. It was subordinated to the Kreis branch in Tomaszów.⁹

In November 1941, the German authorities ordered resettlement to the Koluszki ghetto of approximately 200 refugees living in nearby settlements.¹⁰ In late November 1941, close to 600 Jews from the Tomaszów Mazowiecki ghetto (all refugees from other towns) were transferred to Koluszki. The catastrophic housing conditions worsened, as the deportees' arrival coincided with the ghetto being reduced in size; one quarter of the apartments was lost.

Most of the 500 evicted Jews (80 families) were left to wander around the ghetto; only at night were they allowed to stand (literally) in the single-room premises of the Judenrat. Through great efforts, the JSS provided some relief, but far less than was required.

Many of the Tomaszów deportees returned to the ghetto there after a few weeks. According to witnesses, 33 were caught,

imprisoned, and shot in the spring of 1942, in Tomaszów's forest, near some barracks located there.¹¹

The stream of expelled Jews coming to Koluszki was constant. In December 1941, when the Łódź ghetto authorities determined that there were too many Jews in the ghetto, they began simply to put them on trains to Koluszki. Likewise, in December 1941, a group of 30 Jews from nearby Żakowice was transferred to Koluszki.¹²

At the beginning of 1942, typhus was again on the rise, with 92 Jews infected in January and 75 in February. The hospital was equipped with only 30 beds. Two deportee doctors attended the sick; even minor operations were impossible, and hygienic conditions were catastrophic. Although the number of dead is unknown, it had to be significant. By June 1942, an orphanage for about 120 children was set up.

During the last months of the Koluszki ghetto's existence, the German authorities deluded its residents that they might be spared through employment in workshops and in agriculture.

The Germans liquidated the ghetto, with its 3,000 Jews, in October 1942.¹³ According to one testimony, the Gendarmerie, Gestapo, (ethnic German) Selbstschutz, and Polish (Blue) Police and firefighters surrounded the ghetto by 5:00 A.M. Approximately 50 Jews still managed to escape.¹⁴ Another source relates that 500 people were killed before the train departed for the Treblinka killing center, including a woman who was killed at the platform after giving birth to a child during the Aktion. A small group from Koluszki was reportedly transferred to the remnant ghetto in Ujazd, which was liquidated on January 6, 1943, with its residents also sent to Treblinka.

Four Poles from Koluszki were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp for helping Jews. Two of them, Szymon Bormański and his daughter, Danuta Opuchlik, were murdered there on December 24, 1942. On December 19, 1985, a three-person Koluszki family—the Krzyżanowskis—was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for hiding six members of the Buki family. The Bukis had escaped from the Rawa Mazowiecka ghetto and hid with the Krzyżanowskis from October 1942 until January 1945.

A German Gendarmerie official, Harry Szuman, was sentenced to death by the Regional Court in Piotrków Trybunalski for persecuting and killing several dozen Jews and Poles in the Kreis, including residents of the Koluszki ghetto. Szuman was executed on September 9, 1947.¹⁵

SOURCES Information regarding the destruction of the Jewish community of Koluszki can be found in the following publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AAN; AŻIH (210/412, 211/547, 211/548, 211/549, 211/550, 301/3079, 301/4071, Ring I/560); SOPi (sygn. 40); USHMM (RG-15.079M [Ring I], reel 22; RG-15.084M

[Relacje]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 29; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (e.g., # 13377, 15847, and 23787); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 210/412. There are two documents identifying Ch. Kuper as the Judenrat's chairman, dated February 20 and July 17, 1941. Later correspondence is signed again by the chairman Sz. Tyrangiel. According to AŻIH, 301/3079, Frydlender was the chairman.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/547.
3. Ibid., 211/548, L. dz. no. 1/VII-1941.
4. Ibid., 211/548, December 11, 1941; VHF, # 13377, testimony of Simon Ell, 1996; # 15847, testimony of Mirosława Scherer-Abramczyk, 1996; # 23787, testimony of Mina Fuks, 1996.
5. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 22, Ring I/560.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/412.
8. Ibid., RG-15.079M, reel 22, Ring I/560; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
9. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/548, no. 7/41-S.P and 211/549, Sprawozdanie.
10. Ibid., 211/548, no. 7/41-S.P and no. 12059/41-I/2, T/S.
11. Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 120–121; and AŻIH, 301/4071, testimony of Samuel Talman, 1948.
12. Dawid Sierakowiak, *The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak: Five Notebooks from the Łódź Ghetto*, ed. and with an introduction by Alan Adelson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 70–72; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
13. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 154 (table 10), 177–178; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 233.
14. AŻIH, 301/3079.
15. SOPi 11.

KONIECPOL

Pre-1939: Koniecpol, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radomsko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo śląskie, Poland

Koniecpol is located 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) southeast of Radomsko. When World War II broke out, 955 Jews populated the town.¹

On September 3 or 4, 1939, all the town's residents were expelled to the surrounding villages. When the occupying German forces allowed civilians to return, they found that their houses had been looted. Jews who before the war had made their living in various trades were now put to forced labor six days per week on the railroad and in gravel extraction. From the fall of 1939, a number of Jews were assigned to irrigation and canalization work on the riverbank, while being held at a labor camp in Zarębice near Przyrów.²

Abram Kornberg was the Judenrat chairman. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, the Judenrat did not take advantage of

Koniecpol's Jews. Its two main tasks were conscripting Jews for labor and collecting punitive fines. Three such fines were imposed between September 1939 and January 1940. The community's rabbi and seven other Jews were taken hostage to ensure their payment.³

By June 1940, many Jews were sick with typhus. Christian doctors were forbidden to treat them. Later on, the community found a Jewish doctor, Marian Braun, who also headed the Sanitation Column affiliated with the Judenrat. At this time, there were approximately 700 deportees in Koniecpol—as the Judenrat put it—"wandering about town" and "with no roof above their heads."⁴

Information on the ghetto in Koniecpol remains sparse and somewhat contradictory. Those sources referring to a "ghetto" do not give the date on which it was established but note that it served as a point of concentration for Jews from the surrounding area just prior to their deportation.⁵ However, some sources (e.g., *Pinkas ha-kehillot*) claim that no ghetto was set up. As Jews were able to move within the town limits, they were free to trade with local Poles and ward off hunger.

By January 1941, a soup kitchen had been established, serving 200 meals daily. The Judenrat reported 700 children living in Koniecpol. In the course of a fur requisition operation, Hayim Neufeld was reported to the German police and shot after a fur garment was found in his house. A Jewish youth and his entire family were also killed during the ghetto's existence.⁶

In March 1941, a number of Jews from a transport of 1,000 Płock deportees destined for Radomsko were transferred to Koniecpol; all were later resettled to Częstochowa. By this time, there were 1,182 Jews living in Koniecpol, including 512 deportees.

In June 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was organized to take over the provision of welfare from the Judenrat. Its three members were: Henryk Citron (chairman), Abram Kornberg (deputy), and Szmul A. Goldstein.⁷

By the summer of 1942, rumors of mass murders in the region and the likely evacuation of the ghetto were spreading in Koniecpol. Frightened Jews tried to get work at the local copper factory or in agriculture, as a possible protection against deportation.

In mid-September, the Germans set a deadline—September 28, 1942—for the Jews of Olsztyn (200 persons), Przyrów (ca. 770), Złoty Potok, Dąbrowa Zielona, Małuszyn, Sekursk, and Cielętnik to resettle into the Koniecpol ghetto.

German and Ukrainian guards surrounded Koniecpol in preparation for the ghetto's liquidation on October 6, 1942. A son of the Judenrat chairman was sent door to door to instruct Jews to report to the market square at 6:00 A.M. the next morning. Remnants of the Jews living in the vicinity were brought into the ghetto that day. Some, however, were shot in their places of residence—for example, 25 Jews living in Koniecpol Mały village. On October 7, 1942, 1,600 Jews were convoyed to the train station, loaded into wagons, and attached to a transport of Jews from the liquidated Częstochowa ghetto, destined for the Treblinka extermination camp.⁸

Jewish partisan forces commanded by men with the pseudonyms “Kuba” and “Bolek” reportedly operated in the area of Żłoty Potok, Chrzastów, and Koniecpol after the completion of “Aktion Reinhard.”⁹

SOURCES The Koniecpol ghetto is mentioned briefly in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 239–240; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 101.

The following archival sources were used to write this entry: AŻIH (210/418, 211/556); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 29).

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NOTES

1. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 144 (table 5).
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/418 (Koniecpol), p. 3.
3. Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 233–235.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/556 (Koniecpol), p. 18; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/418, pp. 1, 3.
5. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), pp. 252, 269, refers to the “collection ghetto” (*Sammelghetto*) in Koniecpol.
6. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 239–240; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 233–235; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 101; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/556, p. 1.
7. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 91–92, 144 (table 5); USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/556, p. 4.
8. Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gehenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 117–118, 197; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 233–235; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 101.
9. Fąfara, *Gehenna*, p. 509.

KOŃSKIE

Pre-1939: Końskie, town and powiat center, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Konskie, Kreis Konskie, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Końskie województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Końskie is located 63 kilometers (39 miles) southwest of Radom. There were 5,333 Jews living there in 1939.

After the occupation of the town in September 1939, the German authorities established two prisons, one of which was under the authority of the German police and Gendarmerie. A Gendarmerie unit was permanently stationed in Końskie.¹

On October 15, 1939, the Końskie Kreishauptmann Albrecht created the so-called Kolonia Żydowska (Jewish Set-



German troops order a group of Jews into a park in Końskie, where they were forced to bury German dead found in the area, September 12, 1939.

USHMM WS #50414, COURTESY OF IPN

tlement). It consisted of several streets, already densely populated by Jews, and to which other Jews had to relocate. Most of these streets were included subsequently in the ghetto. As a result, the Germans quickly took over the better Jewish houses and businesses. The Kolonia management was authorized to summon Jews for forced labor three days a week with “a shovel, a pickaxe, or a hammer.” It is likely that the organization of forced labor was supervised by the Judenrat, which was set up by the Kreishauptmann on the same day—October 15.

A former municipal official, Josef Rosen (“The Landrat” as Końskie’s Jews called him), chaired the Judenrat. Its staff also included Ezryl Weintraub, Simon Wajntraub, Wolf Frydman, Alter Stark, Nusyn Neufeld, Moszek Goldszer, Chaim Albert, Leon Rozenberg, Samuel Piżyc, and Dr. Hipolit Kon. Its offices were located at no. 50, 3 Maja Street.²

On October 20, 1939, on instructions from the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (Nazi People’s Welfare, NSV), a self-help committee affiliated with the Judenrat was set up. The Kreishauptmann selected the pre-war leader of the community, Josek (Josef) Kinderlerer, as its president. The other staff consisted of Wigdor Chmielnicki, Szabsia Edelist, Iser Chabański, Izak Wajntraub, Jakub Dawid Ehrenberg, and Dawid Rozenblatt. Located at first in the Judenrat offices, it was moved in November 1940 to 1a Kazanów Street due to deteriorating relations with the Judenrat, which tried to control the committee.

By December 1939, the 2,000 refugees and expellees who had arrived from Łódź and other places nearby had set up their own Committee for Assistance to Refugees and Deportees. The “popular kitchen” that Kinderlerer’s committee opened in January 1940 served 400 meals daily, 80 percent of which went to local Jews.³

On August 16, 1940, 450 Jews from Końskie and its environs were sent to camps in Distrikt Lublin. At first they labored in the Wereszyn camp on the 20-kilometer-long (12.4-mile-long) Mircze-Uhrynów road, which was part of the “Otto Program.” By November, a number of these workers had been released,

but the remainder labored in the Oszczów-Waręż camp on an extension of the same road from Chełm to Sokal. The Oszczów camp was a punitive camp with harsh conditions. Although promised, the laborers received no help from the Końskie committee while in the camp or on their return. Kinderlerer visited the camp twice at the cost of laborers' parents but only achieved the release of his brother-in-law and nephew with a bribe.⁴

Most of the sources maintain that the Końskie ghetto was set up in the spring of 1941, but in fact the Kreishauptmann's order was issued on February 28, 1941. The relocation was completed within seven days. A special housing commission of the Judenrat assigned Jews to their new accommodations.⁵

The ghetto consisted of two parts connected by a narrow tunnel along 3 Maja Street and included the following streets: Kiliński, Piłsudski, Poczтова, Bóżniczna, Jatkowa, Berek Joselewicz, Nowy Świat, Przechodnia, Kazanów, Krakow, a section of the market square (Rynek), and 3 Maja.

The 30 members of the Jewish police squad set up in March 1941 were commanded by a deportee from Essen, Lejbusewicz, and included two of his brothers. Among the local policemen were Symcha Szwarefutter, Moszek Złotogórski, and Uszer Sztajner. A Jewish post office was also set up, and a Jewish arbitration court judged on conflicts between Jews related to housing, personal issues, and money.

The ghetto remained open until the end of 1941, but some movement restrictions may have existed earlier. According to one source, a wooden fence surrounded the ghetto, while another reports barbed wire. The windows of buildings facing out from the ghetto were boarded up. The Jewish Police guarded the ghetto gates and the crossing between its parts. On the ghetto's closure, communication between its two parts was limited to a few hours a day. Poles were then strictly forbidden to enter the ghetto; however, many smuggled themselves in to exchange food for the work of Jewish tailors. The Jewish Police was authorized to solicit identification from Poles found in the ghetto.⁶

At the time of the ghetto's establishment, the percentage of Jews to Poles within the Kreis was 44 percent. In Końskie, however, it was 56 percent.

Just after the ghetto's establishment, German authorities deported 1,042 Jews from Płock to Końskie. They arrived on March 6, 1941, and were housed in a local *gymnazium* (high school). As the Końskie committee reported to Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków, the newcomers were "in a horrible state, all have broken arms and legs." On the morning of March 9, 1941, all the deportees were suddenly taken to the train station and sent to nearby Opoczno; from there they were distributed among six nearby localities. Although the Płock Jews only spent a few days in Końskie, many sources report their arrival without noting their subsequent distribution to other towns, which has added to the confusion about the total number of victims of the Końskie ghetto.⁷

The Końskie JSS committee was criticized by various parties for being run as "a private enterprise for profit." A first investigation by the JSS headquarters in Kraków in Novem-

ber 1940 criticized the Końskie committee for nepotism and its failure to represent the interests of the 2,000 deportees from Łódź. The Łódź committee was the only institution providing help to the newcomers. While almost all locals were able to use the soup kitchen free of charge, newcomers had to pay. Thanks to Kinderlerer's pleading, however, the committee was not dismissed.⁸

A further investigation resulted in a decision in May 1941 to dismiss Ehrenberg, Wajntraub, Chabański, and Chmielnicki, to be replaced by Józef Millner (Milner) and a Łódź refugee. These changes were, however, blocked by an adviser to the chief of Distrikt Radom, Józef Diamant, who took Kinderlerer's side. Finally, the committee was transformed into an official branch of the JSS in Końskie on May 22, 1941. Its staff members were Kinderlerer, Edelist, Wajntraub, Chabański, and Millner. Końskie's Jews reported that "the [JSS members] threaten us all with deportation for any complaints [to higher authorities]."⁹

By May 1941, the ghetto was populated by 7,400 Jews, of which 2,000 were dependent on social assistance. Up until the establishment of the ghetto, Końskie's Jews were still running 77 shops and 27 workshops. However, these numbers soon diminished, as businesses outside the ghetto were liquidated. The ghetto's sick initially were treated in the Kreis hospital in Końskie; the Judenrat paid for those unable to afford health services. A Jewish hospital was opened in June 1942.

In June 1941, 41 Końskie Jews were working in a nearby labor camp in Zagacie; 27 unfit workers had by then been released. Laborers performed drainage work under Sonderdienst guard. The camp was disbanded on July 9, 1941.¹⁰

On December 10, 1941, Kreishauptmann Kurt Driessen issued a decree imposing the death penalty for leaving the ghetto. The same decree also recognized as ghettos all other localities in the Kreis still inhabited by Jews.¹¹

By June 1942, the kosher kitchen reportedly served up to 2,400 meals a day; however, this service was sometimes interrupted. Deportees and refugees were forced to open their own "self-sufficient kitchen" in December 1941. Used also by the local "intelligentsia," it served 300 meals daily.

In the summer of 1942, 500 Jews were being conscripted for forced labor three days per week. All those enlisted had to report in front of the Judeneinsatz (Jewish workforce) office (Rynek 3; later Kazanów 1a) by 6:00 A.M. Checking in after 7:00 A.M. was punishable. Those willing to work six days a week could get additional rations from the Kreishauptmann. On May 22, 1942, 50 Jews were sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition plant in Skarżysko-Kamienna. By August 1942, the German administration had permitted workshops to open at 4 Piłsudski Street.¹²

As Końskie's Jews came to realize that the ghetto's liquidation was inevitable, all able-bodied inhabitants tried to procure work for themselves. Agricultural labor outside the ghetto was considered the best protection from deportation. All posts, including various committees and work brigades, were reserved for men. With a bribe, the Gestapo gave unpaid jobs to approximately 30 girls from rich families in a Hitler-Youth

School, to which Jewish Police escorted them. The Germans, however, suddenly liquidated this post in September 1942.¹³

Some sources mention that 1,500 Jews “from smaller nearby towns” were brought into the Końskie ghetto in summer 1942; but according to historian Adam Rutkowski (who also notes the same increase in the ghetto’s population), most Jews from smaller localities in the Kreis were transferred in the spring and summer to Radoszyce, although it lacked a rail connection.¹⁴

Kreis Konskie was the last to be cleared in Distrikt Radom. On November 3, 1942, the ghetto’s Jews, surrounded by a cordon of Germans and Lithuanians, were gathered at the marketplace. Approximately 60 were shot in the course of the liquidation Aktion; another 70 were sent to Skarżysko. Approximately 6,000 ghetto inmates were taken to the train station and deported to the Treblinka killing center.

There are reports that 4,000 Jews from the liquidated Radoszyce ghetto were added to the Końskie transport, as well as reports of “a second deportation” of “3,000 Końskie Jews,” dated November 7 or 11, 1942. This second deportation was most likely of Jews from Radoszyce. About 600 people were murdered in the course of the deportation Aktion.

Around November 15, 1942, the Germans announced that those Jews who had avoided deportations could work in Końskie. Those who left their hiding places were housed in a ruined barracks. On the night of January 6, 1943, all 300 Jews gathered there were deported to the Szydłowiec ghetto. Szydłowiec, announced as one of the places where Jews could live legally, was liquidated later that month.¹⁵

SOURCES The following publications contain information on the Końskie ghetto: Halina Zawadzka, *Living in Fear on the Aryan Side* (Bowie, MD: Eagle, 2004); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

The following archival sources were used in preparation of this entry: AŻIH (210/420 [AJDC]; 211/560–65 [JSS—Końskie]; 220/1 (Rady Żydowskie); 301/4824 [Relacje]; and USHMM (RG-15.084M [Holocaust Survivors Testimonies]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.073M [Jewish Councils]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/565, p. 3; Czesław Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 241.

2. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 81, 135; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 6, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/560, p. 16; and 211/563, p. 31.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/420, pp. 15–17, 33; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/560, pp. 2, 5–6; 211/562, pp. 6–7; and *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 5, 1942.

4. Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na

Majdanku, 1998), pp. 62, 67, 75; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/560, pp. 36–39.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 6, 1942.

6. USHMM, RG-15.073M (Jewish Councils), 220/1 (Końskie), pp. 1–331; AŻIH, 301/4824, testimony of Helena Rodczycka (Rodzycka), n.d.; Zawadzka, *Living in Fear*, pp. 3, 7, 10–11; *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 24 and November 23, 1941; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 99, 135.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29, 211/562, pp. 4, 6, 10, 13–15, 21.

8. *Ibid.*, 211/560, pp. 8, 13–18, 31; 211/563, pp. 28–29.

9. *Ibid.*, 211/561, pp. 11–13; 211/562, pp. 9, 23, 53; 211/563, pp. 1, 7; 211/564, pp. 21–23.

10. *Ibid.*, 211/564, p. 36; 211/565, pp. 3, 13; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 6, 1942.

11. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 85.

12. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 17, June 5, June 28, July 8, and August 23, 1942.

13. Zawadzka, *Living in Fear*, pp. 113–119.

14. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 12:288; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 151–152 (table 9).

15. Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), p. 36; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 178; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 108–109, 151–152 (table 9), 159 (table 11); Zawadzka, *Living in Fear*, pp. 3–12; AŻIH, 301/4824; and Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 273.

KOPRZYWNICA

Pre-1939: Koprzywnica (Yiddish: Pokshivnitsa), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: village, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Koprzywnica lies about 17 kilometers (11 miles) southwest of Sandomierz. On the eve of World War II in August 1939, there were about 800 Jews living in the town.

Koprzywnica was captured by the Germans about a week after the start of the invasion. Within a few days the Germans imposed restrictions on the Jewish population. Jews were forced to wear the Star of David, they were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks, and they were not allowed to have contacts with non-Jews. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established at the end of October 1939 and ordered to provide forced laborers. The Judenrat also had to meet demands for large “contributions.” One such demand was for the delivery of “80 pairs of boots of the finest leather” within 24 hours. Fully aware of the consequences of failure, all the men of the town fled into the forest to wait for the anger of the SS to subside.¹

On October 26, 1939, the Germans established the Generalgouvernement, and authority was handed over to a civil administration. Koprzywnica became a town in Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom. The Kreishauptmann was Dr. Heinz Ritter.

VOLUME II: PART A

Conditions during the first few months of 1940 were relatively stable. One family, which fled from Warsaw to Koprzywnica in March 1940, was amazed at the freedom of movement enjoyed by the Jews in the small town. Religious life seemed to continue as usual, and everyone had enough to eat. There seemed to be scarcely any German presence in the town. All this changed when a 40-man SS unit came into the area and established its headquarters about 6 kilometers (4 miles) from the town. From time to time the SS would show their presence, arresting groups of Jews and taking them away for execution.²

In the course of 1941, Jews from other communities were brought to Koprzywnica. In January 1941, 420 poor Jews expelled from Radom arrived, and in March a group of at least 24 Jews came from Vienna.³ Their arrival exacerbated the overcrowding and hunger, as the Jewish population rose to 1,500 by June 1941.⁴

The flood of refugees was a heavy burden for the local community. The number of Jewish refugees eventually exceeded the number of Jews in the original population. Some financial assistance came from the Kraków office of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS). The soup kitchen provided 100 hot meals a day, at no charge, to the refugees. The overcrowded conditions led to sanitation problems and the spread of infectious diseases. The small community of Koprzywnica worked valiantly to provide the refugees urgently needed assistance.⁵

On August 27, 1941, the Germans demanded an exceptionally large “contribution,” an amount far beyond the means of the impoverished community. When the Judenrat failed to come up with the money, a German police unit from Sandomierz, joined by local German and Polish police, murdered the members of the Judenrat.⁶

In December 1941, the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto. At that time the Germans confiscated the fur garments of the ghetto inhabitants. During this period younger Jewish men were sent out of town to work camps. They worked along the Vistula River preparing fields for agriculture and at a munitions factory in Starachowice.⁷

By the summer of 1942, rumors circulated about the deportation of entire Jewish communities to places unknown. The Jews of Koprzywnica felt the noose tightening around their necks with no way out. The Judenrat received an order to provide 50 young men to work at the munitions factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna for an indefinite period. When the head of the German Labor Office, Heinrich, and his aides arrived, many Jews with local work permits went into hiding. Others paraded as instructed, assuming they would not be taken, because their local work was essential to the Germans. But this proved to be wrong. They were loaded onto trucks and taken to Skarżysko. None of their families were permitted to see them off, and the workers never saw them again.⁸

In May 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter ordered that Koprzywnica was among 12 settlements and five towns that were to serve as concentration points for all Jews in the region (Kreishauptmannschaft). The resettlement into these ghettos was due to be completed by June 1. According to one account, the

area of the ghetto was reduced at the end of August 1942, and on German orders, the Jewish Police closely guarded the new boundaries. Even before this, Jews were forbidden to move freely in the town on pain of death. During the last two months of the ghetto’s existence the Jews were compressed together in a small space under terrible hygienic conditions.⁹

By the end of September 1942, the concentration of the Jews from the smaller neighboring communities in the Koprzywnica ghetto had been completed, raising the number of its occupants to 2,140. On September 30,¹⁰ the ghetto was encircled by SS men and Ukrainian police, and the inhabitants were ordered to the market square. During the course of the roundup, the elderly, disabled, and sick were shot and killed. Many tried to flee or to find hiding places (although their prospects for finding shelter among a hostile population were slim). Some managed to get Aryan papers. Others escaped to the forest. About 1,600 people were escorted to the railway station in Sandomierz; from there they were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Immediately after the expulsion, Polish police swarmed over the Jewish houses, stealing whatever goods were left behind and murdering any Jews they discovered. They tore down the houses and sold the rubble for building materials.¹¹

The chances for survival in the forest were also very poor. Polish partisan units killed Jews who fell into their hands. Some members of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK) in the region also revealed the whereabouts of Jews in hiding. Very few members of the Jewish community of Koprzywnica survived the war.¹²

SOURCES In preparing this article, reference was made to Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 475–477. The yizkor book, edited by Elchanan Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Koprzywnica in Israel, 1971), contains several articles on the Holocaust period, including material from the Yad Vashem Archives. The ghetto in Koprzywnica is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 242.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Koprzywnica can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2425 and 210/422); IPN; USHMM (Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF; and YVA (M-1/E/31 and 443; O-16/9).

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NOTES

1. Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa*, pp. 205–206.
2. Ibid., pp. 204–205.
3. AŻIH, 210/422, letter appealing for help signed by 24 Viennese Jews in Koprzywnica addressed to the AJDC in Kraków, May 9, 1941. On February 19, 1941, the Nazi authorities deported 1,010 Jews from Vienna to Kielce; see Florian Freund and Hans Safrian, “Die Verfolgung der österreichischen Juden 1938–1945: Vertreibung und Deportation,” in Emmerich Talos et al., eds., *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich: Ein Handbuch*, (Vienna: öbv & hpt, 2001), pp. 767–794, here p. 793.

4. Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa*, p. 245.
5. Ibid., pp. 207–208.
6. This incident is mentioned several times in the yizkor book. One account names a sadistic German Wachtmeister, Lescher, as being responsible. Another account dates the incident in 1942; see *ibid.*, pp. 235, 239–240, 244.
7. Henryk Sharf, “Geto-Tseyt in Pokshevntse,” in Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa*, pp. 234–238, here p. 234.
8. Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa*, pp. 208–209. See also Felicia Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: OPA, 1996), pp. 34–37, on the various deportations to Skarżysko-Kamienna from August to October 1942 from the Opatów region.
9. Sharf, “Geto-Tseyt,” p. 236.
10. Ibid., pp. 236–238; this source gives the date of September 30, 1942, but a footnote corrects this to October 30. However, this latter date is more likely the date of the deportation to Treblinka from the Sandomierz ghetto. Another source, Dovid Schniffer, “My Town Plontch” (first published in Hebrew in Elhanan Erlich, ed., *Sefer Stashov* [Tel Aviv: Ir-gun yotse Stashov be-Yiśrael, 1962]), indicates that the Aktion in Koprzywnica must have taken place before mid-October 1942; see www.plontch.net/ybta.htm.
11. Ehrlich, *Sefer Pokshivnitsa*, pp. 236–237, 245.
12. AZIH, 301/2425, testimony of Zelman Baum (Wacław Kozieniec); *Benjamin and Vlacka Meed Registry of Jewish Holocaust Survivors 2000* (United States Holocaust Memorial Council, 2000), 4:353.

KOZIENICE

Pre-1939: Kozienice, town and powiat center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Kozienice lies about 80 kilometers (50 miles) southeast of Warsaw, on the Zagożdżonka River. In 1939, the town had slightly less than 9,000 inhabitants, of whom roughly half were Jews.

German forces occupied the town on September 9, 1939. The Germans appointed Marian Trug as mayor and an ethnic German from Wólka Tyrzyńska named Miller as his deputy. The main German police presence in the town was a squad of Gendarmerie under the command of Leutnant Hennig. From September 1939 until June 1941, there was a strong Wehrmacht garrison in Kozienice. The Selbstschutz (Auxiliary Police, subsequently renamed the Sonderdienst) and the Baudienst (Construction Service) were recruited mainly from local ethnic Germans (*Völkdeutschen*).¹

In October 1939, the Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of 12 members, with A.H. Perle as chair. The Judenrat had to implement all German orders concerning the Jewish community. Other members of the Judenrat included Shmuel Weinberg, Abraham Shabason, Pinkas Freilich, Zygmunt Halputer, and Josef Lichtenstein. On German orders, a complete list of Jewish residents in Kozienice was prepared.

It lists 4,248 individuals, including their first and last names, addresses, age, and occupation.² The surviving reports of the Judenrat to the Security Police in Radom contain detailed information on the changes in the Jewish population throughout the occupation until the summer of 1942. While the number of births remained unchanged from 1939 to 1941, the number of deaths climbed steadily, from 42 in 1939 to 210 in 1941, then 255 in the seven months to the end of July 1942.³

A number of Jewish charitable institutions operated during the occupation, including the Committee for Aid to the Poor (Komitet Pomocy Biednym), the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), and the “Drop of Milk” Society (Towarzystwo “Kropla Mleka”) to feed poor infants.⁴ At the end of October 1941, a hospital was opened under the management of Dr. Joel Wajnbler to deal with serious epidemics. In 1942, the Society for Improvement of Sanitation was established. When a severe epidemic of typhus broke out in the spring of 1942, the Department of Sanitation took measures to prevent its spread, including extensive programs of delousing and vaccination.

The Jewish Council mediated all contacts between the Jewish community and the outside world, serving as a post office, a tax office, and also a communal bank. It had to collect money from the Jews to pay the levy demanded by the Germans for the benefit of “needy Germans” (the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt, NSV). The levy was 18,500 złoty in 1939, and further demands followed.⁵

In principle the Jews were not allowed to work independently. Only a few of them managed to find some gainful private employment or to continue their previous commercial activity. Many Jews and some Poles were recruited for forced labor, digging canals in the area between Kozienice and Gniewoszów. From the first days of the occupation, the Jewish Council had to provide a quota of about 500 laborers per day. These people worked mainly on road construction and maintenance, in forestry and agriculture, and on the railroads. Other assignments included digging peat, working in the gunpowder factory in Pionki, and performing cleaning duties at various Wehrmacht and Gendarmerie posts, as well as at the Town Hall. Other groups were detailed to sweep the streets and clear snow in the winter. Some Jews were also employed by private enterprises such as the construction firms of Heinrich Koehler, Paul Gatz of Jedlnia, and the Kozienice-based companies of Czarnota-Bojarski and Eng. Gorczycki (on drainage works). The workers were paid very low wages. In order to survive, Jews had to stretch out their last reserves of food and money and sell off any remaining property; they also obtained some aid from the JSS and continued to make and trade items (illegally). Smuggling and begging were widespread.

There was very little in the way of cultural life, but Jews continued to pray in the synagogue. Religious observance and Jewish responses to adversity in Kozienice were undoubtedly influenced by the community’s strongly Hasidic character. A small school continued operating for about 70 pupils, taught by Rochama Frajlich.

Until December 1941, Jews were relatively free to move about within the town and even to visit the surrounding villages.

At the end of December, in response to orders issued by the German civil authorities for Distrikt Radom, the Jewish Council began to establish a Jewish residential quarter (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in Kozienice. All Jews living outside the designated quarter had to move into it, and any Poles living there had to move out. The streets within the Jewish quarter were 11 Listopada, Piłsudski, 3 Maja, Lublin, Krótka, Magietowa, Pieracki, Targowa, Drzewna, Browarna, Pusta, Czwartek, Szpitalna, Młyńska, Nowy Świat, Polskiej Organizacji Wojskowej, and Harmenicka. The ghetto remained open for several months and was guarded only by the Jewish Police internally and the Gendarmerie externally. It was enclosed with a barbed-wire fence in May 1942.⁶ Anyone leaving the ghetto faced the death penalty.

After July 1942, Jews from surrounding towns and villages were systematically relocated into the Kozienice ghetto. By August 1942, a few weeks before its liquidation, around 13,000 Jews had been assembled in the Kozienice ghetto, which became immensely overcrowded.

The German police conducted the liquidation of the Kozienice ghetto on September 27, 1942. First SS forces, Gendarmerie, and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto early in the morning. The Jews were forced to leave their houses and gather on Targowa and Kościelna Streets. The people were only allowed to take 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of luggage with them. The older people were loaded onto trucks; the sick and anyone attempting to resist, as well as the Jews in the hospital, were shot in the town. In total, at least 100 people were shot in Kozienice on this day. Columns of Jews escorted by Germans marched to the railroad station at around 9:00 A.M., watched by local inhabitants. On reaching the station, they were searched thoroughly and deprived of any valuables.⁷ The first train to the Treblinka killing center left in the afternoon, and the next, a short time later; there were 60 railroad cars altogether with approximately 150 people in each car. Railroad documents confirm the exact date on which these special trains (*Sonderzüge*) from Kozienice arrived at Treblinka.

The Germans retained in Kozienice a group of several dozen male Jews, the "Sonderkommando," in order to clear out remaining property from the ghetto area. This task lasted until December 1942. Less valuable belongings and everyday household equipment (e.g., bedclothes, underwear, clothing, shoes, furniture, and kitchen utensils) were sold to the Poles at auctions or plundered. The more valuable items were locked up and guarded in the offices of the Gestapo. In the spring of 1943, most of the former Jewish houses were destroyed. In the summer, Jewish tombstones were taken to pave the square in front of the Gendarmerie headquarters (the former vicarage) and other places, and the cemetery was eventually leveled.

The largest group of survivors was composed of those who made it through the harsh conditions in the labor and concentration camps until liberation; a smaller number managed to survive in hiding, usually with the aid of several Polish helpers. Moshe Grynberg and his wife, for example, were rescued by the Gawełek family from the neighboring village of Sieciechów,

who were honored with the title of the "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem.

There were at least two trials in postwar Poland concerning crimes committed against the Jews of Kozienice. In one, Bronisław Salomon was accused of robbing Jewish property and was sentenced to death.⁸ In another, Stanisław Sotr was convicted of denouncing four Jews to the Gendarmerie (he received sugar and a coat as a reward). He was also sentenced to death but managed to avoid execution by escaping from the Radom prison, where he was being held.⁹

SOURCES Published sources regarding the Jewish community of Kozienice and its fate during the Holocaust include the following: Barukh Kaplinsky, ed., *The Book of Kozienice: On the 27th Anniversary of the Savage Destruction of Our Former Home* (New York: Kozienice Organization, 1985); Anka Grupańska, "Skrawki opowieści," *Karta: Kwartalnik Historyczny*, no. 47 (2005): 46–63; Sebastian Piątkowski, ed., *Kozienice, monografia miasta* (Kozienice, 2004); E. Jaworski, ed., *Kozienice: Wędrowka przez stulecia* (Kozienice, 2002); Alina Skibińska, "Połowa miasteczka," *Karta: Kwartalnik Historyczny*, no. 47 (2005): 40–45; Ryszard Kucharski, *Życie codzienne w przedwojennych Kozienicach* (Kozienice, 2001); Alina Skibińska, "Życie codzienne Żydów w Kozienicach pod okupacją niemiecką," *Zagłada Żydów: Studia i Materiały*, no. 3 (2007): 64–86; Marcin Urynowicz, *Żydzi w samorządzie miasta Kozienice w okresie międzywojennym 1919–1939* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2003); and E. Stąpór, J. Kuśmierczyk, and L. Wiśniewski, eds., *Ziemia Kozienicka: Periodyk kulturalno-historyczny* (Kozienice), no. 14 (2006). See also J.A. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen. Der District Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt, 2007). Published memoirs and diaries include Gerry Sorkin, with David Bayer, *The Remarkable Odyssey of David Bayer* (Daytona Beach, FL: Marshfire, 2000); Stefan Janeczek, *Z przeszłości Kozienic* (Kozienice, 1981); and Kazimierz Mróz, "Kozienice 1939–1944 (fragment dziennika)," *Wieś Radomska*, no. 4 (1993).

Other sources used by the author include several articles published in the wartime *Gazeta Żydowska* and personal interviews conducted by the author with local inhabitants of Kozienice and Jewish survivors now resident in the United States and Belgium. The large collection of glass negatives from the photographic studio of Chaim Izrael Berman is now located in the "Shalom" Foundation, as well as in the KARTA Center in Warsaw. The exhibition "The Portrait of Kozienice," which presented several hundred photos from this collection of around 4,500 images in total, was organized by the Foundation "Dialogue Forum among the Nations" and presented for the first time at the Festival of Jewish Culture in Kraków in 2006. The exhibit includes many portrait photographs of Jews, Poles, and Germans taken in the Berman studio during the war.

Available documentation on the fate of the Jews of Kozienice under the German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/452, 846, 1220/19; Ring II/210 and 460; 210/429; 301/1172, 2296, 3001, 3003, and 3525; and 303/V/582); IPN (SSKI 56 and 105); USHMM (Acc.2003.406.1 [Records of the Jewish Council in Kozienice, 1940–1942]; RG-50.030*0324; RG-50.488*0123-24); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/886, 1347, 1542, and 1892; O-3/2523; O-39/105).

Alina Skibińska

NOTES

1. Based on photos from the collection of Chaim Israel Berman located in the “Shalom” Foundation as well as in the KARTA Center in Warsaw.
2. See USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1 (Lista mieszkańców).
3. Ibid., Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Kozienice, reports to the Security Police, 1940–1942.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 29, April 11, 1941; and no. 47, June 13, 1941. See also USHMPA, # 14325.
5. The post of Kreishauptmann was initially occupied by Dr. Friedrich Egen; he was later replaced by Dr. Justus Rubehn.
6. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1, Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Kozienice, reports to the Security Police, December 31, 1941, and May 15, 1942.
7. Ibid., RG-50.488*0124; and RG-50.488*0123—video interviews with H. Siczek and Władysław Krawczyk.
8. IPN, SSKl 105.
9. Ibid., SSKl 56.

KUNÓW

Pre-1939: Kunów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kunow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kunów, town, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Kunów is located 52 kilometers (32 miles) east of Kielce. In 1939, approximately 495 Jews lived there.

The first Wehrmacht units entered Kunów on September 8, 1939. Abuse, plunder, and forced labor began immediately. After the Red Army invaded eastern Poland on September 17, 1939, many young Jews fled eastward into the Soviet-occupied zone. The number of Jews in the village did not, however, change much, as Jews from western Poland replaced the missing locals.

Kunów's Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established on German orders in March 1940. Jankiel Brykman was appointed as chairman. The other members of the Judenrat included A. Szpiro, E. Różany, J. Adler, R. Hilf, M. Wajnsztok, and A. Modrzewiecki; Lejbuś Zygmant was the secretary. The Judenrat had to organize forced labor and was also the sole source of social relief. With the assistance of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC, based in Kraków), Kunów's Jews received a little help, starting in the spring of 1940.¹

In early December 1940, a group of 50 Jewish deportees was resettled in Kunów.² Another group of 100 deportees arrived from Vienna on March 13, 1941, followed by a smaller group on March 27. Most of the newcomers were over 60 years old and penniless. Many were in poor health; some were disabled. Half of the Viennese Jews were quartered in the local synagogue, while the remainder wandered from one overcrowded place to another. There was still no soup kitchen, no hospital, nor even a Jewish doctor.

The number of Jews in Kunów reached its peak in March 1941, when, according to the Judenrat, there were 600 Jews there, 100 of them new arrivals. By August 1941, the number

of Viennese Jews had decreased from 100 to 76.³ Many of these Austrian Jews found life especially hard in the small shtetls, devoid of the basic comforts they were used to, and a number resettled to larger towns.

Although in December 1940, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established to deal with refugee and deportee matters in Kreis Opatow, a branch was not set up initially in Kunów. The JSS committee in Opatów only sporadically transferred funds to Kunów for the purchase of food and its distribution to the needy. Unfortunately, this help was rather ineffective, as the Judenrat in Kunów had to pay black market prices. A lack of local initiative did not help, as, for example, the JSS could only subsidize a soup kitchen in Kunów once the village had established one using its own resources.⁴

The JSS committee in Kunów was established on June 10, 1941. The then-secretary of the Judenrat, Zygmant, became its chairman, with the president of the Judenrat, Brykman, as his deputy. Within a month, a soup kitchen was opened, feeding initially 100 and, by August 1941, up to 170 people daily. At that time, the JSS registered 250 Jews seeking assistance.⁵

At some time in 1940, or possibly in 1941, the Germans established an open ghetto in Kunów. Large signs were put up on the streets exiting the ghetto, informing Jews that they were forbidden to leave. Later on, the ghetto was enclosed by a fence.⁶

In the summer of 1941, only 10 of Kunów's Jews were working in labor camps, all in the vicinity of Kunów. In the village itself, 20 craftsmen were still permitted to run their businesses, most of them shoemakers.⁷ There was also a number of Jews working in road construction, forestry, and care of the horses for the German Gendarmes stationed in Kunów. According to one of the Viennese deportees, there were no problems in Kunów; he described it as a “nice little ghetto.”⁸

On the order of Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów, effective June 1, 1942, Jews in Kreis Opatow were to be limited to only 17 points of concentration. Kunów was selected as one of the permitted locations. Noncompliance with orders to move to the ghetto was punishable by death. These designated locations automatically became ghettos.⁹ At this time, many of Kunów's Jews were moved to the ghetto in nearby Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, where the Germans forced approximately 5,000 Jews to live in houses on only two streets.¹⁰ In the summer of 1942, 15 Jewish youths from Kunów were sent to the labor camp in Bodzechów near Ostrowiec. There they worked in a quarry under harsh conditions.¹¹

At this time, rumors reached Kunów that the SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries were going from town to town, killing and deporting the Jews. These rumors were initially not believed; however, one day in September 1942, men in black uniforms were spotted approaching the town. Panic broke out, and everybody started running for cover. Many shots were fired. The intruders searched for Jews in hiding and killed a few of them. No deportation was conducted, but this incident shook Kunów's Jews out of their false sense of security.¹²

Another raid on the ghetto took place immediately after Yom Kippur (September 21). Kunów's Jews were ordered to assemble at the market square or they would be shot. On this

occasion, the Germans amused themselves by shooting five Jews selected at random. The others were released after witnessing the execution.¹³ A handful of Jews in the ghetto tried to save themselves by volunteering to work at the Bodzechów labor camp, where they worked for a German company installing electric power lines.¹⁴

At the end of October 1942, SS forces and Ukrainian auxiliaries cordoned off the ghetto. They removed the elderly and the sick from their homes, took them outside the village, and shot them. According to one witness, the market square, where all the Jews were assembled, was an “indescribable shambles.” The SS tore the babies from their mothers’ arms and flung them against the wall or crushed their skulls under their heels. A woman was seen choking her own child before the Germans could get to her. These scenes drove many people mad, and some tore at their clothes. It apparently took several days to complete the deportation of the Jews from the Kunów ghetto.¹⁵

Approximately 500 remaining Jews were sent to the Treblinka killing center.¹⁶ Only two of them, Velvel Hupert and his son Yehoshua, succeeded in jumping off the train. The son was shot, but his father made it to the Bodzechów labor camp. The 15 youths from Kunów sent to Bodzechów in the summer had escaped into the forest and dug a bunker to conceal themselves. At first, a partisan farmer brought them food and news, but this connection was broken when, after the ghetto liquidation, the Germans initiated a round-the-clock search for Jews in hiding. In view of the increased threat, the young fugitives returned to the Bodzechów camp. From there, they were transferred to the labor camp in Starachowice, where they worked in a munitions plant. Subsequently they were sent to the labor camp in Bliżyn; only 1 person from this group is known to have survived.¹⁷

SOURCES The main published source on the fate of the Jewish community in Kunów is the article in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 468–470. See also Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004).

Documentary sources include the following: AŻIH (210/441 [AJDC]; 211/629 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 32; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]). Relevant survivor testimonies can be found in DCRO (D/DLI 7/404/12) and VHF (# 1867 and 22708).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32; and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/441.
2. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32.
3. Ibid., Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BZIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955), p. 164 (table 13).
4. Marek Józwiak, “Akta Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem dystryktu radomskiego,” *Biuletyn Kwartalny Radomskiego*

Towarzystwa Naukowego 23:1 (1988): 45–46; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 107; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32; and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/441.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 18, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32.

6. VHF, # 22708-13, testimony of Szmuel Nudelman, 1996, states that the ghetto was established in 1940, but this is not corroborated by other sources. Similar signs were erected in the Kreis capital, Opatów, in October 1941; see Zvi Yasheev, ed., *Apt: (Opatov); sefer zikaron le-ir ve-em be-Yisrael asher hayetab ve-enenab ‘od. Yizker-bukh tsum ondenk fun undzer geburts-shtet in Poyln velkhe iz mer nishto* (Tel Aviv: Yotse Apt be-Yisrael, Ar. Ha-B., Canada, Brazil, 1966), pp. 223, 226.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32.

8. VHF, # 1867, testimony of Herbert Kaufmann, 1995; transcript of statement given by Janette Kaufman in Belsen concentration camp, April 21, 1945, D/DLI # 7/404/12, on the Web of the Durham County Record Office (DCRO) (www.durham.gov.uk); VHF, # 22708-13.

9. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 262; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 116, 152–153; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 85–86; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 470.

10. Marian Tadeusz “Bończa” Mazur, *Szumiały nam świętokrzyskie jodły* (Katowice: Zakłady Graficzne, ca. 1986 to 1999), p. 14.

11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 470.

12. VHF, # 1867.

13. Transcript of statement given by Janette Kaufmann in Belsen concentration camp, April 21, 1945.

14. VHF, # 1867.

15. Transcript of statement given by J. Kaufmann in Belsen concentration camp, April 21, 1945 Kaufmann was at that time part of the labor detachment sent from Bodzechów to install a conveyor in the immediate proximity of Kunów; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 470.

16. Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 690; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 147; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 262; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 470; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 164 (table 13).

17. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 470.

ŁAGÓW

Pre-1939: Łagów (Yiddish: Lagov), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Lagow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łagów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Łagów is located 113 kilometers (70 miles) northeast of Kraków, not far from the larger town of Opatów. In 1939, at the time of

the Nazi invasion, the Jewish population of Łagów was approximately 1,400 people.

German forces occupied Łagów shortly after the start of the invasion, in early September 1939. At this time some (mainly young) Jews fled to the east, to that part of Poland that was soon to come under Soviet control. As the Germans entered the town, they accused a local Jew of shooting at German troops with a pistol. In reprisal, the Germans pulled Jews out of several houses close to the incident and shot 32 people on the street. They also burned down the houses in this part of town near the market.¹ Within a few days of their arrival, the Germans started using Jews for forced labor. In the fall of 1939, the German authorities in Łagów established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which had to transmit German regulations to the Jewish community and meet German demands for forced laborers. Among the restrictions imposed on Jews was the wearing of a yellow Star of David and a prohibition on eating meat.² The German authorities also demanded large “contributions” from the Judenrat. However, despite dire threats, their exorbitant demands could not be met in full, on account of the impoverishment of the Jewish population in Łagów. Nevertheless, the Germans murdered hostages, searched Jewish homes, and stole what meager possessions they could find.

On March 12, 1941, a deportation train left the Aspang Station in Vienna with 997 men, women, and children on board bound for Opatów. Only 11 of these Austrian Jews survived the war.³ Most of the transport was resettled in Kreis Opatow, with about 100 of them being sent to Łagów. In July 1941, they were joined by a large group of refugees expelled from the city of Radom, who arrived empty-handed, barefoot, famished, and sick. They were housed in the Bet Midrash (study center) and the small synagogue. As a result of the overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions, a typhus epidemic claimed many lives.⁴

At some date before March 1942, with the assistance of the Judenrat, all the Jews in Łagów were resettled into an area around the market square, which became the Jewish residential quarter. This probably took place around the same time as the establishment of a similar open ghetto in Opatów in early April 1941. At first the Jews were permitted to move about with relative freedom. Unfortunately, only scant information on living and working conditions in the Łagów ghetto is available.

Surviving records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization indicate that by May 31, 1941, 1,694 Jews were residing in Łagów; three months later, by August 31, the Jewish population had increased to 1,805. Of these, 73 were merchants and traders, and 89 were craftsmen; most of the latter were tailors and shoemakers. In addition, there were 32 general workers and laborers, 5 professionals, and 157 unemployed. Over 500 Jews were seeking assistance from the JSS and the Judenrat. The assistance was given in the form of food, clothing, fuel, money, housing, and medical services.⁵

In March 1942, the Jewish quarter in Łagów was enclosed with barbed wire with only one small gate and sealed off as a

ghetto. Leaving the ghetto was forbidden on pain of death. At this time the number of ration cards for Jewish laborers was reduced to one sixth of the previous total, and starvation in the ghetto greatly increased. In May 1942, the Jews from the villages around Łagów were brought into the Łagów ghetto, further increasing the overcrowding there.⁶

In July 1942, the Germans, working from a list prepared in advance, took 460 young men from the ghetto to an unknown destination. It is probable that they were sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko Kamienna, as were many Jews from Opatów at this time, but this cannot be confirmed from available sources.

In August 1942, a rumor spread in the Łagów ghetto that the Germans were sending Jews from neighboring ghettos to extermination camps. Many began searching for hiding places. Some sought help from farmers in the vicinity, but only a few farmers were willing to risk giving aid to Jews. Furthermore, on December 15, 1942, the German governor of Distrikt Radom, Dr. Ernst Kundt, published a decree stating that anyone offering help to Jews would be executed. Nevertheless, there were a few individuals who hid Jews and shared their bread with them.⁷ One such person, Ignacy Bazorski, was betrayed to the Germans and tortured to death in prison.

On October 27, 1942, SS forces, assisted by Ukrainian police auxiliaries and local Polish (Blue) Police, arrived in Łagów. Several days earlier, on October 20–22, 1942, the Germans had liquidated the Jewish ghetto in neighboring Opatów, sending more than 6,000 Jews to the extermination camp in Treblinka.⁸ In Łagów, the Germans broke into Jewish homes and forced all the inhabitants into the square next to the Judenrat building. The ill and the aged were murdered in their beds. Many children were also shot and killed in the town. On the square in front of the Judenrat, the Jews were grouped by family and lined up in rows. From there they were marched to the train station. Along the way more were murdered.

About 2,000 people were crammed into freight cars dusted with chlorine disinfectant and sent to Kielce, and from there they were sent to Treblinka. The Germans retained a few dozen Jews in Łagów, including members of the Judenrat, and put them to work sorting abandoned Jewish possessions, burying the bodies left on the street, and cleaning up the ghetto area. After a time these Jews were transferred to the Opatów ghetto, and from there most were sent to the ghetto in Sandomierz.⁹

SOURCES Additional information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Łagów can be found in the following publications: Zvi Yasheev, ed., *Apt: (Opatov); sefer zikaron le-ir ve-em be-Yisrael asher bayetab ve-enenab 'od. Yizker-bukh tsum ondenk fun undzer geburts-shtet in Poyln velkhe iz mer nishto* (Tel Aviv: Yotse Apt be-Yisrael, Ar. Ha-B., Kanadah, Brazil, 1966); and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 267–269. The ghetto in Łagów is also mentioned in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 700.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Łagów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/667); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 33); VHF (# 532); and YVA (O-3/2973).

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NOTES

1. Eugeniusz Fafara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), p. 21; Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach Polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw, 1980), p. 140; see also VHF, # 532, testimony of Leon Silberberg.

2. VHF, # 532.

3. See www.doew.at/projekte/holocaust/shoahengl/opatow.html.

4. VHF, # 532.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 33, Correspondence of Praesidium of the JSS with the delegation in Łagów (1941).

6. Alina Skibińska and Jakub Petelewicz, "The Participation of Poles in Crimes against Jews in the Świętokrzyskie Region," originally published in Polish as "Udział Polaków w zbrodniach na Żydach na prowincji regionu świętokrzyskiego," *Zagłada Żydów* 1 (2005): 114–148.

7. See, for example, YVA, O-3/2973, testimony of Maria Guterman.

8. Yasheev, *Apt: (Opatov)*; pp. 234–235 and p. 18 (English); AŻIH, 301/3328; and Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 63–64.

9. VHF, # 532.

LIPSKO

Pre-1939: Lipsko, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Ilza (later Starachowice) Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Lipsko is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) southeast of Radom on the Vistula River. On the eve of war in the summer of 1939, there were about 1,600 Jews living in the town, comprising more than half of its total population.

Units of the German 29th Motorized Infantry Division captured Lipsko on September 8, 1939. On September 9, German soldiers assembled all the men on the market square and shot several Jews, including the local rabbi, named Kronenblatt.¹ From the late afternoon through the next morning, the 3rd Battalion of Infantry Regiment 71 (part of the 29th Motorized Infantry Division) staged a pogrom in which between 60 and 80 Jews were murdered, most of them dying in the flames of the burning synagogue.² A few weeks into the occupation, the Germans established a civil administration, and Lipsko initially became part of Kreis Ilza (from January 12, 1942, it was renamed Kreis Starachowice) in Distrikt Radom of the Generalgouvernement. The Kreishauptmann in

Ilza was Hans Zettelmeyer. In Lipsko there was a Gendarmerie post, comprising only a few Gendarmes commanded by Leutnant Lucheneder.

As in other towns, Jews were required to wear armbands bearing the Star of David and had to perform forced labor for the Germans. In 1940, a work camp with 130 inmates was set up; from here, the forced laborers were sent to various sites in the vicinity. On December 6, 1941, Zettelmeyer ordered the establishment of a ghetto, but this order was implemented only in the spring of 1942.³ The ghetto inmates also had to work for the Germans; the Jewish Police escorted them to their workplaces outside the ghetto.⁴ The ghetto comprised only two smaller streets in the town center, covering an area of approximately 500 by 150 meters (1,640 by 492 feet).⁵ No direct evidence has been uncovered concerning the Judenrat, but it is assumed there must have been one, as a Jewish police force was definitely in existence.⁶

In Kreis Ilza a Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee was founded, which had a branch in Lipsko. It was able to distribute food parcels to the men in the forced labor camps, which it had received from the head office of the JSS in Kraków. Living conditions in the ghetto were quite harsh, with the diet mainly consisting of potatoes and rough bread prepared from flour and baked at home. There was also a shortage of soap, which ghetto inmates had to make themselves. Although most prayer houses had been closed down, observant Jews continued to pray at home and celebrate the High Holidays as best they could.⁷

Jews from the surrounding villages were also brought into the Lipsko ghetto, which due to its location on a railroad line was well suited for the Nazi purpose of collecting and then deporting the Jews. Especially in the spring of 1942, when the Germans began to set up collection ghettos (*Sammelghettos*) in order to concentrate Jews from the smaller towns, Lipsko took on a certain regional importance. In the first months of the occupation, the Jewish population was boosted by refugees from western parts of Poland and especially by many Jews deported from the Łódź region.⁸ Thus, the Jewish population of Lipsko increased from the pre-war figure of about 1,600 to some 2,100 in April 1940. Subsequently, despite certain depletions due to deaths and relocations to labor camps, it was 1,852 in May 1941, and then finally, following the influx from nearby villages, such as Chotcza, it had risen to some 3,600 by October 1942.

In Lipsko, the ghetto was open and not enclosed by walls or barbed wire; Jews were more or less free to come and go as they pleased, which allowed some of them to escape prior to the ghetto's liquidation. However, a strict curfew was enforced at night. The German Gendarmes would occasionally enter the ghetto to round up Jews for forced labor or to carry out other Aktionen, more or less at random. Jewish victims shot by the Gendarmerie included an elderly person named Goldfarb in the spring of 1942 and Helena Rozenwajg in the summer of 1942.⁹ Some Jews hid to avoid the roundups. Among the last Aktionen before the liquidation of the ghetto was a de-

portation by truck of younger able-bodied Jews (up to the age of 30) to the forced labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna.¹⁰

On October 17, 1942, German police forces comprising about 150 German policemen brought from Radom, together with Ukrainian auxiliary guards and local Gendarmes under the command of Lucheneder of the Gendarmerie post in Lipsko, surrounded the ghetto.¹¹ The Jewish population was ordered out of their houses into the town square. A few managed to escape and hide with Polish acquaintances or were able to join partisan groups in the forests. The German police transported the rest, more than 3,000 people, to the Tarłów ghetto some 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) south of Lipsko, which served as an assembly point for Jews in the area. From there they were transported to the Treblinka extermination camp and were murdered there a few days later. After the deportation of the ghetto's inhabitants, local Poles moved into the houses vacated in the former ghetto area.¹² In December 1942, the Germans murdered three members of a Polish family in Lipsko who had hidden Jews in their house.

SOURCES There is not much literature regarding the Jewish community in Lipsko and especially regarding the ghetto there. A brief account of the fate of the Jewish community during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 285. The Lipsko ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 271.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Lipsko can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/82; 210/451; and 211/640-641); IPN (ASG, sygn. 47, p. 39); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 15); VHF (# 4822); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. *rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo radomskie* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), p. 96; VHF, # 4822, testimony of Eva Young.

2. The massacre is mentioned in AŻIH, 301/82, testimony of Michał Birenbaum, p. 1.

3. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach” (Lipsko), October 1, 1945. Here the exact date given is March 1, 1942, but this could not be verified.

4. AŻIH, 301/82, p. 1.

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach” (Lipsko), October 1, 1945; and AŻIH, 301/82, p. 1.

6. AŻIH, 301/82, p. 1.

7. VHF, # 4822.

8. AŻIH, 301/82, p. 1.

9. *rejestr miejsc i faktów: Województwo radomskie*, pp. 96–97.

10. VHF, # 4822.

11. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach” (Lipsko), October 1, 1945.

12. Ibid.

MAGNUSZEW

Pre-1939: Magnuszew, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Magnuszew is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) southeast of Warsaw, on the left bank of the Vistula River. On the eve of World War II, about 700 Jews resided in Magnuszew, numbering about 45 percent of the total population of 1,500.

Magnuszew was invaded by the Wehrmacht in early September 1939. Once a civil administration was established in the newly formed Generalgouvernement, Magnuszew was incorporated into Kreis Radom-Land, a part of Distrikt Radom. Head of the civil administration was a Kreishauptmann; the post was filled by Dr. Friedrich Egen (December 16, 1939, to July 1942; and September 1943 to January 1945) and Dr. Justus Rubehn (July 1942 to September 1943). As Magnuszew was only a small place, no special German outpost was established there, and no German Order Police units (subordinated to Lieutenant Wichern in the Kreishauptmannschaft) were located there.

Just as in the entire Generalgouvernement, the Jews of Magnuszew were soon no longer allowed to slaughter animals according to Jewish religious law. Yet two Jews in the village did so, disregarding German orders, and while one was executed, the other succeeded in escaping and went into hiding.¹ Jews were required to wear distinctive markings and perform forced labor, but generally, as no German units were permanently there, the Jews of Magnuszew were able to live in relative quiet during the first two years of the occupation.

This comparatively normal life ended with the establishment of an open ghetto, which was ordered by Kreishauptmann Egen, together with the creation of ghettos in several other towns in the Kreis, on December 22, 1941. The Jews of Kreis Radom-Land had to leave smaller villages and gather in the larger ones.² Thus, the Jewish population of Magnuszew increased, and surviving documentation shows that it rose from 730 in April 1940 to 1,106 in 1941 and finally to 1,200 by August 1942. The formation of the ghetto coincided with an outbreak of typhus in Magnuszew, where no medical services were available. The ghetto itself was rather cramped, comprising only a very small part of the former shtetl near a lake. Living conditions were squalid. In some houses as many as five or six housewives had to share one kitchen, and many Jews were forced to reside together in a large barn that had no facilities whatsoever. Initially the Jews were permitted to leave to buy food during certain hours of the day. Subsequently the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire, although it was not closely guarded. At least some Poles were willing to help the Jews by selling them food or trading it in exchange for labor.³ Unfortunately, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee

of Kreis Radom-Land, which was founded on August 20, 1940, had no branch in Magnuszew, so that assistance from other Jewish communities was quite rare.

On August 17, 1942, Kreishauptmann Rubehn ordered that all the Jews of the Kreis, including those remaining in the Magnuszew ghetto, be brought into the Kozienice ghetto between August 19 and August 21, 1942.⁴ In the process of assembling the Jews for resettlement, the German police forces murdered 120 of them. Of the survivors, 200 were transported to Ćmielów, where they became slave laborers digging irrigation channels.⁵ The main group had to march about 15 kilometers (9 miles) to the nearby town of Kozienice, taking with them only what meager possessions they could carry in their arms. In total, some 4,000 additional Jews were brought into Kozienice at this time.⁶ Just over one month later, the Germans deported most of these along with many of the Jews from Kozienice (about 13,000 people in total) to the Treblinka killing center on September 27, 1942.

SOURCES A brief history of the Jewish community including its fate during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 293. The ghetto in Magnuszew is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 302.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Magnuszew can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3915; Niemieckie materiały okupacyjne, no. 60); BA-L (206 AR-Z 56/72); USHMM (Acc.1988.A.0204; Acc.2003.406.1); VHF (# 9288, 29091, 39189, 43358, and 46716); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1988.A.0204 (Alec Ward, My Story), p. 2.
2. AŻIH, Niemieckie materiały okupacyjne, no. 60. Order of Kreishauptmann Egen, December 22, 1941; see also VHF, # 39189, Samuel Dresner, who dates the establishment of the ghetto in either December 1941 or early 1942.
3. USHMM, Acc.1988.A.0204 (Alec Ward, My Story), p. 2; VHF, # 39189; and # 9288, Freda Landau.
4. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1 (Kozienice ghetto papers, 1939–1942), report of the Obmann des jüdischen Ältesten-Rates in Kozienice, August 31, 1942.
5. AŻIH, 301/3915, testimony of Szymon Szwarcberg, May 29, 1948, p. 1.
6. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1 (Kozienice ghetto papers, 1939–1942), report of the Obmann des jüdischen Ältesten-Rates in Kozienice on the mood of the Jewish population, August 31, 1942; Acc.1988.A.0204 (Alec Ward, My Story), p. 2.

MAŁOGOSZCZ

Pre-1939: Małogoszcz, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Małogoszcz, Kreis Jędrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Małogoszcz, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Małogoszcz is located about 25 kilometers (16 miles) west-southwest of Kielce. The number of Jews in Małogoszcz stood at 760 on the eve of World War II, when they comprised about 20 percent of the total population.

A few weeks after the Wehrmacht conquered the village in early September 1939, the Nazis established a civil administration. Małogoszcz became part of Kreis Jędrzejów, in Distrikt Radom of the Generalgouvernement. The Kreishauptmann, based in Jędrzejów, which is situated about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) south of Małogoszcz, was initially Dr. Karl Glehn (from September 1939 to October 1940); he was succeeded first by Dr. Fritz von Balluseck (November 1940 to April 1942), then Bernhard Höfer (April 1942 to January 1945).¹ As no German offices were stationed directly in Małogoszcz, the Kreishauptmann was the decisive executive figure for the Nazis' anti-Jewish measures in the village. There was not even a detachment of German police based in Małogoszcz; the nearest police post was the Gendarmerie office in Jędrzejów, where Leutnant Wagner was in charge.²

The temporary military administration established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) before the end of 1939. Soon the Nazis started to exploit Jewish labor, forcing Jews to work in a nearby quarry.³

According to the account in *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, early in 1941, the German authorities ordered the relocation of Małogoszcz's Jews into a ghetto, which in combination with the robbery and expropriation of Jewish possessions led to a drastic deterioration in economic, sanitary, and physical conditions. In the spring of 1941, the ghetto was closed, and anyone leaving it without permission was subject to the death penalty.⁴

Unfortunately, no primary sources could be found to corroborate the details given in this account. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee for Kreis Jędrzejów, which was founded on August 16, 1940, under the leadership of Pinkus Tajtelbaum, set up a branch office in Małogoszcz at the end of 1941.⁵ However, since the funding was very meager, it was unable to provide much assistance. A questionnaire answered by the JSS branch in Małogoszcz on April 1, 1942, reported that no Jewish quarter (*dzielnica żydowska*) had been established in the village. The same report also recorded that in 1940 a number of displaced Jews had arrived in the village from Łódź, Bielsko, and Kielce.⁶

In the town of Jędrzejów, Jews were informed that they would be shot for leaving the ghetto without a permit from October 1941 onward.⁷ Presumably, similar restrictions applied to Jews caught outside the limits of Małogoszcz by 1942, rendering the whole village a de facto ghetto.

The number of Jews in Małogoszcz, which had been 760 in September 1939, fluctuated during the occupation but had apparently increased to more than 800 by August 1942, with some sources putting the total at 1,130.⁸

In the same month, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. On August 28, 1942, 830 Jews were deported to the Jędrzejów ghetto, at the same time as the Jews from a number of other villages in the vicinity.⁹ On September 16, 1942, all but around 250 Jews, who were selected for work, were deported from the

collection ghetto in Jędrzejów to the Treblinka extermination camp, including most of the Jews recently arrived from Małogoszcz.¹⁰ It is possible that a few of the Małogoszcz Jews were among the group of 200 or so Jews transferred to the forced labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna from Jędrzejów.¹¹

SOURCES Published information on the Jewish community of Małogoszcz during the Holocaust includes Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 312–313. The existence of a ghetto in Małogoszcz is mentioned also in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 789; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 451–452; and on the ŻIH (jewishinstitute.org) Web site. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), and the sztetl.org Web site, however, make no mention of a ghetto in Małogoszcz.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Małogoszcz can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (JSS 211/483, 489, 684; and 301/765); BA-L (B 162/6203); IPN (159/2); and YVA (O-3/8150).

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NOTES

1. Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 49.

2. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), p. 82.

3. Ibid., p. 154.

4. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 312–313.

5. AŻIH, JSS 211/483 and 489, Judenrat Jędrzejów to JSS head office in Kraków, August 19, 1940; JSS Jędrzejów to Kreishauptmann Höfer, July 30, 1942.

6. Ibid., JSS, 211/684, p. 1.

7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 3, August 27, and October 26, 1941, and January 9, 1942.

8. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 75–182, here pp. 145, 172.

9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489 (Jędrzejów), p. 38.

10. BA-L, B 162/6203, p. 569, Report, July 6, 1972. See also Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 145; and Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 262.

11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 312–313.

MARIAMPOL (AKA MARJAMPOL)

Pre-1939: Mariampol, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mariampol is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of Kozienice. Information regarding the ghetto in Mariampol is scarce. Czesław Pilichowski, dates its establishment in 1942 and reports that it had 2,200 inhabitants at the time of its liquidation. Adam Rutkowski indicates, however, that there were 1,500 Jews in 1939 and that the same number of residents was transferred to nearby Kozienice in September 1942, when the Mariampol ghetto was liquidated. Neither offers further details.¹

Since the 1921 census does not seem to register any Jews living in Mariampol, this raises the question of the origin of the inhabitants of the Mariampol ghetto, as the reported ghetto population is too large to have been native to this very small village. Available sources indicate that the inhabitants of the so-called Mariampol ghetto were in fact Jews transferred there from the Głowaczów ghetto.

In the autumn of 1941, German authorities completed the gradual evacuation of all the residents of Głowaczów, including the Jews residing in the ghetto there. This decision resulted from the requisition of this area for German aviation purposes, combined with the establishment of other military installations north of Radom, along the Radomka River.² Rutkowski cites a letter by the mayor of nearby Luta, addressed to the Radom Kreishauptmann, which reported the deportation of 160 Jewish families from Głowaczów and its vicinity to the gminas of Mariampol, Magnuszew, and Skaryszew on September 20, 1941.³

The Radom-Land Kreishauptmann, Dr. Friedrich Egen, formally ordered the establishment of the Mariampol ghetto in an order dated December 22, 1941, in which he instructed that the Jewish inhabitants of 40 rural communities be resettled into Jewish quarters—one of them being Mariampol.⁴

From survivors’ testimony, it is clear that the majority of Głowaczów ghetto residents were resettled to the closest locality, this being a piece of fallow land 4 to 5 kilometers (ca. 3 miles) northwest of Głowaczów.

According to survivor Abraham Kaspi, “the ghetto for Głowaczów’s Jews”—as he refers to it—“was situated between Mariampol (known to locals as ‘Marianki’) and Jasieniec, and its border was demarcated by a small lake.” Owners of Jewish houses in Głowaczów were allowed to pull them down and move them to the new location. Most of Głowaczów’s Poles were resettled to the village of Jasieniec and some other fallow lands near the village of Mariampol. Now deserted, Głowaczów was used as a training site for German artillery.

The name Mariampol (or Marianki) was applied to this ghetto most probably due to its close proximity to the larger of the two villages (Mariampol) and the fact that it remained within the same pre-war administrative gmina of Mariampol (of which Głowaczów was the administrative seat). The gmina comprised a total of 18 settlements.⁵

Housing and sanitation in the new ghetto were deplorable. Many Jews lived in primitive huts made of pieces of plywood, cardboard, and metal. A number of Jews died of various illnesses and suffered from malnutrition. The ghetto had one bakery, but the Germans provided too little flour to satisfy

even a fraction of the community's needs. There was not a single shop. Kaspi believes that "if it had not been for the help of Polish neighbors, all the Jews would have died of hunger," as the latter were forbidden to leave the ghetto. Despite the ghetto's poverty, Gendarmes from Kozienice and Grabów demanded the delivery of various goods from the Judenrat, beating its chairman as a warning.

During the winter of 1941–1942 and in April 1942, all men aged 50 and under were rounded up by the Gestapo and the SS and were taken to the nearby Kruszyna labor camp.⁶

According to Hanka Grynberg, in the summer of 1942, the ghetto, which she refers to as Marianki, was enclosed by a fence, yet its inhabitants continued to sneak out at night to forage for food.⁷

The Mariampol ghetto was liquidated in the second half of August 1942. According to instructions issued on August 17 by the Kreishauptmann in Radom, Dr. Justus Rubehn, all the Jews of Mariampol, Magnuszew, Mniszew, and Sieciechów were to be transferred to the Kozienice ghetto by the end of the month. A report prepared on August 31 by the Judenrat in Kozienice confirms that the arrival of about 4,000 Jews from these places, composed of men, women, and children, including some elderly and sick, had provoked a mood of heavy mass fear (*befüge Massenangst*) among the Kozienice Jews. "The arrival of the transferees with their meager possessions, and the cases of sickness and death that had transpired during the transfer, deeply shattered morale, and the various rumors and unconfirmed gossip about the forthcoming removal of the transferees, increased the panic to the utmost."⁸

On the arrival of the Jews from Mariampol, the Jews in the Kozienice ghetto were already suffering from severe shortages of food and hunger. The new arrivals increased overcrowding to a catastrophic degree, such that now about 15 to 20 people were forced to share some rooms, and numerous people were compelled to live in closets, outhouses, and other improvised accommodations.⁹

The Kozienice ghetto was liquidated on September 27, 1942, when almost all of its Jews were sent to the Treblinka killing center by rail.¹⁰

The number of victims of the Mariampol ghetto—of whom Głowaczów Jews appear to have been the vast majority—requires further research. Given that around 4,000 Jews arrived in Kozienice in late August from four separate ghettos, it is likely that between 1,000 and 1,500 of these people came from the Mariampol ghetto.

SOURCES The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (301/2296 [Relacje]); USHMM (RG-15.084M [Holocaust Survivors Testimonies]; and Acc.2003.406.1 [documents of the Judenrat in Kozienice]); and VHF (# 20410 and 23283).

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NOTES

1. Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 156–157 (table 11),

178–179. Contemporary documentation, however, indicates that the transfer to the Kozienice ghetto took place in late August 1942; see USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1, Kozienice Judenrat report, August 31, 1942. Also see Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 315.

2. Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 137.

3. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 156–157 (table 11), 178–179.

4. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), pp. 122–123.

5. A. Kutkowski and I. Boratyn, "Zapłaćcie za wojnę!" *Słowo Ludu, Magazyn Obok Nas*, September 10, 2004, available at www.slowoludu.com.pl/gazeta/codzienna/2004/IX/10/8.pdf; Euzebiusz Małaśnicki, "Moje wspomnienia," available at www.glowaczow.republika.pl/chor.html; AŻIH, 301/2296, testimony of Hanka Grynberg; VHF, # 20410, testimony of Abraham Kaspi, 1996. The border was possibly a pond, as no lake is visible on current Google maps. Note also that there is a village by the name of Marianki located approximately 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) west of Głowaczów.

6. VHF, # 23283, testimony of Sol Rozenzweig, 1996; and # 20410; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 137. This is mentioned also in the report of the Judenrat in Kozienice, dated August 31, 1942; see USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1.

7. AŻIH, 301/2296.

8. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1, Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Kozienice, report (to the Security Police) on the mood of the Jewish population, August 31, 1942.

9. Ibid.

10. AŻIH, 301/2296; Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 156–157 (table 11), 178–179; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 315.

MNISZEW

Pre-1939: Mniszew, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Mniszew is located about 47 kilometers (29 miles) southeast of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 265 Jews living in Mniszew. Following the village's occupation in September 1939, the Germans established a Judenrat chaired by Ajzyk Zysman.

In a letter from the Judenrat addressed to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Kraków, it was reported that by March 1941 the number of Jews in Mniszew had tripled due to the arrival of refugees from nearby small towns, reaching a total of more than 1,000 residents. Two months later in May 1941, the Judenrat reported over 600 Jewish families living in Mniszew, most of which were from Warsaw or other locations in Distrikt Warschau. As refugees continued to stream into the village, a desperate Judenrat pleaded with the AJDC for help. The above figures, however, are inconsistent with the findings of historian Adam Rutkowski, who

recorded 317 Jews living in the village in 1941 (including 131 refugees) and approximately 300 by August 1942. As the AJDC's Mniszew file ends with the May 1941 report, it is possible that those refugees were transferred to another location or that the Judenrat overestimated their numbers in an effort to receive more substantial assistance.

The precise date of the ghetto's establishment is unknown. Mniszew ghetto survivor Henry Brait dates its creation in 1939 or 1940, which, in comparison with other similarly ghettoized communities in Kreis Radom, is probably too early. According to historian Jacek Młynarczyk, Kreishauptmann Dr. Friedrich Egen in Radom ordered in December 1941 the concentration of the Jews from the villages in a number of specified places in the Kreis, including in Mniszew, which were to be designated as *Judenbezirke* (Jewish ghettos).¹ This was presumably implemented in the beginning of 1942 as part of the overall ghettoization process. According to Brait, relocation to the ghetto was sudden and unannounced. Jews moving in had to leave behind their possessions. The Mniszew ghetto was made up of two streets, from which the Jews were forbidden to exit.

The ghetto was liquidated in August 1942. On August 17, the Kreishauptmann in Radom, Dr. Justus Rubehn (who had replaced Dr. Egen), ordered that all the Jews of Mariampol, Magnuszew, Mniszew, and Sieciechów were to be transferred to the Kozienice ghetto by the end of the month. Around 350 Jews from Mniszew were transferred to the Kozienice ghetto, where about 4,000 Jews from the vicinity were being concentrated. The Judenrat in Kozienice reported at the end of the month that the new arrivals, composed of men, women, and children, including some elderly and sick people, had provoked a "heavy mood of fear" among the Kozienice Jews, as they feared that it presaged a major deportation Aktion.²

Accordingly, the Kozienice ghetto was liquidated the following month, in late September 1942, when its residents were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES For demographic information on the Jewish community of Mniszew, see Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 158, 186.

Relevant documentation concerning the Jews of Mniszew during the Holocaust can be found, for example, in the following archives: AŻIH (210/496 and NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/496 [Mniszew], pp. 1, 4, 9, 11; and Acc.2003.406.1 [Judenrat in Kozienice]); and VHF (# 14490, testimony of Henry Brait, 1996).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122.

2. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1, Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Kozienice, report (to the Security Police) on the mood of the Jewish population, August 31, 1942.

MSTÓW

Pre-1939: Mstów (Yiddish: Emstow), village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Mstow, Kreis Radomsko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Mstów, województwo śląskie, Poland

Mstów is located 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) east of Częstochowa. According to the 1921 census, there were 740 Jews living in Mstów, constituting 37.6 percent of the total population.

An estimated 532 Jews lived in Mstów on the eve of the German occupation in 1939. Upon entering the village, the German forces turned the synagogue, local school, and the offices of the former cloister into military warehouses. The synagogue was later razed on the orders of the German mayor, Klubsch.¹ The village was supervised by the Gendarmerie post in Chorzenice, located 10 kilometers (6 miles) north of Mstów.

Abram Wolfowicz, a survivor of the Mstów ghetto, describes its establishment: "In the first months of 1940, the mayor evicted the Jews from their apartments and established an open ghetto on Kiliński Street. Those who paid a fee were allowed to return to their apartments."² It is not clear if the ghetto was later closed or how long exceptions permitting some Jews to live outside its borders lasted.

Wolfowicz also testified that the Germans murdered the first chairman of the Judenrat, Jankiel Joskowicz, and his two sons. He also named other victims including local butchers Janas Federman, Idel Naparty, Icek Hauptman, Salom Unglik, Jankiel Biber, and Abram Samsonowicz; grave digger Icek Pelta; and baker Jankiel Szydłowski. All were accused of offenses against the German commercial ordinances. The Jewish cemetery on Kiliński Street was often used as a killing site.

In November 1940, the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen that was able to provide 100 meals daily until January 1941. Sometime before January 1941, Izrael Woźnica was appointed as the Judenrat chairman. At that time there were 670 people (about 150 families) living in the ghetto, including a number of deportees. In March 1941, 35 Jews from Płock were resettled into the Mstów ghetto. The kitchen reopened that month, serving 200 meals daily.³

In June 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social-Self Help (JSS) was organized in Mstów. It was named Mstów-Wancerzów, as it also served the neighboring Wancerzów village. The JSS committee included the following members: Szmul Mitelman (chairman, 42 years old), Izrael Woźnica (43), and Icek-Mojzesz Kohn (42). Zisla Mitelman (18) was the Judenrat secretary; Szymon-Dawid Kohn (15) worked as a courier. As of August 1941, the Jews living in the Rędziny community were excluded from the Aurełów JSS and were added to the responsibilities of the Mstów JSS. An estimated 60 Jews from that community were in need of social assistance.⁴

In January 1942, the ghetto had 650 residents, of which, according to JSS estimates, there were 150 children aged 3 to 15. Approximately two thirds of those children were receiving a bowl of soup and a piece of bread daily. The JSS tried to raise more funds for this purpose by organizing a Purim play that year.

In February 1942, the JSS reported that there were still 25 carpentry workshops operating and employing 1 to 3 Jewish workers each. They specialized in the production of ash and oak wood furniture. In mid-March 1942, a Jewish man by the name of Gudsztadt from Radom opened a furniture factory in Mstów. The factory employed 28 carpenters and 10 assistants. It was most likely producing chairs for the Wehrmacht. The JSS also sought employment for 20 local tailors and 15 cobblers.⁵

The ghetto in Mstów was liquidated in August 1942. Approximately 600 Jews gathered there were escorted by the Gendarmerie to Radomsko. The ghetto in Radomsko was liquidated on October 9–12, 1942, and its residents were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES References to the Mstów ghetto can be found in Jan Pietrzykowski, *Hitlerowcy w powiecie częstochowskim, 1939–1945* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo “Śląsk,” 1972), pp. 62, 71, 106, 116, 125; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 144 (table 5).

The following archival sources were used to write this entry: AŻIH (210/503; 211/707-708); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. See “Dzieje Mstowa” at www.mstow.pl/?id=Historia.
2. As cited by Pietrzykowski, *Hitlerowcy w powiecie częstochowskim, 1939–1945*, p. 116.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/503 (Mstów), p. 1; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/707 (Mstów), pp. 1–2, 8–9.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 12, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/707, pp. 14, 30. The JSS erroneously refers to “Wancerzów” as “Kancerzów.”
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/708, pp. 15, 19, 26, 29.

NOWE MIASTO NAD PILICĄ

Pre-1939: Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Nowe Miasto, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The town of Nowe Miasto is located some 70 kilometers (44 miles) south of Warsaw and roughly the same distance east of Łódź on the Pilica River. In 1939, more than 1,300 Jews lived in the town, comprising just under half of the town’s population.

Units of the Wehrmacht captured Nowe Miasto in early September 1939. When the Nazis established the Generalgou-

vernement in the fall of 1939, the town became part of Kreis Tomaszów within Distrikt Radom. The first Kreishauptmann was Dr. Fritz von Balluseck (until November 1940); he was succeeded until the town’s liberation in January 1945 by Dr. Karl Glehn. Most of the German administration, including several police offices, was located in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, but in Nowe Miasto there was an outpost of the Gendarmerie (Order Police) commanded by Leutnant Kottlinski.

The Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Mottel Cilikh, a former restaurant owner. A Jewish police unit was also established. The Germans ordered the dismantling of the synagogue and imposed several large “contributions” on the Jewish community, including one for 10,000 złoty, which was accompanied by the taking of hostages. Among the tasks performed by the Judenrat was the recruitment of forced laborers to meet German quotas, in order to stop Jews from simply being picked off the street.

In the second half of 1940, the German Water Administration Office (Wasserwirtschaftsamt) established a labor camp for Jews (*Julag*) in Nowe Miasto. Between 200 and 400 inmates had to work on land reclamation and draining the countryside. In addition, the Jewish Council in Nowe Miasto was concerned with sending aid to about 50 Jews who had been deported in 1940 to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin. By February 1941, however, the Jewish population of the town had roughly doubled, numbering 2,603, of which 1,593 were refugees and deportees, most of whom had arrived almost completely without means and with no suitable clothing.¹ This population increase was due to the Nazis’ transfer of Jews from surrounding towns, including Mogielnica, Będ-ków, Grójec, and Tarczyn, to Nowe Miasto.

An impression of living conditions for the Jews in Nowe Miasto can be gained from the report of the Judenrat to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), dated February 1, 1941. The report noted that material conditions had deteriorated considerably due to recent confiscations by the Germans and due to the large number of indigent Jews among both the refugees and those native to Nowe Miasto. A welfare kitchen was distributing 350 to 400 lunches every day, but this support was still completely inadequate. A recent clothing distribution received from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) office in Radom had scarcely covered 5 percent of actual needs. The report concluded with an appeal to the AJDC in Kraków to send an emissary to Nowe Miasto to assess the catastrophic situation there.²

According to the same report of February 1, 1941, an enclosed ghetto (*geschlossenen jüd. Wohnviertel*) had recently been established in Nowe Miasto.³ The ghetto was located in the center of town and covered an area of about 4,000 square meters (4,784 square yards). As there was a shortage of labor, many Jews were forced to work outside the ghetto, where they performed road maintenance, cut lumber in the forest, and did agricultural work on surrounding estates.⁴ The number of Jews in the ghetto increased over the following months, rising to 3,375 in May after the arrival of about 600 Jews from Vienna, then to 3,700 by November 1941, but the mortality rate

also climbed during the winter of 1941–1942. There were outbreaks of typhus and tuberculosis; so a special quarantine room was set up in the hospital. Official rations were set at 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of potatoes and 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread for Jews in the first month of the occupation, but even these small rations were subsequently reduced considerably, leading to severe food shortages.⁵ Thus, the Jews depended heavily on work outside the ghetto, which permitted them to acquire some additional food. Limited assistance continued to be provided by the JSS committee of the Kreis, whose head, Henryk Szczęśliwy, established a branch in Nowe Miasto, enabling the ghetto inmates to receive parcels with food and clothing. Nevertheless, during the existence of the ghetto, about 300 Jews died solely from malnutrition, insufficient health care, and the exhausting working conditions.

The Germans sporadically shot Jews, both inside and outside the ghetto. Those murdered inside included some suspected of concealing items during searches and also several members of the Judenrat; these people were buried in the Jewish cemetery. By 1942, those caught outside the ghetto, including children caught trying to smuggle food, were usually shot and buried on the spot, in accordance with orders applied by the Order Police throughout Kreis Tomaszów. About 150 Jews from the Nowe Miasto ghetto were shot in total.⁶ Due to these shootings, the high mortality rate due to illness and starvation, and the transfer of Jews to other camps, the number of ghetto inmates had declined to less than 3,000 by February 1942. However, on August 20, 1942, a train carrying 400 Jews arrived from Odrzywół, which increased the number of Jews in the ghetto to about 3,400 by the end of the month.

The ghetto in Nowe Miasto was liquidated by the Nazis on October 22, 1942. German units surrounded the ghetto and gathered the Jews for deportation. More than 3,000 Jews were transported by train to the Treblinka extermination camp. Only a few Jews managed to escape and flee into the nearby woods.

About 20 to 25 people were held back to clean up the Nowe Miasto ghetto and collect the abandoned property. When this task was completed, the remaining Jews were sent to the reconstituted ghetto in Tomaszów Mazowiecki.

The Jewish community in Nowe Miasto was not reconstituted after the war.

SOURCES A brief account of the fate of the Jewish community during the Holocaust can be found in Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 156–158. See also Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955); Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006); and Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007).

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Nowe Miasto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/515); IfZ (Gd 01-60); IPN (ASG/22 and 51); Sta. Darmstadt (2 Js 461/64, proceed-

ings against former Kreishauptmann Karl Glehn); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 16; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/515); and YVA (O-3/5238).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC), 210/515, pp. 5–7, report of the Vorstand des Jüd. Aeltestenrates to the AJDC, February 1, 1941; and Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, p. 157. For further details on the Distrikt Lublin camps, see David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 87–127.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC), 210/515, pp. 5–7, report of the Vorstand des Jüd. Aeltestenrates to the AJDC in Kraków, February 1, 1941.

3. Ibid. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 119, and Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” p. 154, both date the establishment of the ghetto in the spring of 1941. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, fr. 198, gives the date of November 1940.

4. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 16, fr. 198, Kwestionariusz o obozach (Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą), November 26, 1945.

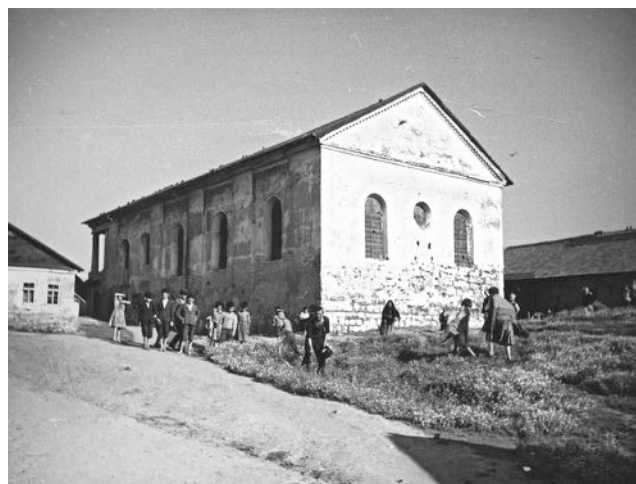
5. Ibid.

6. Ibid. On the “shooting order” in Kreis Tomaszów, see BA-L, B 162/14521, verdict of LG-Darm, 2 Ks 1/69, pp. 20–30.

NOWY KORCZYN

Pre-1939: Nowy Korczyn, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village of Nowy Korczyn is located some 60 kilometers (37 miles) northeast of Kraków and 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Kielce at the confluence of the Nida River and the Vistula River.



Jewish children and adults pose outside the Nowy Korczyn synagogue, ca. 1936.

USHMM WS # 77740, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

The Wehrmacht occupied Nowy Korczyn on September 20, 1939. The Nazi authorities established the Generalgouvernement on October 26, 1939. Nowy Korczyn was located in Kreis Busko, within Distrikt Radom; Nowy Korczyn lay close to the border with Distrikt Krakau. The Kreishauptmann and head of the local administration during the entire occupation was Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer, who together with the SS and police forces in charge of the Kreis was based in Busko. In Nowy Korczyn, there was only a branch of the German Gendarmerie (the rural Order Police) under Leutnant Schwab, which took over a local school as its headquarters. At that time, the Jews of the town numbered 2,462, about two thirds of the entire population.

Upon entry into the town, the occupiers began persecuting Jews there, snatching people from the streets for forced labor, humiliating some of them, and shaving the beards off Jewish men. The Germans also burned the Torah scrolls from the synagogue.¹ After a few weeks the Germans ordered the Jews to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was made responsible for the collection of a 20,000 złoty “contribution” from the community. After a short while the Germans demanded an additional contribution of twice that amount. Other German regulations prohibited Jewish children from going to school, and adult Jews had to wear a Jewish Star. Subsequently a Jewish police force was established, which also helped the Germans to enforce a nightly curfew.²

It is not clear exactly when the Jewish quarter or open ghetto in Nowy Korczyn was established, but by the summer of 1942 Jews faced the death penalty for leaving the area of the town without permission. In one case, a Jewish woman named Hammer was shot in the summer of 1942 for leaving the ghetto. Despite this risk, some Jews continued to trade remaining property with local peasants up to the ghetto’s liquidation.³ The concentration of Jews in the town, however, started much earlier. In the first months of 1941, the Germans had transported Jews from Warsaw, Łódź, Kielce, and Radom to the town, increasing the number of Jewish inhabitants to 3,599 in May 1941. This figure rose to 3,717 in January 1942; then 3,834 in April; and finally about 4,200 in October 1942. As a result of this rising Jewish population, living conditions for the Jews deteriorated steadily, although some of the Jews arriving from larger ghettos noted that conditions were much less oppressive than in Warsaw or Łódź. It remained an open ghetto until its liquidation, but the inmates were forced to live in very overcrowded conditions, with up to 12 people in one room. To obtain some money and food, the Judenrat organized work groups, which were employed in workshops and in service units at the regional military base in Busko-Zdrój. Within Nowy Korczyn, several “workshops” were established for sewing, shoemaking, and carpentry. Some Jews also worked directly for the Gendarmerie or on irrigation projects in the surrounding countryside.

In 1941, the Judenrat set up a public kitchen, which provided 200 meals a day to people in need. In addition, there was a clinic for people affected by the typhus epidemic, which broke out in the ghetto. Further assistance was provided by the Jew-

ish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee of the Kreis, which was founded on December 29, 1940, and which, under the leadership of Josek Topioł and Izaak Nadler, soon opened a branch in Nowy Korczyn.⁴ Nevertheless, all these efforts could not prevent the spread of typhus in the ghetto. Kreishauptmann Dr. Schäfer reported at the end of February 1941 that a dangerous typhus epidemic in Nowy Korczyn had resulted in several deaths and that the ghetto was so overcrowded it could no longer accommodate further deportees.⁵ But as the above-mentioned statistics show, his appeal had no effect in slowing the influx of successive waves of Jewish deportees.

The German Security Police planned for the liquidation of the Nowy Korczyn ghetto at the beginning of October 1942. Units from the local Gendarmerie post and Ukrainian auxiliaries from Radom surrounded the ghetto at dawn on October 2 and assembled about 4,000 Jews on the main square. As there was no railroad connection in Kreis Busko, the deportees had to march or be transported on carts to the neighboring Kreise of Jedrzejow or Opatow. From there, they could be transported by train to the Treblinka death camp.⁶ This was also the fate of the Jews of Nowy Korczyn. First, they were forced to march to the village of Słupia Nowa, 16 kilometers (10 miles) away. Along the way the Nazi guards shot women, children, and elderly people who had difficulty keeping up. On the next day, along with Jewish inhabitants of Słupia and surrounding villages, the Jews were taken to the train station in Szczucin, packed into freight cars and sent to Treblinka.

About 50 to 100 Jews were allowed to stay behind in Nowy Korczyn. These people consisted of members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police, as well as laborers assigned to collect and sort the abandoned Jewish property. According to survivors from this group, they were placed in a few houses that were isolated from the rest of the town, forming a small remnant ghetto. Another 200 or more people who had managed to escape the roundup returned to the remnant ghetto over the following weeks. In one or more transfer Aktions, either at the end of 1942 or in the first half of 1943, the remaining Jews in Nowy Korczyn were loaded onto trucks and taken to labor camps—(especially the Hugo Schneider AG [HASAG] camp) in the area of Kielce.⁷

SOURCES A brief account of the fate of the Jewish community during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 317–319. Further information is contained in the town’s chronicle by Teresa Ginalska, *Nowy Korczyn. Gmina u zbiegu Wisły i Nidy* (Krasno, 1999), pp. 46–53. The memoir of the child survivor Mark Bernard Kupfer, *From Darkness to Sunshine: A Young Boy’s Odyssey* (Pittsburgh, PA: Dorance, 2002), includes brief details about the remnant ghetto.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211 [JSS]); BA-BL (R 52 II/30); BA-L (206 AR-Z 29/63); IPN (Ob/177); StA-Münc (Sta. München I, 1a Js 311/60); Sta. Stuttgart (18 Js 597/67); VHF (e.g., # 2256, 9367, 11648, 34033, 37476, and 41643); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/581).

Stephan Lehnstaedt

NOTES

1. VHF, # 34033, testimony of Morris Piszarz.
2. Ibid., # 41643, testimony of Rita Nussbaum; and # 37476, testimony of Ted Beckard.
3. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1985), p. 181.
4. AŻIH, JSS/211, pp. 266–267, JSS Busko to JSS Kraków, January 24, 1941; membership list of JSS branches in the Kreis, March 22, 1941.
5. BA-BL, R 52 II /30, pp. 1–3, report of Kreishauptmann Dr. Schäfer to the Generalgouverneur, February 28, 1941.
6. BA-L, 206 AR-Z 29/63, vol. 2, pp. 202 ff., interrogation of Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer, February 15, 1965; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów*, p. 181.
7. See Felicja Karay, “Heaven or Hell?: The Two Faces of the HASAG-Kielce Camp,” *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. 32 (2004): 269–321, here pp. 278–280. See also VHF, # 37476; # 2256, testimony of Allen Kupfer; and # 9367, testimony of Mary Hoppe.

ODRZYWÓŁ

Pre-1939: Odrzywół, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Odrzywół, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Odrzywół, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Odrzywół is located 29 kilometers (18 miles) northeast of Opoczno. In 1921, its 389 Jewish residents made up 29.1 percent of the village's population. There were between 250 and 320 Jews living there in 1939.

Following the German occupation of the region in September 1939, no permanent German authorities were based in the village, but officials of the Gendarmerie from Nowe Miasto supervised its affairs.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by N.D. Kozłowski, was organized to represent Jewish interests to the Germans. M. Dessau served as the Judenrat's secretary.

In the autumn of 1940, the Judenrat set up a self-help committee chaired by Alter Weksler. A number of deportees from Mława were resettled to Odrzywół in December 1940. They “arrived literally with no shoes, clothing or bedding,” reported the Judenrat. A number of refugees from Tomaszów Mazowiecki also settled in the village.¹ In January 1941, Weksler sent a letter to the Mława Hometown Association in the Warsaw ghetto, requesting aid for the Mława Jews living in Odrzywół.²

In March 1941, 200 Jews deported from Jeżów, Skierniewice, Mogielnica, Przytyk, and other localities settled in Odrzywół.³ The local community, comprising 250 Jews, was unable to provide help to the 392 newcomers. A soup kitchen that had been opened for some time was closed in April 1941. That same month, the Judenrat requested assistance from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in financing housing rentals for refugees.⁴

In September 1941, the Judenrat reported that “after a thorough requisition of property from the local Jews, a Jewish quarter was established, where 716 Jews were placed.” The Judenrat also noted that some Jews left Odrzywół after the ghetto's establishment. The community was resettled to the Praga neighborhood, inhabited by only five Jewish families before the war. At the time of the ghetto's establishment, none of the houses there were Jewish-owned. There were 23 buildings in the ghetto on approximately 2 hectares (5 acres). The ghetto was never enclosed by a fence. In March 1942, the overcrowding was especially severe; the Judenrat reported an occupancy rate of 12 to 30 people to a room.⁵

The Jews in the ghetto reportedly worked raising chickens for their eggs and in agriculture.

The German authorities announced that the ghetto would be closed on January 1, 1942; Jews would no longer be permitted to leave, except for labor assignments. In April 1942, the Judenrat reported that much of its spending that year included “1,000 zloty for saving from death each of the poor Jews who were caught outside of the Jewish quarter.” In three months (January 1–April 1, 1942), 172 Jews were infected with typhus. Out of that number, 55 were hospitalized in Opoczno and Nowe Miasto. Out of 82 people that died during that period, 44 had to be transported to the Jewish cemetery in Klwów and buried there at the Judenrat's expense. The Judenrat struggled to pay for the burials as well as hospital bills.

In March 1942, nearby villages were cleared of Jewish farmers who were forced to resettle to the Odrzywół ghetto; some inhabited barns and cowsheds.

By April 1942, some form of welfare had been provided to more than one third of the ghetto's Jews. Out of its total of 632 inhabitants, 281 were locals, while the remaining 351 were newcomers.⁶

On May 23, 1942, 25 Jews were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp. Of them, 21 had returned by July 31, 1942, having been released as “unable to work” due to “bodily injuries.” The 4 laborers who remained in Skarżysko were Lajb Abram, Azriel Huberman, Zelig Frydman, and Mendel Brajnenberg.⁷

Most secondary sources maintain that the ghetto was liquidated on August 20, 1942, at which time its 400 residents were deported to the nearby ghetto in Nowe Miasto. The Nowe Miasto ghetto was liquidated on October 22, 1942. Its residents were shipped from there to the Treblinka killing center.

SOURCES The following publications include references to the Odrzywół ghetto: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 78, 84, 154 (table 10); Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), p. 41; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 345. Note that Pilichowski gives an unlikely date for the ghetto's liquidation—the winter of 1943—as at that time there were only a few remnant ghettos

existing in Distrikt Radom. For example, Ujazd was the only ghetto in Kreis Tomaszów, and it had been liquidated by mid-January 1943.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/520 [AJDC]; 211/749 [JSS]; 301/2987 [Relacje]); and USHMM (RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-15.084M [Relacje]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.084M (AŻIH), 301/2987 (Relacje), testimony of Tadeusz Kalski, 1947; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/520 (Odrzywół); Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/749 (Odrzywół), p. 22.
2. Ibid., RG-15.079M (Ring I/599/11), reel 24.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/520, p. 5.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/749, pp. 9–11, 13.
5. AŻIH, 301/2987; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/749, pp. 27–29.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/749, pp. 28–29.
7. Ibid., p. 30.

OPATÓW

Pre-1939: Opatów (Yiddish: Apt), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Opatów, Kreis center, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Opatów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Opatów is located in southeast Poland, 29 kilometers (18 miles) northwest of Sandomierz. In 1921, there were 5,462 Jews in Opatów (62 percent of the total); on the eve of war in 1939, there were around 5,200.¹

The German army occupied Opatów on September 7, 1939. Upon entering the town the Germans set fire to three quarters of the Jewish homes in the market square (*Rynek*). The following day the Germans rounded up and held captive more than 1,000 young Poles and Jews in the local theater. The Jews were separated from the group and subjected to torture, allegedly for concealing weapons, before being released. Schools were closed, and the teachers, Polish and Jewish, as well as the local intelligentsia were sent to concentration camps. Before long, the occupying authorities announced new regulations. Jews could not go outside after sunset and could not leave the town without a special permit. Furthermore, Jews were not allowed to buy food or other products from non-Jews.

Soon the German administration started to conscript Jews for forced labor and impose large “contributions” on the Jewish community. Forced labor in Opatów was of two kinds: Jews performed work for the town council and the German army and civil authorities; in addition, 220 men had to be supplied daily for work at the “Oemler” firm, engaged in road construction. Jews aged 18 to 45 performed seven days of forced labor every two weeks.²

In October 1939, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Dr. Heinz Ritter was appointed Kreishaupt-



Majer Sztajnman poses on a cobblestone street in the Opatów ghetto, while holding his baby daughter, Mania, ca. 1942. Note the armband on Sztajnman's sleeve.

USHMM WS #27173, COURTESY OF MARION WEINZWEIG

mann in Opatów. The German civil administration introduced many restrictive measures for Jews including the wearing of white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. At the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940, a number of Jews arrived in the Opatów region from Kalisz, Turek, Konin, and other cities. The Jews organized a Judenrat, headed by Mordechai Wejsblum, composed of former members of the pre-war Jewish Council. Its main tasks were to provide forced laborers for the Germans and coordinate the various organizations and committees established to assist the Jewish population of Opatów, including the refugees. A Jewish police force assisted the Judenrat in enforcing German demands. Responsible for Kreis Opatów was the outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in the nearby town of Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, headed from 1941 until 1944 by SS-Untersturmführer Hans Soltau. Based in Opatów were units of the Gendarmerie and auxiliary Polish (Blue) Police.³

From the beginning of the occupation, Jewish shops, houses, and apartments had to be surrendered to German officials and local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). Soon, however, it became

unacceptable for the German occupants that Jews and Germans should share the same space. In the summer of 1940, the Germans sent several hundred younger Jewish men to labor camps in the Lublin area. On August 31, 1940, there were 5,500 Jewish residents in Opatów, including 700 refugees. The constant influx of refugees led to a marked deterioration in living conditions for the Jews in Opatów. In September 1940, Kreishauptmann Ritter reported that plans were being made for the establishment of a ghetto and that as a first step the Jews were being forced to move out of the houses around the market square. This gave further impetus to the confiscation of Jewish businesses for the benefit of Germans.⁴

A further strain was imposed on the community in March 1941 following the arrival of a transport of 995 Jews from Vienna destined for Opatów and Łagów. Most of this transport consisted of women and children, as well as sick people and the elderly. Some initially had to be accommodated in stables in Opatów.

On April 6, 1941, the Kreishauptmann established an open ghetto (Jewish residential district) in Opatów. It was not sealed off from the surrounding area, as the Jews were still able to move around most of the town (except during the night curfew). The Jews were forced onto Berek Joselewicz Street and the adjoining alleys; more than 6,000 people were crammed into only about one fifth of the area of the town.⁵ From October 1941, signs were posted at the ghetto entrance warning that illegal crossing of the boundary would be punished with death.⁶ Survivor testimonies, however, maintain that some communication with the outside continued, particularly with peasants in the surrounding villages, as Jews sneaked out to barter or buy food.

During 1941, the overcrowding in the ghetto and worsening sanitary conditions led to an outbreak of typhus. The Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ) promptly established a hospital, which despite lack of means was able to provide medical support to the impoverished population. Further waves of refugees arrived from neighboring towns, Łódź, and eastern Poland.⁷ Despite the hardships, on June 24, 1941, a six-grade Jewish school was opened in the ghetto. Of the 320 children enrolled, 160 received free meals at school. Almost 1,500 people benefited from the public kitchen, which distributed 550 lunches per day. The TOZ provided medical care and supplies. The employment office (Arbeitsamt) provided work for many unemployed people in jobs within and outside the town.⁸

By December 1941, the Jewish population had increased by 900 since the start of the year, and conditions for the Jews continued to deteriorate. The German police conducted a number of shootings and killings in the ghetto. They commandeered many Jews for work in forced labor camps. In the summer of 1942, about 800 young Jews, mostly men, were sent to work at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko Kamienna.⁹

By the fall of 1942, rumors of the horrors of the extermination of the Jews started to spread. The Jewish population was trying to obtain any kind of employment locally, in order

to avoid being sent away for forced labor. By September 1942, the Jewish population of Opatów had reached 7,000 people, including 1,800 refugees from other towns. On October 19, 1942, the Germans announced that all the Jews had to assemble the next day in a nearby field. Members of the SS, Ukrainian auxiliaries, and the Gendarmerie kept the Jews under close guard during the Aktion. More than 6,000 people were marched to the train station at Janice, near Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, 28 kilometers (17 miles) from Opatów. Another group capable of work was selected and sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp. Those who could not walk, especially the sick and the elderly, almost 300 people, were killed on the march. On arrival at the train station, the SS and the Ukrainians loaded the Jews into cattle cars destined for the Treblinka killing center. Around 100 Jews, mostly members of the Judenrat and Jewish Police, remained in Opatów to collect all remaining Jewish possessions and sort them out for the Germans. Once their assignment was carried out, they were taken to the Jewish cemetery and murdered. By October 21, 1942, the ghetto in Opatów had been completely liquidated.¹⁰

Around 300 Jews from Opatów survived the Holocaust, mostly in the forced labor camps. The bulk of them immigrated to Israel, the United States, and Canada after the war.

SOURCES Additional information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Opatów can be found in the following publications: Zvi Yasheev, ed., *Apt: (Opatov); sefer zikaron le-ir ve-em be-Yi'sra'el asher hayetab ve-enenab 'od. Yizker-bukh tsum ondenk fun undzer geburts-shtet in Poyln velkhe iz mer nishto* (Tel Aviv: Yotse Apt be-Yisrael, Ar. Ha-B., Kanadah, Brazil, 1966); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 58–64.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Opatów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1134, 2350, 3328, and 4951); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, II 206 AR-Z 23/64); IPN; USHMM (RG-50.120*0204; Acc.1997.A.0302; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 37); VHF; and YVA.

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. USHMM, 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 37.
2. Yasheev, *Apt: (Opatov); sefer zikaron*, pp. 204, 217, 233–234; *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 6, 1940.
3. BA-L, B 162/14485, verdict of LG-Hamb, 147 Ks 3/71, December 22, 1972, p. 11.
4. Bericht des Kreishauptmanns in Opatów für den Monat August 1940, September 7, 1940, in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 95.
5. VHF, # 6919, testimony of B. Fogel; Juli-Bericht des Kreishauptmanns in Opatów, August 1, 1941, in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 127.
6. Yasheev, *Apt: (Opatov); sefer zikaron*, pp. 223, 226.
7. Ibid., pp. 225, 233–234; AŻIH, 301/3328, testimony of H. Hersherberg; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 16, 1941; USHMM,

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RG-50.120*0204, oral history of S. Willenberg; Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 37.

8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 16, 1941; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 37; VHF, # 1966, video testimony of B. Schreiberman.

9. AŻIH, 301/4951, testimony of B. Rotlewi; VHF, # 1966; USHMM, RG-50.120*0204, S. Willenberg.

10. Yasheev, *Apt: (Opotov); sefer zikaron*, pp. 234–235; AŻIH, 310/3328; VHF, # 3118, testimony of D. Blumenfeld Clenman.

OPOCZNO

Pre-1939: Opoczno (Yiddish: Opots'nab), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

The town of Opoczno is located 60 kilometers (37 miles) southeast of Łódź. According to the 1921 census, the Jewish community numbered 3,376 (46.7 percent of the total population). At the outbreak of World War II, approximately 2,900 Jews (40 percent of the total population) lived in Opoczno.

The town was occupied by German troops on September 7, 1939.¹ A regime defined by plunder and abuse was installed immediately.

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was set up in November 1939 and headed by Abram Frydlewski. It served as the Jewish representation to the German authorities. Mordecai Rosenbaum, the chairman's deputy, became a German informant, according to historian Isaiah Trunk. He later interceded on behalf of arrested relatives but kept for himself a share of the bribes intended for the Germans.

The Judenrat assigned up to 400 men daily (each conscript worked once or twice a week) for forced labor that included digging peat, paving roads, working in nearby lime pits, and clearing snow. To avoid work, one could send a substitute or pay 5 złoty for a day's exemption. The Judenrat vainly intervened on behalf of those badly beaten by the ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and German guards. The only effective arguments were bribes. After a time, the Judenrat imposed a monthly tax on the community to pay the wages of those working for the Jewish community, including members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police (*Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*), as well as welfare expenses.

The number of refugees—most of them coming from Łódź—rose quickly, reaching a total of 500 people. The large group of newcomers caused increasing difficulties in maintaining hygiene, leading to an outbreak of typhus in the spring of 1940. The sick were treated by two Jewish doctors.²

In November 1940, the Germans established a ghetto in Opoczno, announcing it one morning and forcing the Jews to settle into it by noon, leaving their belongings behind. Approximately 50 Gendarmes conducted the resettlement. Those Jews who moved slowly, or attempted to flee, were shot. According to a Polish witness, approximately 200 people were killed.

The bodies were piled up on the bank of the Wąglanka River and were buried that evening in the Jewish cemetery.

The ghetto consisted of 115 houses and encompassed a compact area bordering on the Wąglanka River, including Błotna, Rzeźnicza, and Joselewicz Streets. One of the streets, since it was a key thoroughfare, could not be fenced, so the Poles remained on one side, while Jews occupied the other. It was a prime location for food smuggling until it was excluded from the ghetto.

As for ghetto housing, close to 40 people were crammed into single-family homes. Almost 1,000 people lived in temporary accommodations in the synagogue, in huts, and in barns or simply on the streets. The ghetto was surrounded by a wooden fence and barbed wire.

With the ghetto's creation, the Judenrat ordered the formation of a Jewish police force to keep its inhabitants inside.³ The son-in-law of Chairman Frydlewski, known as Profos or Protas, was the police commander. The police supervised a jail in one of the synagogue's chambers.

Inhabitants needed a permit from the German authorities or the Judenrat to leave the ghetto. Sources differ regarding smuggling activity. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, it was easy and common as the German guards were readily bribed; some of the transactions were conducted during funerals at the Jewish cemetery located outside of the ghetto. Within the ghetto, illegal production of (for example) soap and bread took place. Alter Szymaszynowicz's testimony states, however, that smuggling was conducted only by Jewish and Polish policemen charging extremely high prices. Jews caught smuggling were shot. Although the labor performed outside the ghetto was poorly paid, including for numerous German enterprises, the difficulty in obtaining food caused some people to enlist voluntarily.⁴

From June 1940, the Judenrat-affiliated self-help committee (chaired by J. Chmielnicki) assisted impoverished Jews. Thanks to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) subsidies, it could open a soup kitchen, which provided 700 meals daily in early 1941. This, however, fell far short of demand. Based on these activities, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was formed in July 1941, chaired by Lejb Rabinowicz. Due to a lack of funds, the JSS was only able to develop meager support services.⁵

An epidemic hospital "Esterka," equipped with 40 beds, was set up at the end of 1941. The sick from Żarnów, Drzewica, Białaczów, and Gielniów were to be treated there as well. A public bath and disinfection center were opened at the same time.⁶

By May 1941, there were approximately 4,000 people in the ghetto, about one quarter of them refugees from Mogielnica, Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Łódź, and Płock. Further waves followed, although some also left. In April 1942, there were 4,230 residents in the ghetto, including 1,400 newcomers.⁷

The Opoczno ghetto was the scene of mass executions that were carried out at the Jewish cemetery, on the banks of the Wąglanka River, near the mill, and in the streets. More than

one source refers to two mass killings. Some 100 imprisoned Jews were dragged out from their cells and machine-gunned by the Gendarmerie; the date of their murder is unknown. On April 27, 1942, 30 (or 40, according to another source) Zionists and Communists were rounded up and executed at the Wąglanka River. The victims were arrested based on a list prepared by the Judenrat. This so-called April Aktion was a part of a large-scale operation to eliminate ghetto activists in the region before the deportations to the extermination camps. Entire families were also frequently executed.

The most brutal of the local Gendarmes were Heinrich Moritz, Johann Schmiedke, and Ryszard (or Walter) Kuntz.⁸ A Luftwaffe unit, which had an observation point in Opoczno, also took part in the massacres.⁹

In June 1942, 20 escapees from forced labor assignments were seized by the ghetto police and held in the synagogue jail. The German informant, Deputy Rosenbaum, warned them that they were to be shot. Overpowering the Jewish guards, these men broke out of the jail. Rosenbaum refused to help in the pursuit and “disappeared,” although the degree to which his execution was linked to the escape remains unclear.

In July 1942, approximately 400 ghetto inhabitants were taken to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp, where they worked in the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory.¹⁰

In October 1942, a number of nearby Jewish communities were resettled into the Opoczno ghetto, including the Jews from Paradyż (250 people), Białaczów (250), Skrzynno (400), and Żarnów (more than 2,000).

The Germans liquidated the ghetto in Opoczno on October 27, 1942. The community was ordered to gather at the horse market. The sick, elderly, and those discovered in hiding were shot in the town. The deportation was conducted by a Gendarmerie unit from outside of Opoczno, local Gendarmes, and Polish and Jewish Police. The transport was directed to the Treblinka extermination camp. Only after the train's departure did the Germans realize that the sick in the hospital had been left behind. According to one testimony, Moritz machine-gunned the 100 patients and about 20 hospital personnel. Most scholarly sources report 3,000 people deported; however, this number seems to be too low and may have been closer to 4,000.

A group of 120 to 180 Jews—including the Judenrat, the Jewish Police, and a number of rich families—was left in Opoczno to clean up the ghetto and sort through remaining possessions. Soon after, the Germans announced that those who had families in Palestine could register to be exchanged for German prisoners of war (POWs) held by the Allies. Approximately 500 Jews gathered in the ghetto to register, often by forging a connection to Palestinian kin. All were sent to Treblinka by January 6, 1943.

A group of several dozen refugees from the Przysucha, Drzewica, and Opoczno ghettos joined the Communist Gwardia Ludowa (People's Guard, GL) “Wilk” partisan unit. They soon split off and set up a separate Jewish unit named GL

“Lwy” commanded by Izrael Ajzenman (aka Julian Kaniewski). The squad conducted several operations, including the destruction of official documents of the Nieznanowice and Petrykozy gmina, as well as the disarmament of the Polish police precincts in Gowarczów and Rusinów. Post-1989 publications suggest that the unit murdered seven members of the Polish far-right-wing underground in Drzewica on January 22, 1943. Kaniewski and his group allegedly committed a number of other killings and robberies in the vicinity.

SOURCES Most of the information in this entry can be found in the following publications: Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 207–216 (Alter Szymaszynowicz's diary); Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 47–52 (translation by Shalom Bronstein available on the Web at the Remember Jewish Opoczno! Web site, www.zchor.org/opocz.htm); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 348–349. There is also some additional information in the yizkor book: Aaron Meirovitch, ed., *Sefer Opoczno* (Tel Aviv: Association of Emigrants from Opoczno and Vicinity, 1989). See also Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

Archival sources relating to the fate of the Jewish community of Opoczno can be found in APR (SORd 1907); AŻIH (210/526 [AJDC]; 211/761 [JSS]; 302/5 [Pamiętniki]); IPN (KG MO, sygn. 35/875, k. 114); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS Opoczno]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC Opoczno]; VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC Opoczno), 210/526.
2. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS Opoczno), 211/761; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/526; Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 209.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 21, 1941.
4. Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region*, pp. 47–52; Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 209.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/761; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 9, 1941.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 23, 1941.
7. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 100, 154 (table 10), 177–178; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/526, p. 23; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2004), pp. 130–131.
8. According to Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 200–201, and Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, pp. 209–211, the Gendarmerie also included Albert Schultze (commander), Herman Baumgarten, Richard Leufer, Paul Elsner, Paul Kuntze, Jerzy Chądzyński, Mueller, Makowski, and Gutknecht.

Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 47–52.

9. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 132.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/761; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 348.

OSIEK

Pre-1939: Osiek, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Osiek is located 71 kilometers (44 miles) southeast of Kielce. There were 520 Jews living in Osiek in 1939.¹ On September 11, 1939, 164 houses owned by both Poles and Jews burned down due to heavy German bombardments, leaving 252 Jews (52 families) in the village without a roof over their heads. Some inhabitants escaped to neighboring settlements, but the German occupiers soon forced them to return.

In the fall of 1939, many Jews were mobilized into forced labor to clear the rubble from the bombings, and all Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing markings. The Jews also had to make large monetary payments to the Germans, and to assist with the implementation of their instructions the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). In June 1940, the chairman of the Judenrat was Majer Sznajder, and Eliaż Rajter was one of its members. By this time the community's numbers had declined to 395. Out of that total, 68 Jews lived outside the village limits, and another 12 were refugees.² Harsh living conditions in Osiek caused an outbreak of disease in the summer of 1940: 35 Jews became sick with typhus and 15 with dysentery. Among these cases of illness, 5 people died.³

In August 1940, the Germans rounded up Jews from the neighboring towns and sent them to labor camps. The chairman of the Osiek Judenrat warned the men of the approaching raids and advised them to go into hiding to avoid deportation for forced labor.

Despite the critical housing situation, Kreis Opatow sent 25 Jewish deportees from Vienna to Osiek in March 1941. In total, there were 481 Jews in Osiek in August 1941, including 100 deportees and refugees, many from Kraków.⁴

The situation improved slightly with the establishment of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee based in Kraków. Responsibility for Osiek fell to a branch organized in Opatów in December 1940. A separate committee in Osiek opened a soup kitchen in August 1941, feeding about 80 people daily. In addition to these beneficiaries, 30 children were provided with breakfast. Szmul Klajner was the chairman of the committee, with Rabbi Josef Boruch Goldberg as his deputy. The kitchen operated intermittently; for example, it was closed temporarily in February 1942 due to financial constraints.⁵ According to JSS records, out of the 491 Jews registered in Osiek in May 1942, there were only 35 refugees and deportees.⁶

On the orders of Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów, the presence of Jews in Kreis Opatow was to be limited to 17 sites

of concentration (as opposed to a previous total of 150 Jewish settlements), effective from June 1, 1942. These 17 places were automatically recognized as ghettos from that date. Osiek was selected as one of the locations. Noncompliance with the orders for the Jews to move into the ghettos was punishable by death.

In June and July 1942, the Gestapo and Gendarmes shot 277 Poles and Jews from prisons in Sandomierz and Opatów in nearby Czarny Las on Czerwona Góra (or Czerwony Krzyż) Mountain. Among the victims were residents of Osiek and the following settlements located between Staszów and Osiek: Osieczek, Pliskowola, Strzegom, Strzegomek, Łęg near Połaniec, and Dzięk; their names are unknown. The bodies were partially buried in Czarny Las, in the fields near Strzegom, in the cemetery at Osiek, and in Wiązownica.

On October 17 or 18, 1942, an unknown number of Jews from Osiek were transferred to Staszów together with some 2,000 Jews from Połaniec, following the liquidation of the Połaniec ghetto on October 18. At first, all were held on the market square in Staszów, but later they were released into the Staszów ghetto on condition that they would not return to Osiek or Połaniec.⁷

Two secondary sources report that the Osiek ghetto was liquidated on October 25, 1942, when approximately 500 of its residents were sent to the Treblinka killing center. *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, however, reports that the ghetto was liquidated on October 15, which corresponds better with the transfer of some or all the Jews to Staszów, prior to their deportation to Treblinka. During the course of the ghetto's liquidation, German forces entered Jewish homes and forcibly removed anyone who tried to evade the roundup. The sick and elderly were taken from their beds and murdered on the spot. For example, all three members of Ela Groshauz's family were shot at this time. Krzysztof Urbański notes that local Catholic priests helped the Jews of Osiek.

SOURCES The main published source concerning the Jewish community in Osiek is Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 68–70. The following publications also have some information on the fate of Osiek's Jews during the Holocaust: Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979); and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo tarnobrzskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1984).

The main archival sources are AŻIH (210/529; 211/576; 211/763); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37.
4. Ibid.
5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 26, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37.
7. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 179–180; according to Joseph Goldstein, “Extracts from a Ghetto Diary,” in Elhanan Erlikh, ed., *Sefer Stashov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Štashov be-Yisrael, 1962), p. 27, they arrived on October 17, 1942.

OSTROWIEC ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKI

Pre-1939: Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski (Yiddish: Ostrevtseh), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ostrowiec, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski is located in south-eastern Poland, 67 kilometers (42 miles) south of the city of Radom. Just before the outbreak of World War II, there were around 10,000 Jews living in Ostrowiec. In the early stages of the war, a number of Jews fled from the town with the retreating Polish army. After the defeat of the Polish forces, some of these Jews remained in the area that came under Soviet occupation.

The German army entered Ostrowiec on September 7, 1939. The violence against the Jewish population began during the first days of the occupation. Jewish stores and homes were plundered, a “contribution” of 200,000 złoty was imposed on the community, and requisitions of property and valuables began to be carried out regularly.¹ Almost immediately after the invasion, the Germans started to eliminate the local intelligentsia. During the first three days of the occupation, 10 Jews were killed in the marketplace (*Rynek*) by members of the SS and soldiers of the Wehrmacht.² Soon kidnappings

and conscription to forced labor became daily events in the streets of Ostrowiec.

At the end of September 1939, the German occupiers ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Initially the council was headed by an attorney named Seisel, who was, however, to the chagrin of the local Jews, soon replaced by I. Rubinstein. The Judenrat’s main tasks were to provide forced laborers for the Germans and ensure the fulfillment of German demands and regulations. In addition, it was also in charge of most welfare services, such as the establishment and management of a public kitchen and a hospital.³

Already by the beginning of October 1939, the German authorities started confiscating Jewish businesses, placing them into “trusteeships” under the direction of Poles, many of whom came from the Poznań area.⁴ In January 1940, the Germans introduced further restrictions against the Jewish population of Ostrowiec; these included mandatory registration, compulsory wearing of a white armband with a blue Star of David, and the imposition of a curfew.⁵

In the summer of 1940, Jewish men were forced to assemble in the square where the Judenrat building was located, under the false pretense of listening to a German communiqué. Soon, however, members of the Gestapo, the Gendarmerie, and the Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the group and selected 150 Jewish young men, who were then sent to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, including those near the Bełżec extermination camp. Some of those who were deported survived the harsh conditions there and subsequently were able to return home at the end of 1940.⁶

Between December 1939 and January 1941, Ostrowiec absorbed about 1,000 refugees from the towns of Konin, Golin, and Sokołów,⁷ some 1,200 refugees from Vienna, and a number of refugees coming from Łódź and towns of the Poznań area incorporated into the Third Reich. As a result, the Jewish population of Ostrowiec rose to almost 16,000.⁸ The Jews from Konin, who arrived at the end of 1939, remarked that they were well received by the Ostrowiec community, which provided them with meals from the public kitchen, and some refugees also were invited into local family homes on Saturdays for dinner.⁹

In April 1941, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish quarter (or open ghetto) in Ostrowiec. The Jews were given two days to move in and were allowed to bring most of their possessions with them. Poles living in the area were forced to move out. When the quarter was established, an auxiliary Jewish Police consisting of 50 members was formed; its commander was Blumenfeld. It is estimated that more than 16,000 Jews entered the unfenced Jewish quarter.¹⁰ The left side of the quarter bordered on Młynska and Pieracki Streets, while its right side was delimited by Denkowska Street. Its total surface area was 4 square kilometers (1.5 square miles).¹¹

As a result of its lack of fencing, the quarter’s limits were patrolled by the Schupo and the Polish (Blue) Police; a member of the Jewish Police was stationed at each street exit. The Jewish residents were free to circulate only within the quarter and had to respect a 9:00 P.M. curfew. By 1942, the penalty for



Jews from Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski stand at the site of a mass grave for about 2,000 Jews shot in late 1942 and early 1943. Behind them is a portion of the vandalized Jewish cemetery, October 1945.

USHMM WS #21084, COURTESY OF RUBIN KATZ

being caught outside the ghetto was death.¹² Occasionally, however, some Jews sneaked out of the ghetto and reached the surrounding villages in order to smuggle in provisions. Other Jews were escorted out of the ghetto by the police on a daily basis, to get to their places of work, mainly in the factories and workshops of the town or as orderlies working for the Germans.¹³ Other Jews worked for German construction firms in and around Ostrowiec, such as Haumer, Loscher, A. Oemler, Hruse, R. Mende, and Travers.¹⁴ The living conditions in the Jewish quarter were extremely harsh; the Jews lived in terrible poverty. The overcrowding and the poor hygienic conditions led, in May 1941, to an outbreak of typhus.¹⁵ According to one estimate, during its entire existence about 10 percent of the inhabitants of the ghetto died from hunger and disease.¹⁶

There were also periodic roundups in the ghetto of younger Jews to be sent to various forced labor camps. On April 18, 1941, 150 Jews were sent to the armaments factories in Starachowice. Others were sent to the nearby labor camp in Bodzechów. By the fall of 1942, hundreds more Jews had been sent to work at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) factory camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna.¹⁷

On the night of April 27–28, 1942, members of the Gestapo and the Schupo (including Ernst Thoms, Brunner, and Weiler) entered the Jewish quarter and arrested 68 people according to a list provided by the Judenrat, which was supposed to represent the members of the local leftist parties. Although the Aktion was dubbed a “Kommunistenaktion,” among those arrested were also members of the town’s intelligentsia, who had not been targeted at the start of the occupation. Some 36 of the arrested Jews were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp; and 32 were shot on the spot.¹⁸ From that day on, the killings and the repression of the Jews in Ostrowiec intensified.

On October 10, 1942, the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Radom, Dr. Herbert Böttcher, initiated the first mass deportation Aktion from Ostrowiec. First members of the Security Police, the SS, the Order Police, Ukrainian and Lithuanian auxiliaries, and Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the ghetto. The Jewish Police was instructed to visit all Jewish homes and announce that the Jews were to assemble the next morning in separate locations according to their work status and that they were only allowed to take a few possessions with them.¹⁹ On the first night of the Aktion, the Judenrat was eliminated, and all its remaining members were absorbed into the Jewish Police, which became responsible for life and death in the quarter.²⁰

The next morning, many old people and children were murdered right away during the roundup. All the unemployed Jews were forced to assemble in the marketplace, whereas those in possession of *Arbeitskarten* (work cards) were to gather on Florian Square facing the Labor Office. The unemployed Jews were left standing on the marketplace the whole day, witnessing the cruel murders of their kin. Later they were taken to the courtyard of the Polish elementary school on Sienkiewicz Street, where they remained without food or water, as they waited to be sent to the train station in three separate large transports spread over several days. At the train station, the

Jews were boarded onto cattle cars, 100 people per wagon. The Jewish Police spread the rumor among the Jews that they were being sent to forced labor in Ukraine.²¹ The truth, however, was that they were being sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Those who could demonstrate some form of employment, probably at least 2,000 people, were taken by Ukrainian auxiliaries to another building, and on the following day they went back to work.²²

The Germans soon realized, however, that a large number of Jews had gone into hiding or fled the ghetto during the early phases of the Aktion. With the help of I. Rubinstein, the former head of the Judenrat, and also members of the Jewish Police, hundreds of Jews were assembled in the market square, after they had been lured out of hiding, on the false pretense that they would be sent to work in the Starachowice factory camp. Most of this group was sent to Treblinka.²³ In the course of the October deportation Aktion, hundreds of Jews were shot in Ostrowiec by members of the SS, the Gestapo, the Order Police, and Ukrainian and Lithuanian auxiliary forces. The bodies were subsequently burned and their remains buried in the Jewish cemetery in mass graves.²⁴ Overall, during the Aktion between 10,000 and 12,000 Jews were deported from Ostrowiec to the extermination camp in Treblinka.²⁵

As the deportation Aktion was being conducted, a small ghetto was established on a single street for the selected workers. As Mike Jacobs, who was selected, recalled: “We were taken to a small ghetto that had been made that day. I always wondered how they could build a wall so quickly around that small ghetto. A wooden fence, built in only one day, surrounded the entire ghetto. We were put in small rooms with bunks.”²⁶ Including others who emerged from hiding and sneaked in, probably around 3,000 people were living in the small ghetto by the end of 1942. Some of the Jews continued to work in German factories and offices, and others were engaged in clearing out remaining Jewish property from the area of the former ghetto.

On January 10, 1943, a second deportation Aktion was carried out, this time against the small ghetto. Members of the SS, the Polish (Blue) Police, the Gendarmerie, and the Ukrainian auxiliary forces surrounded the Jewish quarter and gathered 2,000 people, mostly Jews who were unable to pay the bribes necessary to be added to the registered list of workers at the factories; all were then sent to Treblinka. The Jewish Police assisted the Gestapo in finding those Jews who had gone into hiding.²⁷ On that day some 300 Jews were shot by members of the SS and the Schupo. Their corpses were burned and the remains buried in the Jewish cemetery in mass graves.²⁸

Following the second deportation Aktion, only about 1,000 Jews were left in Ostrowiec; 300 of them worked at the Jaeger factory, 600 in the main Ostrowiec armaments factory, and the other 100 consisted of members of the Jewish Police and their families and other Jews whose job was to gather for the Germans all the possessions left behind by the deportees. Following the second Aktion, preparations were made for the establishment of a forced labor camp in Ostrowiec, which was to consist of a barracks compound to hold the Jewish factory workers.²⁹

During the last phase of the ghetto's existence, a number of young Jews succeeded in escaping and tried to join up with Polish partisan groups that were active in the area. However, in one reported instance, a dozen Jews were betrayed or murdered by members of the Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army, AK), and the wounded survivors fled back to the ghetto. Others were simply turned away by AK detachments. The Jewish population became increasingly nervous following the closure of the nearby forced labor camp in Bodzechów, in early March 1943, where some Jews originally from Ostrowiec had been working. A few Jews also fled to the Aryan side, including Roza Rosenman and Cyrla Rakocz, who were both given assistance by Ewelina Lipko-Lipzyńska once they had escaped from the ghetto.³⁰

At the end of March 1943, there was a further deportation Aktion to Treblinka, which marked the final liquidation of the small ghetto.³¹ The remaining Jews after this were all in the forced labor camp. In April 1943, 110 Jewish craftsmen from Ostrowiec were selected and transferred to the forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ) in Bliżyn, which at that time was subordinated to SSPF Böttcher.³² Subsequently other Jews were brought into the Ostrowiec labor camp from Piotrków Trybunalski, Starachowice, and the Płaszów concentration camp. The labor camp in Ostrowiec remained in existence until the evacuation of the remaining laborers in early August 1944.

SOURCES Further information on the history and the fate of the Jewish population of Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 55–58; J. Rosenberg, *Nazywam się Józef Nowak* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2004); M. Sh. Geshuri, ed., *Sefer Ostrovtsekh: Le-zikaron ule-edut* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Ostrovtsekh be-Yisrael, 1971); and M. Jacobs, *Holocaust Survivor: Mike Jacobs' Triumph over Tragedy, a Memoir*, ed. G. Jacobs (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2001).

Documentation regarding the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Ostrowiec can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/146, 301/2545, 301/2774, 301/2913, 301/3053, and 301/3056); BA-L (B 162/14485); IPN (ASG); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reels 2 and 14; RG-03.012*01; Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 37); and VHF.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3056, testimony of J. Libman; Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, p. 48.
2. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 2, pp. 402–415.
3. AŻIH 301/3053, testimony of F. Klajnman; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37, 211/764; and Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 55.
4. AŻIH, 301/2545, testimony of S. Gutwilen.
5. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, p. 49; and VHF, # 11984, testimony of Y. Baum.
6. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, pp. 51–52.
7. Ibid., p. 48.

8. Ibid., pp. 51–52.

9. M. Gelbart, ed., *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatah uve-burbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Konin be-Yisrael, 1968), p. 488.

10. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, p. 53; AŻIH, 301/146, testimony of S. Scherman; 301/2913, testimony of B. Judkiewicz.

11. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14 (IPN, ASG, sygn. 47), pp. 116–117.

12. Rosenberg, *Nazywam się Józef Nowak*, p. 23; and Jacobs, *Holocaust Survivor*, p. 42.

13. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 56.

14. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, sygn. 47, pp. 116–117.

15. AŻIH, 301/2913; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 37, 211/765; and VHF, # 12270, testimony of J. Ancer.

16. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, pp. 116–117.

17. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, p. 54; Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow. Skarżysko-Kamienna Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996), p. 36; Gelbart, *ehilat Konin*, p. 488.

18. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 2, p. 403; and BA-L, B 162/14485, Verdict of LG-Hamb, 147 Ks 3/71, against Ernst Hugo Thoms, December 22, 1972, p. 9. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), p. 161, reports that 606 prisoners sent by the Sipo and SD in Radom were registered in Auschwitz on April 30.

19. AŻIH, 301/3056.

20. Ibid., 301/2913.

21. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, pp. 64–65; AŻIH, 301/3056.

22. AŻIH, 301/146; and 301/3056.

23. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 57.

24. BA-L, B 162/14485, Verdict against Thoms, December 22, 1972, p. 17. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 2, pp. 402–415, gives a much higher figure than the German court estimate. See also AŻIH, 301/146; and 301/3056.

25. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, pp. 116–117; and BA-L, B 162/14485, Verdict against Thoms, December 22, 1972, p. 17.

26. Jacobs, *Holocaust Survivor*, p. 52.

27. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 57–58; AŻIH, 301/146.

28. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 2, pp. 402–415.

29. Geshuri, *Sefer Ostrovtsekh*, pp. 76–77.

30. Ibid., pp. 77–78; AŻIH, 301/4953; Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), 1:458.

31. AŻIH, 301/2913.

32. Ibid., 301/146.

OŻARÓW

Pre-1939: Ożarów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ożarów, Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ożarów, town, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Ożarów is located 77 kilometers (48 miles) east of Kielce. There were about 3,200 Jews living in Ożarów at the outbreak of World War II, on September 1, 1939.¹

The Germans started a program of plunder, forced labor, and abuse during the first week of the occupation. The Germans nominated a Pole, Bidziński, as the mayor of Ożarów and the commander of the Polish (Blue) Police, which was subordinated to the German authorities. The Germans allowed the pre-war members of the Jewish community to retain their posts, but in early October they reconstituted this group under their own authority as a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Members of the Judenrat included Lajpcie Halpern (chairman), Szmulek Rozenchwajg, Pincie Halpern, Szachne Frid, and Mojsze Szerman. The Judenrat selected the members of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), appointing a local lawyer as its commander. One of the Judenrat's first tasks was to provide the Germans with a daily quota of 40 to 50 men for compulsory labor.²

The men were conscripted for forced labor five days a week. They were taken in trucks 10 kilometers (6 miles) outside of Ożarów, where they had to dig up large rocks and break them into slag for road construction. The laborers were supervised by Ukrainians or German-speaking guards armed with rubber truncheons. While working, they were often kicked, beaten, and called names. No food was provided. They were paid a minimum wage distributed by the Judenrat, which deducted from this amount its own administration costs. By paying a weekly tax to the Judenrat, better-off Jews could exempt themselves from forced labor. Compared to the rest, families of members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police were relatively privileged.

The German authorities frequently demanded large monetary contributions. In early 1940, all Jewish businesses and goods were confiscated. Later that year, all the town's Jews were ordered to vacate their homes and move to a designated area. They were also ordered to put signs on their doors marked *Jude* (Jew).

From the beginning of the war, the Jewish population of the village was augmented by many refugees, of which about 200 settled in Ożarów, mostly from Łódź, Warsaw, and Kraków. At the end of 1939, the Germans ordered a number of Jewish farmers from neighboring villages to move to Ożarów. On December 4, 1939, a transport of 400 deportees from Włocławek arrived, and the number of Jews in Ożarów rose to 3,941, of which 706 were refugees. The Judenrat coordinated the distribution of accommodations. Every local family was forced to admit at least one newly arrived family. Later on, the newcomers were also quartered in the prayer house. On December 3, 1940, 100 impoverished Jews from Radom were transferred to Ożarów. At the end of March 1941, 100 Jews from Vienna and a number from Kraków arrived, bringing the number of newcomers to 892 out of a total of 4,133 Jews in Ożarów.³ Around August 1941, about 400 deportees (80 families) from Łódź arrived.⁴

Fearing an epidemic in the overcrowded Jewish quarter, the Judenrat established a sanitation committee led by Andzel Bromberg. By 1940, Ożarów's Jews had been vaccinated for typhus. From March 1940, Jewish houses were inspected for cleanliness. Personal inspections and compulsory baths were

also enforced. Dr. Teodor Drach checked the men, and Dr. Anna Bobowa, the women. Thanks in large part to their efforts, between January and May 1941, only 22 Jews and 40 Poles died, with no deaths from infectious disease. Statistics for 1941, however, reveal 150 patients being quarantined in the local synagogue, 8 of whom died. The records also show that 44 Jews were born in that year. In December 1940, a soup kitchen was established on the premises of the Jewish primary school, serving 500 meals daily to the poor and deportees. The kitchen operated intermittently; for example, in November 1941, the number of daily meals served was restricted to 110.⁵

The organization of social help was transferred from the Judenrat to a newly created Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee regional office in Opatów in December 1940. A separate branch in Ożarów was set up in June 1941. The Judenrat's president, L. Halpern, chaired the committee. A local pharmacist, Maurycy Rosenberg, served as his deputy after Dr. Drach turned down the post. Poverty and hunger forced many Jews to beg for food and money in the surrounding villages disguised as Poles. Some were hired by farmers for transitory work in agriculture. The deportees from Łódź set up a separate self-help committee in August 1941, which opened another soup kitchen in February 1942.⁶

The ghetto in Ożarów was established on January 1, 1942, in the section of the village already occupied by the Jews. The Germans confiscated all goods in the ghetto, including items of little value. The ghetto was not enclosed, but large signs were posted warning that any Jews proceeding more than 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from the village would be shot. Poles could enter and leave the ghetto freely. In April 1942, the ghetto had 4,471 residents, including 1,349 deportees. In March 1942, Aaron Bodko was shot by German Gendarmes in front of the Judenrat for smuggling food into the ghetto. In the spring of 1942, there were rumors of a Polish-Jewish gang robbing ghetto homes at night. The victims did not report these assaults for fear of reprisals.

On April 16, 1942, the Judenrat chairman, L. Halpern, took part in a conference in Sandomierz attended by the heads of the Jewish Councils from nearby ghettos. One of the questions discussed was the possibility of organizing self-defense. Participants decided to keep close ties with the Judenrat in Radom and to collect money, in order to defend themselves by bribing the Germans. According to Henryk Fafara, as a result of these efforts, the deportations from these ghettos, including Ożarów, were conducted later than in other places. Those Jews working for the Germans hoped to avoid deportation through hard work, making themselves indispensable.

In May 1942, the Judenrat registered 100 young men to be sent to labor camps. The going rate to pay for a substitute was 1,000 złoty, which only a few more wealthy Jews could afford. Those Jews remaining worked mainly for the Stuttgart-based company, Oemler, repairing the Opatów-Ożarów road. A few Jews worked in agriculture near the village.⁷

On the orders of Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów, effective June 1, 1942, Jews in Kreis Opatow were to be confined to only 17 points of concentration (as opposed to a previous total

of 150 settlements). Ożarów was selected as one of the permitted locations. Noncompliance was punishable by death. After the arrival of the Jews from neighboring settlements (including Lasocin), there were 4,648 Jews in the Ożarów ghetto.

On the morning of September 3, 1942, the Germans drove 3,000 Jews to the market square. The Jewish Police guarded the group while some Jews were selected for work in labor camps. About 700 young Jews were selected for the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. The column left for the Jasice train station, 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Ożarów. Before reaching the station, the Jews were asked by the Germans if they wanted to work. Those who said they wanted to stay in Ożarów were ordered to strip naked and return to the ghetto. At the station, two nephews of a Judenrat member were removed from a cattle car before its departure. Other testimonies report that the Germans sought volunteers for HASAG by promising good treatment, decent wages, and permission to visit their families in Ożarów every two weeks. None of these promises were kept.⁸

In Ożarów itself, the Agraria Company (Lublin) set up a workshop producing straw baskets for ammunition storage in July 1942. By mid-October it employed 80 women and 126 men, with the aim of employing 400 Jews altogether. The laborers were not paid because Agraria was forced to pay the SS in Radom 5 złoty per day for each Jewish laborer. In return, Kreishauptmann Ritter, who had visited the workshop, assured the laborers that they would remain in Ożarów.⁹

The Germans liquidated the Ożarów ghetto at the end of October 1942. Most of the remaining 4,500 ghetto inhabitants were composed of the elderly, women, and children. Some were taken by wagon, and some walked to the Jasice train station. From there they were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. A significant number of Jews managed to run away en route to the station and went into hiding, either in the woods or with Poles. A group of 25 Jews was left in Ożarów to clean out the ghetto and sort Jewish possessions. Upon completion of their work, Ukrainian policemen shot them on the road to Sandomierz.

SOURCES The main source of information on the Jewish community in Ożarów is the book by Hillel Adler, *Memories of Ożarow* (Montreal: Ożarow Press, 1996). The chapter on the Holocaust is only brief. There is also an essay on the fate of Ożarów's Jews in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 39–42. The Ożarów ghetto is also mentioned in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 958–959; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 377–378.

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/536 and 211/775-76); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 38; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (# 05426, 31503, 32812); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38, 211/775-76.
2. VHF, # 31503-4, testimony of Helen Klaiman, 1997.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/536; VHF, # 32812, testimony of Pola Klepacz-Spiegelman, 1997; see also # 05426-3, testimony of Jack Fleischer, 1995.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 22, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC); Adler, *Memories*, p. 203.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 22, 1942.
7. Adler, *Memories*, p. 194; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
8. See VHF, #32812; and #05426-3. Both contain inconsistencies.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38; VHF, # 31503-4.

PACANÓW

Pre-1939: Pacanów, village, Busko-Zdrój powiat, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Pacanow, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Pacanów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Pacanów is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) southeast of Busko-Zdrój. There were 1,850 Jews living in the town in 1939.

The Germans occupied Pacanów on September 7, 1939. As the situation in Pacanów was relatively stable at the start of the occupation, many refugees fled there. The nearest Gendarmerie post was in Busko, the Kreis center; however, the Gendarmes drove through Pacanów daily, visiting another post in nearby Słupia Nowa. They would often stop in Pacanów and harass Jews by beating them or cutting off their beards in the street.

In October or November 1939, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Moshe Aron as chairman. The Judenrat had the task of passing on and enforcing German orders and regulations. The Judenrat asked the Jews to surrender their valuables—gold, bronze, furs, and feather beds—to bribe the Germans and meet their demands for “contributions.”

Starting in November 1939, all Jews between the ages of 16 and 60 were subject to forced labor for up to 10 hours per day. The Judenrat was responsible for providing the requested quota of workers. A number of conscripts from Pacanów had to report to Chmielnik, and from there they were dispatched to various forced labor camps. The Pacanów Jews worked mostly in agriculture. In the summer of 1940, when assigned to picking strawberries, Jews were able to take home a small portion of their pickings as a form of payment.¹

In May 1940, there were approximately 2,200 Jews living in Pacanów, 250 of which were refugees. About 100 families lacked the basic means to support themselves. Almost all Jewish shops and businesses were now closed. Up until then, the Judenrat had been able to provide help for the refugees by

distributing potatoes, wood, and coal for heating. It also asked the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) based in Kraków for subsidies to open a soup kitchen, claiming that it was the best way to prevent outbreaks of disease in the village. The AJDC approved, and the soup kitchen was opened. In settlements where no kitchen was organized, groceries were distributed. The soup kitchen only functioned intermittently, because there was never enough money to keep it open for more than two or three weeks each month.²

To cope with the refugees and a large number of impoverished Jewish expellees arriving in the region, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), also based in Kraków, was established. The Kreis committee in Busko was established on November 4, 1940, with Jusek Topioł as its chairman. The branch in Pacanów was set up shortly afterwards. Icek Frydman was the president; the other two members were Joel Feldman and Boruch Nudel.³

In December 1940, some of the 2,000 Jews expelled from the Distrikt capital in Radom were transferred to Pacanów. The group consisted of Radom's poorest Jews, as well as deportees from other cities who had been in Radom for only a short time. There were also expellees from Łódź, Kraków, Warsaw, Płock, and Głowno. In May 1941, the number of Jews in Pacanów reached 2,645, including 785 refugees.⁴ The majority was still lodged in mass quarters, mainly in sheds or summer huts. The housing situation did not improve much with time; the last three families were only moved out of the sheds in December 1941.⁵

The date of the establishment of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) in Pacanów is not known, but it was probably in the second half of 1940, as in neighboring Chmielnik. The German authorities created it to maintain order in the Jewish quarter. Its post was located in the southeast corner of the marketplace. Shortly before Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, Wehrmacht units were stationed in Pacanów. The terror, beatings, and arrests increased at this time, and more Jews were sent to labor camps.⁶

On May 5, 1941, after an outbreak of typhus, a hospital was set up in the village. The Sanitary Commission inspected Jewish houses and courtyards for cleanliness twice a week and disinfected the dirtiest flats with sulfur. The Judenrat provided food for the patients and paid for their treatment. In June 1941, the hospital requested a list of 98 medicines, but it received only 25 items in insufficient quantities one month later—for example, only 20 ampules of calcium and 100 aspirin pills. With so little medication, it was almost impossible to combat the epidemic. From August onward, daily checks were carried out on the cleanliness of Jews' homes. As a result, in October 1941, the epidemic died out, and the hospital was closed, only to be reopened two months later, when new typhus cases emerged. Dr. Adolf Haas was in charge of the hospital. In March 1942, three typhus patients and one with typhoid were hospitalized.⁷

An open ghetto was set up in April 1942.⁸ It consisted of 220 rooms in 125 houses located in the center of the vil-

lage. Approximately 2,828 Jews, including 903 refugees, were squeezed into this small area. On average, there were 12 or 13 people living in one room. The marketplace was to be free of Jews, so they were forced to move out. They were also forbidden to enter it to buy food. Local peasants would smuggle items into the ghetto, selling food such as fish, eggs, or potatoes; all the same, there was hunger in the ghetto. Sometime in 1942, Jews from nearby settlements were relocated into the Pacanów ghetto.⁹

In July 1942, close to 10 percent of Pacanów Jews worked in agriculture, primarily at the Wójcza Manor and in nearby Słupia. In September 1942, there were 2,785 Jews in the Pacanów ghetto. Out of this number, 147 were craftsmen and 752 laborers. About 260 Jews worked in labor camps outside Pacanów.¹⁰ A number of them worked on irrigation projects along the Strumień River, a tributary of the Vistula running through Słupia.

At the start of October 1942, a group of Germans came to Pacanów and ordered the youths in the ghetto to come out onto the street. They announced that if 2 healthy Jews from each family volunteered for labor camps, the elderly could remain in the village undisturbed. Everyone volunteered to go, but during the selection on the market square, only about 240 Jews were picked. They were marched for about 10 kilometers (6 miles) at night to Stopnica, where trucks were waiting for them. All were taken to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna.¹¹

The liquidation of the Pacanów ghetto probably took place in early October 1942.¹² Before 5:00 A.M., the Germans gathered almost 3,000 Jews at the marketplace. According to one source, about 300 of Nowy Korczyn's Jews, who had remained to clean up the ghetto there after its liquidation, were added to the transport. From the marketplace they were marched to the train station in Szczucin; the guards beat them brutally along the way. Those who were unable to keep up with the column were shot. All were sent to the Treblinka killing center. On the day of the ghetto's liquidation, about 60 Jews were murdered. Their bodies were buried at the Jewish cemetery in Pacanów.¹³ Some members of the small Jewish cleanup commando that was left in Pacanów were later taken to one of the labor camps in Kielce.¹⁴

SOURCES The Pacanów ghetto is mentioned briefly in Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Jerzy Tomaszewski and Andrzej Żbikowski, eds., *Żydzi w Polsce: Dzieje i kultura: Leksykon* (Warsaw: Wydawn. Cyklady, 2001), p. 377.

Documentation on the Jews of Pacanów and their fate in the ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/538; 211/777; and Ring I/897); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6094); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 38; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], reel 18; and RG-15.079M [Ring I], reel 47); VHF (# 12287 and 36818); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 12287-4, testimony of Rose Herskowitz, 1996; Menashe Montzash, "In di yorn fun der Hitler okupatsye," in Efrayim Shedletski, ed., *Pinkes Kbmyelnik: Yizker-bukh nokh der borev-gevorener Yidisher kehile* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Hmyelnik be-Yisrael, 1960), pp. 729–730.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), reel 18; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
4. Ibid., RG-15.079M (Ring I), reel 47.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
6. "Droga," by Stanisław Pytko, in *Miesięcznik Samorządowy, Z Życia Gminy*, (Styczeń, 2006), p. 12.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
8. Ibid.; other accounts vary on the date.
9. VHF, # 12287-4; # 36818-55, testimony of Helen Masasch, 1997; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38.
11. VHF, # 12287-4; # 36818-55.
12. According to Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 148 (table 7), 173–174, and Tomaszewski and Żbikowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, p. 377, the deportation took place in early October 1942. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 178, and Pytko, "Droga," p. 12, date it in early November 1942.
13. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), p. 195.
14. Joseph Goldstein, "Extracts from a Ghetto Diary," in Elhanan Erlikh, ed., *Sefer Stashov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Štashov be-Yisrael, 1962), p. 29.

PARADYŻ

Pre-1939: Paradyż, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Paradyż, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Paradyż, Łódź województwo, Poland

Paradyż is located 70 kilometers (43.5 miles) southeast of Łódź. The 1921 census registered 117 Jews in the village. When the war broke out in 1939, there were 100 Jews (15 families) living there.

The German occupying authorities established a Judenrat chaired by I. Kinigel. Herszel Dębowski served as the Judenrat's secretary, and in March 1941, he became also the chairman of the self-help committee then established in the village. The committee was to assist 78 deportees from Płock, who arrived in Paradyż on March 12, 1941, as well as several refugee families from Łódź and Główno, who had settled there during the winter of 1940–1941.

There was already a significant housing shortage in the village because, as Dębowski reported, "the head of the borough removes Jews from their own small houses and replaces them with Poles." The only synagogue was also inaccessible to deportees, as a Polish school had been set up there. In the end, the newcomers were placed with local Jews, who already lived in cramped, one-room houses, thereby increasing overcrowding to 13 to 15 people per room. The Judenrat opened a soup

kitchen on March 23 that fed up to 50 people daily, but it was closed on May 8, 1941. By June 1941, there were 260 Jews living in Paradyż.¹

The following month, the Judenrat reported that many of the Jews in Paradyż, especially those from Płock, were suffering from swellings and leg boils. One of the self-help committee members, the elderly hospital attendant E. Moszkowicz, was charged with providing medical care to the Jews of Paradyż.²

A Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch was set up in the village in November 1941. It included Dębowski as chairman, as well as Azryel Bursztyn and Jankiel Gedalia. It reopened the soup kitchen on December 1, 1941; however, the 50 meals served daily covered only part of the community's needs.³

The Jews of Paradyż were ghettoized in January 1942, when Jews from surrounding settlements were transferred there. Dębowski described the situation in February 1942: "The Jewish population is impoverished due to restrictions on its place of residence. The number of people seeking assistance has risen significantly, because in January 70 paupers from surrounding villages were crammed into Paradyż." No one in the ghetto had permission to leave it. "Our work [of the JSS] is extremely hampered due to the lack of identity cards and permits [to leave the ghetto]," and "today, almost none of the [Paradyż] Jews can earn a living," he emphasized.⁴

After the establishment of the ghetto, the JSS tried—unsuccessfully—to procure work for some of the tailors and shoemakers from Łódź, by soliciting orders for them via the headquarters of the JSS in Kraków. Approximately 60 of the newcomers were able to find employment working in agriculture with local farmers in the summer of 1941. "Currently [February 1942], this is impossible, as a Jew must not leave Paradyż under penalty of death," reported the local JSS. Yet it hoped that 40 to 50 men and women could be employed on the surrounding estates including Wielka Wola, Dalszewice, and Stawiczki, all located 1 to 5 kilometers (0.6 to 3 miles) from Paradyż, provided that the authorities issued permission for them to leave the ghetto for work purposes. "Unfortunately we do not have special permits [to leave the ghetto] to speak with the owners or commissars of those estates," reported Dębowski.⁵

By July 1942, 18 ghetto residents were employed in road construction for the Strassenbauamt Radom (Nebenstelle Opoczno), for which they were paid a small amount. Another 20 laborers received no compensation, including 10 workers at the grain warehouse, workers for the local authorities in Wielka Wola, and those at the post office.⁶

In September 1942, there were 262 Jews living in the Paradyż ghetto, of which approximately 50 were working for the Germans.⁷

The ghetto was liquidated on October 12, 1942. Its residents were transferred to the Opoczno ghetto, which the Germans liquidated on October 27, 1942, sending the Jews gathered there to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES The following publications make reference to the fate of the Jewish community in Paradyż during World War

II: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955), pp. 153 (table 10), 177–178; and Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 185.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/779; 211/1039 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/779 (Paradyż), pp. 1–2, 8, 32.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 30, 35, 54.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 44; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1039 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), p. 62.
4. *Ibid.*, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/779, pp. 52–53.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57, 74, 77–78.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 84–85.

PIŃCZÓW

Pre-1939: Pińczów, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Pinczow, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Pińczów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Pińczów is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) south-southwest of Kielce. By 1939, the Jewish population numbered 3,500.

The Wehrmacht captured Pińczów on September 5, 1939. First, the town’s Jews were rounded up; then women and children were separated from the men, upon which German machine guns were trained. All were held in a local church and its yard for over 24 hours while the Germans set fire to the town. An estimated 77 percent of the town’s structures (of which 90 percent were Jewish-owned) were burned to the

ground. Homeless Jews were housed initially in a public school that was soon taken over by the Wehrmacht and turned into a warehouse. The housing situation caused a large number of Jews to move to neighboring towns; many youths fled into Soviet-controlled territory, while the remainder tried to repair their homes.

Due to the fire, most of the town’s authorities had to be moved to neighboring towns; for example, the nearest Gendarmerie post was in Busko, located 16 kilometers (10 miles) away, from where its officers oversaw Pińczów’s affairs. At times, German soldiers came into Pińczów from Kielce to remove certain Jews and kill them; Gendarmes from Busko also conducted such raids.

The local rabbi, Szapsia Rapoport, was ordered by an SD officer (Sicherheitsdienst) to select 12 people for nomination to the Jewish Council (Judenrat) and submit a list naming all of the town’s Jewish inhabitants. Both orders were to be carried out by the next day. A chairman and his secretary were appointed on the spot. The initial composition of the Judenrat (apart from one member, Lejb Gold) is unknown. Gold’s son testified that his father and the others were forced to accept their nominations and were threatened with being killed if they did “not do a good job.” By March 1940, the Judenrat included I. Górski (chairman) and Mojżesz Kozłowski; it is possible that both were members from the outset.¹

Only detachments of the Polish (Blue) Police and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) were permanently stationed in Pińczów. A man named Wilczyński commanded the Polish (Blue) Police. Szmul Fainer, whom the town’s Jews reportedly feared, headed the Jewish Police. According to Stanisław Jaklewicz, its members dutifully collected the contributions imposed by the Germans, often using batons to do so.

Despite occasional German visits, life was comparatively safe and quiet in Pińczów. Jews were able to pray in private. Some reopened their businesses. Despite German-appointed Polish and ethnic German (*Volksdeutsche*) “commissars,” commerce carried on, albeit in secret. According to Gold, there was no hunger, as fields and farms surrounded the town. The situation worsened, however, when Jews were confined to a ghetto, and Jewish tradesmen were no longer able to travel.

Pińczów’s Jews were employed in peat cutting for which they were paid with rations of flour. They would leave Pińczów at 5:00 A.M., walking up to 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) into the forest. Additionally, they repaired roads on the orders of the German army.

Despite the initial outflow of residents, the overcrowding was so severe in Pińczów that by August 1940 there were cases of contagious diseases. There were also 197 refugees in the town by November 1940, many of them likely relatives of Jewish residents of Pińczów. The number of refugees then stabilized, rising only to 218 by January 1941.²

Sources disagree regarding the date on which an open ghetto was created in Pińczów; dates range from November 1940 to April 1942 or later. These discrepancies probably indicate that the ghetto’s establishment was never formally announced, but rather that Pińczów’s Jews were forbidden to



Exterior view of a synagogue in Pińczów, 1936.

USHMM WS #77725, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

leave the town's limits on penalty of death. Travel outside of Pińczów required a permit. There is an additional report that Jews were forbidden to use the town's main streets.

On February 15, 1941, a group of Jews was sent to the labor camp in Sosnowiec. There were reportedly 3,000 Jews (including 218 refugees) living in Pińczów in May 1941. The number of deportees then doubled to 434 by September 1941, while the total number of Jews decreased to 2,991, due to deaths caused by typhus and more roundups of people sent to labor camps. Pińczów was severely overcrowded, with an average of 20 people per room.³

By March 10, 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was set up in Pińczów to take over the provision of welfare from the Judenrat. The committee was chaired by Josek Fajnsztat and was assisted by Rabbi Rapoport. Its soup kitchen was launched on August 10, 1941, feeding approximately 800 impoverished Jews daily.

By April 1942, there were 3,377 Jews in the ghetto, including 400 refugees; its population increased to 3,554 by June 1942. More conscripts were sent to factories in Częstochowa and

Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski in the summer of 1942. At this time, the kitchen fed 1,000 Jews daily. The JSS Women's Committee distributed additional rations to children 3 to 12 years old.⁴

According to survivor Leon Gross, the youth in the Pińczów ghetto set up a self-defense group about one year before the ghetto's liquidation. The group was in contact with Poles of Communist and Socialist orientation in the vicinity. For four to five weeks, the group hid an escapee from Treblinka who explained its role as a death camp. The Judenrat resented the group for disseminating this information, as it preferred to maintain the status quo and keep things calm in Pińczów. In the event of a deportation Aktion, the group planned to set Pińczów on fire; however, in the end, the group did not resist.⁵

On October 3, 1942, the Jews were instructed to report to the square in front of the brewery on Jędrzejów Street the following morning. The same day, Jews from the Wiślica and Busko-Zdrój ghettos were brought on wagons to Pińczów. They were held on the market square. The ghetto was liquidated on Sunday, October 4, 1942, when Jews from neighboring villages were also brought to Pińczów. The liquidation Aktion was carried out by the SS and Gendarmes, assisted by the Jewish Police.

About 3,000 Pińczów Jews gathered at the designated spot. Those who were discovered in hiding were not included in the transport but instantly shot. Polish firemen immediately boarded up emptied houses. The Jewish Police accompanied the Gendarmes. Approximately 150 elderly, women, and children were killed in the course of the liquidation Aktion. A number were killed or died of exhaustion on the way to Jędrzejów; the names of only two of these victims are known: Brania Josek Moszek and Splinen Brama. Upon reaching Jędrzejów, all the Jews were loaded onto trains and sent to the Treblinka killing center.⁶

Upon the column's departure from Pińczów, the corpses of dead Jews were loaded onto wagons by Polish farmers, fire-fighters, and the Jewish Police that the Germans had left behind following the deportation. The Jewish policemen, under supervision by the Gendarmes, buried these victims. The next day, Germans searched the empty houses for escapees and goods, again assisted by the Jewish Police. Several Jews, including a saddler and his son, were discovered and killed on the spot. Some local Poles who looted Jewish households were caught, beaten, and forced to return the goods. The hunt for hidden Jews in Pińczów lasted two days, after which the Germans departed.

In the course of the liquidation Aktion, Rabbi Rapoport presented the Gendarmes with Paraguay passports for his family. According to the postwar testimony of a relative of the rabbi, the Germans pretended to respect the passports but nevertheless attached the family to the transport to Jędrzejów; from there they went to Germany, where the family died in 1945. However, according to a pre-war neighbor, S. Jaklewicz, the rabbi was in touch with his family after the war—at first living in Switzerland, then in France, and later in Argentina.

Some of Pińczów's Jews escaped the deportation by joining two Jewish partisan units operating in the vicinity: the



Dudek Gold stands in front of a wooden fence inside the Pińczów ghetto, n.d. USHMM WS #97088, COURTESY OF DAVID GOLD

“Zygmunt” detachment commanded by Zalman Fajnsztat and another commanded by Michał Majtek. Both units joined the Polish Communist Gwardia Ludowa (People’s Guard, GL) and were active until February 1944, when they incurred heavy losses.

Poles in the vicinity saved a number of Pińczów’s Jews. Some had their houses torched and were killed together with the Jews they had been sheltering when this was discovered (e.g., the Haberman family was arrested on May 1, 1943, with the Niechciał family who had hidden them; both families were executed two days later following their arrest in Busko). There are also accounts of Jews being betrayed by Poles or captured and handed over to the German authorities, who ultimately killed them.

SOURCES The ghetto in Pińczów is mentioned in the following publications: M. Shener, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Pintshev; in Pintshev tog shoyv nisht* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Pinczow in Israel and in the Diaspora, 1970); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 395; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 86; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 991; and Jarosław Tambor, ed., *Spółeczeństwo żydowskie w Pińczowie* (Pińczów: Samorząd Miasta i Muzeum Regionalne w Pińczowie, 1998), p. 2.

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (210/547 [AJDC]; 211/271 [JSS]; and 301/2627 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 16; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (e.g., # 1981, 13170, 43645).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC Pińczów), 210/547, p. 1; VHF, # 1981, testimony of David Gold, 1995.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/547, pp. 21–22, 38–39, 43–44.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 16, 211/271 (Busko-Zdrój), p. 14.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 24, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/547, p. 58.
5. VHF, # 13170, testimony of Leon Gross, 1996.
6. Ibid., # 43645, testimony of Cela Miller, 1998.

PIONKI

Pre-1939: Pionki, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Pionki is located about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) east-northeast of Radom. In 1939, there were 168 Jewish residents out of a total population of approximately 7,700 people. This number

increased to 327 in 1940 with the arrival of refugees, many of whom were members of residents’ extended families.

Survivor Melvin (Mendel) Gelblat named Kocki as the first chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). By January 1940, its membership had increased to include S. Kirszenbaum, H. Libhaber, and Hendel.¹

Aside from the provision of social assistance (including welfare support received from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee [AJDC]), the Judenrat conscripted Jews for labor assigned by the new German administrators of Pionki. Forced labor consisted of various maintenance jobs, including the dismantling of bombed-out houses and cleaning bricks, trucks, and horses; many Jews also worked as tailors. Another group helped to enlarge a train depot and unloaded shipments for the gunpowder factory in the town. The Wehrmacht managed to reopen this badly damaged factory and a nearby power plant in 1940, also forcing its pre-war Polish laborers to work there and later conscripting Pionki’s Jews. Survivors mention an SS presence in the factory, which in fact was run by the Wehrmacht and was subordinated to the Armaments Inspectorate. Operations were under the command of Hauptmann Brandt.

Although survivor testimonies—on which this entry is mainly based—give various dates as to the ghetto’s establishment, it was most likely set up in the autumn of 1941 or at the beginning of 1942. The Germans ordered all of Pionki’s Jews to move to one of the longest streets in the northern part of Pionki—Leśna Street. The street was built up on only one side, as it faced a forest.

Similar confusion among survivors also applies to the ghetto’s physical closure: some claim it was never fenced, whereas Sam Klaiman vividly recollects escaping from the ghetto through barbed wire. Nevertheless, from the very beginning of the ghetto’s existence, Jews were forbidden to leave it. Poles, who had previously been the predominant inhabitants on Leśna Street, were evicted and forbidden to enter the ghetto, which reportedly had a small gate.

German forces and Polish (Blue) Police guarded the ghetto, the latter reportedly looking the other way when Jews were seen escaping. A Jewish police force was set up to maintain order inside the ghetto, resolve minor disputes, and report escapees. A Jewish policeman named Mendel arrested Sam Klaiman’s mother for sneaking out for firewood. Mendel held her in a shed until his wife, whom Klaiman’s father begged, freed her. This was followed by a public confrontation between Klaiman and Mendel, during which a bystander saved the former by intervening when Mendel attempted to kill him with a pick.² Two Jewish women were imprisoned in Radom for leaving the ghetto on June 24, 1942. Rywka Wajzman (née Szykman) is registered as having been “deported” on August 18, 1942. Rojza (Rosa) Gelblat (55 years old) was “executed” on August 15, 1942. The latter, presumably the mother of Melvin Gelblat, fled from the ghetto with one of her sons, who was shot while escaping on foot.³

Soon after the ghetto’s establishment, Jews from nearby villages were forced into the ghetto during the winter of

1941–1942, including some from Sokoły and Klwatka. Inhabitants of the latter place were informed of the resettlement and tried to sell their belongings for food, as they knew they would not be allowed to leave the ghetto. By August 1942, the ghetto reportedly had only 682 residents.⁴

Ghetto inmates continued to labor at the gunpowder factory, to which they were escorted daily by Jewish policemen. Shifts lasted 8 to 10 hours, with Pionki's Jews working every other day. Some volunteered for unpaid labor in order to be fed. Poles administered the works canteen and distributed the same meals of vegetables and meat to Germans and Jews. At the time, Poles were the predominant factory laborers, and from them, Pionki's Jews were able to obtain news and additional food. Yetta Rosenberg added that food rations were distributed once a week among the Jewish laborers. At some point before the ghetto's liquidation, a number of Pionki's Jews were held permanently in a barrack on the factory grounds, while the majority continued to return to the ghetto for the night.

Until the ghetto's liquidation, there were no deportations of Pionki's Jews to other localities, nor were there attempts to organize a Jewish underground movement in the ghetto or to sabotage the factory.⁵

Survivors Manny Weizman and Sam Fireman name Nachman and Baer Kaplan as the "Jewish administrators of Pionki [factory]." Reportedly, the Kaplans befriended Hauptmann Brandt and inquired whether more Jews from the ghetto could work in the factory, as they knew that the Germans wanted to replace Poles engaged in sabotage and underground activities. Shortly afterwards, the Germans liquidated the Pionki ghetto without any warning. In the final stage of the ghetto's existence, due to overcrowding, some refugees had to camp out in the street.⁶

The majority of the deportees arrived just weeks or days before the Pionki ghetto's liquidation in August 1942. Most were likely assigned to work in the gunpowder factory, including refugees from Garbatka-Letnisko, Jedlnia Letnisko (ca. 300), and Jedlnia-Poświętne (ca. 100).

The liquidation of the Pionki ghetto took place on August 20, 1942. One day before, while working in the factory, Pionki's Jewish laborers were suddenly rounded up and informed that from now on they would live on its grounds. Most of these laborers were escorted back to the ghetto to pick up clothing and bedding and were able to say brief good-byes to their families. Some of the current workers that the Germans recognized as being too old or too young were sent back to the ghetto, while others were selected for work on the spot.

In the course of the liquidation, 488 Jews unfit for labor were taken to the nearby Zwoleń ghetto (20 kilometers [12.5 miles] southeast of Pionki), which was liquidated at the end of September 1942.

Approximately 200 laborers (men and women) from the liquidated Pionki ghetto were quartered in the factory's barracks, where a labor camp was set up that same month. Pionki survivors claim that they were the first and original Jewish laborers of the camp, which existed until 1944 and grew much

larger; by January 1943, it had 850 Jewish and 3,220 Polish laborers.⁷

SOURCES The pre-war figure for the Jewish population in Pionki is from Adam Penkalla, *Akta dotyczące Żydów w radomskim Archiwum Państwowym, 1815–1950* (Jerusalem: Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People; Warsaw: ŻIH, 1998), p. 19. For changes in Pionki's Jewish population, Penkalla cites "Akta gminy Pionki (1931–1944)," vols. 13–14, 19–20; for information regarding the Pionki ghetto and the transfer of its population to Zwoleń, see "Starostwo Powiatowe w Kozienicach (1945–1950)," vols. 46–48, held in APR. Direct access to these collections was not possible for the author at the time of writing.

Figures for the population of the Pionki ghetto and for the deportees from other localities are as cited by Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955), pp. 158 (table 11), 160, 178–179. For more information on the Pionki labor camp, see Piotr Matusak, *Ruch oporu w przemyśle wojennym okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Wydawn. MON, 1983), pp. 45, 202, 277–289.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (210/549); USHMM (RG-2.002*18, 23, and 26; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 3041, 4331, 8996, 16678, 33774, 33775, 41649, 44958, and 45313).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/549 (Pionki), p. 1; VHF, # 16678, testimony of Melvin Gelblat, 1996.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/549, pp. 1–4; VHF, # 3041, testimony of Sam Klaiman, 1995; # 44958, testimony of Simon Braitman, 1998.
3. Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe, 1997), pp. 17, 77; and VHF, # 16678.
4. VHF, # 33774, testimony of Bella Malc, 1997; # 44958; # 33775, testimony of Michael Maltz, 1997.
5. Ibid., # 8996, testimony of Yetta Rosenberg, 1995; # 16678; # 33775.
6. Ibid., # 4331-1, testimony of Sam Fireman, 1995; # 41649, testimony of Manny Weizman, 1998; # 44958.
7. Ibid., # 45313-3, testimony of Tema Gutwaks, 1998; # 44958; # 3041; # 8996; and # 41649.

PIOTRKÓW TRYBUNALSKI

Pre-1939: Piotrków Trybunalski, city, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Petrikau, Kreis center, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Piotrków Trybunalski, Łódź województwo, Poland

Piotrków Trybunalski is located about 43 kilometers (27 miles) south-southeast of Łódź. The pre-war population of Piotrków consisted of 50,000 people, including about 15,000 Jews.

VOLUME II: PART A



Survivors visit the Jewish cemetery in Piotrków Trybunalski, 1945. Among those pictured is the photograph's donor, Rose Guterman (at far right). USHMM WS #06950, COURTESY OF ROSE GUTERMAN ZAR

On September 5, 1939, the Germans entered Piotrków. Killings of Jews began immediately, and the next day the Germans set fire to the Jewish quarter. What did not burn was looted. Jews, especially older religious people, were kidnapped and sent to forced labor camps where they were tortured and beaten. Other people were taken as hostages and only released after the community paid “contributions.”

In early October, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was appointed. It was headed by a Bundist leader, Zalman Tenenberg. Included were also representatives of various Zionist groups, religious factions, and members of the Artisans Union. Szymon Warszawski represented all the nonaffiliated Jews. In all the various departments, together with the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), about 500 people worked in the community services controlled by the Judenrat.

The Jewish Police was headed by the lawyer Stanisław Zilberstein and was responsible for matters of public order, supplies, and health. Its function was also to enforce cooperation on those unwilling to work, as requested by the Germans. It was composed of 45 men divided into three groups. The policemen received special hats and armbands.

On October 8, 1939, Oberbürgermeister (Lord Mayor) Hans Drechsel ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski, which was the first ghetto in Nazi-occupied Europe. The Jews were given until October 31 to move into the designated ghetto area, which was located in an old and impoverished part of town. The borders of the ghetto were marked by signposts bearing the word *Ghetto* (in gothic script) above a white skull and cross bones on a blue background. It was not enclosed by a fence.¹

On December 1, 1939, the Stadtkommissar (Oberbürgermeister Drechsel) ordered that 1,000 Jews had to report for forced labor every day and that Jews had to wear a yellow armband. He also imposed a curfew inside the ghetto from 3:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M.² In 1940, all the Jews of Piotrków over the age of 10 were required to wear a white armband on their sleeves with a blue Star of David. Those who failed to comply were

severely punished. Some people still disobeyed the order, despite the danger.

Men born between 1914 and 1923 were registered for forced labor by the Judenrat in March 1940.³ Then in August, almost 1,000 men and boys, some only 16 years old, were sent to labor camps in the Lublin area to fortify the German-Soviet border. David Perach was among 150 initially sent to the camp at Cieszanów. The conditions were terrible: hard labor from dawn to dusk, whippings, and shootings. The most meager rations and primitive living conditions made those places a living hell. The gallant man who organized the repatriation of the laborers by negotiations and bribes was Salomon Gombberg. The young men were released in January 1941.⁴

The people of the ghetto tried their best to endure their cruel fate with dignity. The most shining example was the clandestine education organization. The teachers eager to practice their noble profession and the youngsters thirsty for knowledge formed a “bridge to humanity” by studying and organizing cultural activities such as symposia, plays, discussion groups, and musical events.⁵

The German official Ronig took over the administration of expropriated Jewish houses outside the ghetto. The Germans also appointed commissars to administer Jewish firms and stores. Forced labor involved backbreaking work. Street cleaning, repairing the roads, and serving the various German offices became a nightmare for the people. Very often the oppressors captured men, forcing them to perform harsh meaningless work just for torment. The Judenrat regularly supplied scores of Jewish workers via the Arbeitsamt (labor office). They worked, for example, draining swampy fields near the villages of Milejów and Witów, digging canals and trenches, removing tons of earth, and working up to their knees in water all day long.

Due to the resettlement of Jews by the German authorities, the ghetto population increased substantially as refugees arrived, for example, from Gniezno, Tuszyn, Łódź, Pabianice, and the regions of Poznań and Płock. The ghetto contained 182 run-down buildings in poor condition with 4,178 rooms. With nearly 20,000 Jews forced into the ghetto, there were roughly 5 people living in each room.⁶

As the population of the ghetto increased and the overcrowding intensified, outbreaks of disease reached epidemic proportions. In 1941, a typhus epidemic claimed over 1,000 victims. The newly formed sanitary committee introduced compulsory baths and the disinfection of clothing every three weeks for the inhabitants of each house. They also quarantined those houses affected. The sanitary squad consisted of 60 men, which later became the Sanitary Police.⁷

The Welfare Department of the Judenrat was very active in providing support where needed, including emergency services. They organized medical and dental clinics as well as a pharmacy. Social welfare kitchens were established for the poor, such as the unemployed and those who had lost their businesses.

A number of local companies—such as the Kara and Hortensja Glassworks; the Petrikauer Holzwerke (wood factory) owned

by Dietrich and Fischer, also known as “the Bugaj”; the Ostbahn; the Kreisgenossenschaft; and Phoenix—began to employ Jews, but young workers were given priority.

Those employed in the glassworks learned new crafts. The work itself was very hard. About 1,100 Jews worked in the Kara and Hortensja factories as glass breakers and blowers. They also loaded and unloaded soda, coal, bricks, sand, cement, and other materials. At the Kara factory the managers, Vogel, Popielowski, Mrozinski, and the many foremen, German and Polish, mistreated the workers at every opportunity. A giant glass oven cistern had to be built, and a huge, deep pit was dug for this purpose. The Jews had to remove large amounts of earth from the pit while foremen armed with sticks stood by, beating the workers. This work lasted a year, and in 1943 a new smelting pot and other small buildings were ready. The construction was completed thanks to the sweat and blood of the Jewish workers who carried all the bricks and stones.⁸

On July 5, 1941, the chairman of the Judenrat, Tenenberg, together with several Bundists on the Jewish Council were arrested, as the Germans suspected that they were cooperating with the underground. The investigation lasted 10 weeks, and those arrested were cruelly tortured to extract information. In September the arrestees were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Soon afterwards their families received telegrams informing them of the deaths of the men from various diseases. Szymon Warszawski replaced Tenenberg as chairman of the Judenrat.⁹

During the winter of 1941–1942 the German requisition of furs (*Pelzaktion*) was a further severe blow to the ghetto inmates. All heavy coats as well as furs were requisitioned. Many people became sick as a result of the loss of their winter coats. At the end of 1941, the Germans issued an order prohibiting Jews from leaving the ghetto. Jews caught outside the ghetto faced the death penalty. In early March 1942, the German administration in Piotrków ordered the ghetto to be closed by April 1, 1942. From that date, it was sealed: Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto, and no non-Jews were allowed to enter it.¹⁰

The Germans began preparations for the deportations (*Aussiedlung*) at the beginning of September 1942 with the creation of the Small Ghetto. The block of houses encompassing the Jerozolimska, Garncarska, Zamurowa, and Staro-Warszawska Streets was fenced in with barbed wire. It was rumored that only 3,000 productive Jews would remain for work at the German factories. At this time thousands of Jews were brought into the ghetto from the neighboring towns and villages, such as Sulejów, Srocko Prywatne, Wolbórz, Gorzkowice, and others, raising the total ghetto population to some 25,000. The tension in the ghetto reached its climax on October 13, 1942. The horrifying news spread that the “Aktion” was scheduled to begin on the following day.

On the night of October 13–14, 1942, SS and Ukrainian auxiliary forces surrounded and sealed off the ghetto. The Aktion began at dawn. The first group of people was ordered to go out to the Deportation Square opposite the Jewish Hospital. The commanders of the operation—headed by SS-

Hauptsturmführer Adolf Feucht from Radom, the main deportation expert in the Generalgouvernement—stood in the center of the square. As soon as the Jews had been lined up in rows, the Nazis selected the factory workers, who were sent to their workplaces. The others were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. The quota that day was 6,000 people, or enough to fill the 52 cattle cars. Once the quota was filled, all the others were sent back to the ghetto.

During the ensuing dreadful week, the workers from the glass factory, including the Jews who were temporarily housed there, saw the trains departing for Treblinka and witnessed the trembling hands of people groping at the window gratings and their terrible cries as they were carried off to their deaths. Trains departed on Wednesday, Friday, Monday, and on Wednesday again. In total, more than 20,000 Jews were deported. About 1,000 Jews were shot during the deportation Aktion, mainly the old and sick.

This experience left deep wounds in the souls of those who witnessed it. On the day of the last transport the Nazis realized that several cars would remain empty. The quota of 6,000 had not been met. They rushed the remaining inhabitants of the Small Ghetto to the square, where Feucht passed among the ranks and selected the 300 victims he needed. He took the scholars of the Jewish community, its leaders, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and others who had belonged to the Jewish Council. Finally he came to Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau, who alone among them still kept his traditional dress and beard. The murderer pointed his cane at the rabbi: “The Jews need Rabbis there too,” he shouted. Dislodged from his position and clutching a small Torah scroll, the rabbi joined the last Treblinka transport of Piotrków Jews. With their departure the great community of illustrious, ancient Piotrków was no more.¹¹

When the workers from the Bugaj and the glass factories returned, they were housed in the Small Ghetto, in the dwellings of those who had been deported. Meanwhile, the people who had remained hidden in their houses outside the Small Ghetto filtered back in. Those several hundred “illegals” were of concern to Warszawski and his aides, who feared that the clandestine influx might provoke a further selection.¹² Indeed, soon the Germans began intensive searches assisted by the Jewish Police. The search uncovered several hundred Jews, including entire families. They were incarcerated in the Great Synagogue. Here, the murderers committed brutal atrocities with satanic pleasure. They carried infants out of the building, smashed their heads, and hurled their bodies into basin heaters over bonfires. The first group of people was sent by horse carriages to nearby Tomaszów Mazowiecki, where the deportations to Treblinka were still going on.

A month later, the Nazis assembled another group of several hundred victims from bunkers (hiding places) and the “illegals” from the Small Ghetto in the synagogue. On December 20, 1942, several hundred Jews were taken to their bitter end in the Raków Forest, first digging their own graves before they were mercilessly shot.¹³ (In July 1943, during the liquidation of the Small Ghetto, 39 small children were killed in the same location.)

Only 2,400 Jews were permitted to remain in the Small Ghetto known as the “Blok,” because of their work in vital industries; in fact, the population exceeded 3,000. Most inhabitants were employed in factories, thanks to which the group was allowed to remain. Others, however, worked in the “shop,” which produced clothing for the Germans, and at the Befehlsstelle, cleaning up the large ghetto and sorting and shipping the “goods” to Germany. A small group worked in internal services, the laundry, and in the kitchen; on food supply; at the clinic and at janitorial work; and for the Jewish Police. Prior to the December massacre in Raków, 160 people were killed in the forest on November 20, 1942.¹⁴

In February 1943, 250 people were deported to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factories in Skarżysko-Kamienna. A month later another 250, mostly women, were sent to the same place, among them the rabbi of Radoszitz (Radoszyce), Admor Itzhakl Finkler, and his family.¹⁵

On March 21, 1943, the Germans perfidiously conducted a massacre during Purim. They took 10 scholars, doctors, and lawyers, claiming that they would be exchanged for Germans from Palestine. Doctors Brams and Glatter, attorneys Silberstein and Stein, their families, and others were brought to the Jewish cemetery, ordered to strip naked, and killed without mercy.¹⁶

In July 1943, it became known that only about 1,500 Jews were to remain in Piotrków, employed in the Kara and Hortensja Glassworks and in the Bugaj Lumberworks. The workers were destined to live within the factories’ grounds. About 1,500 excess Jews were sent to the Bliżyn camp. Three truckloads sent to Pionki, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, and Radom completed the fate of the residents of the Small Ghetto. The ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski ceased to exist. When the transport left town in the second half of July, an official sign reading “Petrikau ist judenrein” (Piotrków is cleansed of Jews) was posted at the railroad station.¹⁷

The two labor camps that remained within the Piotrków city limits were headed by Szymon Warszawski at the Bugaj and Salamon Gomberg at the Kara and Hortensja. On November 26, 1944, the remnants of the Jewish population of Piotrków were put into cattle wagons to be transported to three destinations. The majority from the glass factories and a smaller part from the Bugaj were sent to the HASAG facilities in Częstochowa—the Pelzerei, Warta, Raków, and Częstochowianka factories. The larger part of those from the Bugaj, including about 50 people from the glassworks, were sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. The women and small children from both places were sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

In January 1945, only two small groups of Piotrkower were liberated at the Warta and Pelzerei in Częstochowa. The rest were sent to Buchenwald. From Ravensbrück some women from Piotrków were sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Only about half of the people that left Piotrków in November 1944 survived the atrocious conditions in various German concentration camps and on the death marches. By the end of 1946, about 600 Jews had registered with the Jew-

ish Committee in Piotrków, and only 150 remained in the town by December 1948.¹⁸

SOURCES The English-language yizkor book edited by Ben Giladi, *A Tale of One City: Piotrków Trybunalski* (New York: Shengold in cooperation with the Piotrkow Trybunalski Relief Association in New York, 1991), contains much material from the original yizkor book, Yaakov Malts v-Naftali (Lavi) L’au, ed., *Pyotrkov Tribunalski veba-sevivah: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Vaadat ha-maarekhet shel ha-sefer shele-yad Irgun yots’e Pyotrkov be-Yisrael, 1965), including the excellent article by Dr. Joseph Kermish, “The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Piotrkow by the Nazis during World War II.” Other relevant publications include memoirs by Isaac Goodfreind, *By Fate or by Faith* (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet, 2001); Charles Kotkowsky, *Remnants (Memoir of a Survivor)* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, 2000); Schraga Golani, *Brennendes Leben: Vom Pabianice und Piotrków in Polen durch die Lager Skarżysko Kamienna, Bliżyn, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ohrdruf bis zur Befreiung in Buchenwald* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2004); Sidney Finkel, *Sevek and the Holocaust: The Boy Who Refused to Die* (Matteson, IL: Sidney Finkel, 2006); Yechiel Granatstein, *One Jew’s Power, One Jew’s Glory: The Life of Rav Yitzchak Shmuel Eliyahu Finkler, the Rebbe of Radoszitz, in the Ghetto and Concentration Camps* (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1991); and Yisrael Meir Lau, *Al tishlah yadkha el ha-na’ar* (Tel Aviv: Yedi’ot aharonot: Sifre hemed, 2005). There are also a number of relevant articles including William Samelson, “Piotrków Trybunalski: My Ancestral Home,” in Eric J. Sterling, ed., *Life in the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005), pp. 1–16; A. Brzeziński, “Eksterminacja ludności powiatu piotrkowskiego w latach 1939–1945,” in *Rocznik Łódzki* (Łódź, 1972), 16: 147–148; and many others published in *The Voice of Piotrkow Survivors*.

Documentation and testimonies regarding the fate of the Jews of Piotrków Trybunalski during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/1565; Ring I/340); BA-L (206 AR-Z 32/63); FVA (# 306, 888); IPN; USHMM (RG-10.045); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1100, 1298, 2568, and 2576; O-3/522-26, 2777, and 3287; and O-21/4).

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NOTES

1. Decree of Hans Drechsel, *Wiadomości Piotrkowskie*, no. 5, October 8, 1939; Kermish, “The Destruction,” in Giladi, *A Tale of One City*, pp. 323–353; Finkel, *Sevek and the Holocaust*, p. 27; Mala Tribich, “A Child in the Holocaust,” *The Voice of Piotrkow Survivors*, no. 41 (140) (November–December 2005): 12–15; and Samelson, “Piotrków Trybunalski: My Ancestral Home,” p. 2; AŻIH, Ring I/340.

2. AŻIH, Ring I/340, Verordnung des Stadtkommisars von Piotrków, Drechsel, über Beschränkungen, die den im Getto befindlichen Juden auferlegt werden.

3. Bekanntmachung der Jüdischen Gemeinde in Petrikau, March 1940, republished in Giladi, *A Tale of One City*, p. 170.

4. David Perach, “The First Transport to the Labor Camp,” in Giladi, *A Tale of One City*, pp. 202–203; Kermish, “The Destruction,” p. 330.

5. Ben Giladi, "The Topic of Resistance," in Giladi, *A Tale of One City*, pp. 246–250, here p. 247.
6. Kermish, "The Destruction," pp. 331–332.
7. Ibid., p. 334; *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 19, September 24, 1940.
8. Kermish, "The Destruction," p. 331.
9. Ibid., pp. 334, 350; Giladi, "The Topic of Resistance," p. 247.
10. Kermish, "The Destruction," p. 335; Finkel, *Sevek and the Holocaust*, p. 29.
11. Kermish, "The Destruction," pp. 338–340.
12. Sheraga Golani, *Brennendes Leben* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2004), p. 60.
13. Kermish, "The Destruction," p. 342.
14. AŻIH, 301/1565, testimony of Blanka Goldhaust; Kermish, "The Destruction," p. 341.
15. Granatstein, *One Jew's Power*, pp. 89–91.
16. Dr. Michael Lubliner, "The Purim Massacre in Piotrków," in Giladi, *A Tale of One City*, pp. 237–240.
17. Kermish, "The Destruction," p. 343; BA-L, 206 AR-Z 32/63.
18. Kermish, "The Destruction," pp. 343–344.

POŁANIEC

Pre-1939: Połaniec, village, Kielce województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Połaniec, Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement;
post-1998: Połaniec, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Połaniec is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) northeast of Kraków. In 1939, there were 864 Jews living in Połaniec.

The persecution of Połaniec's Jews began even before German troops arrived, at the hands of local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). The Wehrmacht occupied the village on September 5, 1939, and further abuse followed soon thereafter.

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in October 1939. Among its members were the following: Shachne (surname likely Hanger, a carpenter), Avram Nogel, Meir Schlachter, Nehemiah Schnifer, and Shlomo Zucker. The Judenrat was held responsible for carrying out German orders. At this time, a unit of Polish (Blue) Police was organized, with Michał Peksa as its commander. The Jewish Police was likely organized in 1940.

Many Jewish refugees settled in Połaniec after the war broke out. The village lacked good road or rail connections, and with no German Gendarmerie post, Połaniec was regarded by many as a fairly safe place, where Jews were left in peace.¹ The Germans did not kill any Jews in Połaniec until early 1942.

According to the Judenrat in Połaniec, there were about 90 refugee families (mostly from Łódź) residing there by the fall of 1940. On December 3, 1940, on the orders of the Kreishauptmann in Opatów, 150 Jews were resettled from Radom to Połaniec. Some of them were already sick. Połaniec's Jews encountered problems housing this large number of people, since most houses were single-room cottages. The Judenrat solicited the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), based in Kraków, for help. Although Połaniec's Judenrat com-

plained that it never received any outside assistance, the AJDC office maintained that a delegation from Radom's Judenrat visited Połaniec and some assistance was provided. Połaniec was also advised to open a soup kitchen for the resettled Jews. At this time, charity efforts in Połaniec were bringing in approximately 100 złoty per month. The Połaniec Judenrat, however, estimated that 1,000 złoty was necessary to cover the basic needs of the Radom expellees. At the end of 1940, there were approximately 1,200 Jews living in Połaniec. In March 1941, about 300 more Jews were brought in from neighboring towns; among them a number of deportees from Vienna.²

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), also based in Kraków, was created especially for providing social and medical relief for refugees and the needy. Połaniec was subordinated to the regional office organized in Kreis Opatów in December 1940; however, a separate committee was not established in Połaniec, and the village came under the local Staszów branch administration. It is not known when assistance to the refugees and deportees in Połaniec started, but in February 1942, the soup kitchen distributed 8,600 meals. From that month on, children up to 13 years of age received additional food rations: 150 grams (5.3 ounces) of bread and a glass of sweetened coffee.³

Sometime in 1941, the SS arrived and took hostage two Judenrat members: Schnifer and Nogel. They were to be released only upon delivery of a large ransom in silver and copper. The SS held the men in the nearby village of Łoniów, torturing them for three days until the ransom was paid.

In May 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów ordered the concentration of all Jews in the Kreis in only 5 towns and 12 settlements by the end of the month. Połaniec was chosen as one of the settlements, which from June 1, 1942, were to be recognized as ghettos. This was the first stage in the German plan to "cleanse" the region of Jews. The arrival of 500 more Jews from nearby settlements produced further overcrowding in the village. As living conditions deteriorated, an outbreak of typhus developed in the summer of 1942. By June 1942, the ghetto had 1,553 inhabitants.

In August or September 1942, a German Gendarme accompanied by a Polish policeman arrested Yeshayahu Rothenberg at his home, took him to the bridge near the church, and shot him. At the same time, they also shot the head of the municipal council. Rothenberg was buried at the place where he was shot. Local Jews then bribed the Gendarme for permission to retrieve Rothenberg's body and rebury it in the Jewish cemetery.

Despite Połaniec being cut off from the outside world, news of Jews being deported to unknown destinations, allegedly to labor camps, had reached the ghetto by September 1942. Połaniec's Jews were suspicious of the fact that the transports included the elderly and children, who were unable to work. By early October, the number of Jews in the ghetto had risen to 2,200, more than doubling the pre-war number. Among the new arrivals were also several Jews who had escaped from recent deportation Aktions, including Yadzya Offman, who brought a horrific description of the Aktion in Koprzywnica. As rumors spread in mid-October of an impending Aktion in

Połaniec, many left to hide in the woods or bribed peasants to conceal them.

Some larger families divided themselves and went to separate hiding places to enhance their chances of survival. According to one testimony, there were groups of Jewish and Russian partisans in the vicinity of Połaniec, which took in some of the Jewish escapees. However, there were also instances of Jews being killed in the nearby forests by common criminals or Polish right-wing underground organizations, including elements of the Armia Krajowa (Home Army, AK). According to Moshe Szlachter, “all peasants” rid themselves of Jews who paid for shelter with the same ploy: saying that the Germans were coming to search their homes. Several Jews were even murdered after the liberation. Despite this, a number of Jews received various forms of help from local Poles. Several Poles from the area around Połaniec have been recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

German-led forces arrived in Połaniec on Sunday morning, October 18, 1942, to liquidate the Połaniec ghetto. They ordered all Jews to report to the marketplace within half an hour, warning people that those who did not comply would be punished by death. They allowed Jews to take with them only a few basic necessities. All who reported were formed into two rows. During the roundup, Germans and their collaborators combed the village for hidden Jews. They shot on the spot anyone they discovered.

The selection took about five hours. Jews who were deemed unfit for travel were killed in front of the others. The three small children of Azriel Knobel wandered among the dead until an SS man shot them. Dead bodies were piled up in the middle of the market square. Then a column of those Jews that remained was marched 18 kilometers (11 miles) to Staszów. Those who could not keep up with the column were shot along the way. Only at night did the Germans permit the burial of the dead at the Jewish cemetery. According to one source, 300 Jews that had remained in Połaniec were taken to Staszów on the next day, October 19, 1942. Altogether, about 2,000 Jews were deported to Staszów. Initially they were caged on the town’s market square, but later they were released into the ghetto, on condition that they did not attempt to run away.

A 90-year-old rabbi was walled up in his cellar in Połaniec by his son-in-law, who then ran away. The rabbi and his two grandchildren were discovered a few days later. Although he could no longer walk, he was arrested and then sent to Staszów. During the searches of the ghetto and the surrounding area for escaped Jews and Polish partisans over the period up to June 1944, Gendarmes from Staszów and Sandomierz shot at least 55 Jews and 19 Poles.

After the liquidation of the Połaniec ghetto, the Germans destroyed the wooden Jewish houses, while stone houses were sold. The synagogue was purchased by an ethnic German and demolished for firewood. Many Torah scrolls were destroyed.

The liquidation of the Staszów ghetto took place on November 8, 1942, when almost 6,000 Jews were marched to the Szczucin train station. About 700 to 740 Jews collapsed and were shot before reaching the station. The remaining Jews

were loaded on trains and sent to their deaths at the Treblinka killing center.⁴

SOURCES Information regarding the destruction of the Jewish community of Połaniec can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 382–384; testimony of the survivor Moshe Szlachter, article on the Web (www.plontch.net/ybta.htm); and Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/813, 2280, 2291, and 3743); BA-L (B 162/4872); IPN (IPN 0173/97, Charakterystyka no. 135, p. 4); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3743; 301/2280.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 20, 1942.
4. BA-L, B 162/4872, Vorläufiger Abschlussbericht, April 21, 1960, reports that Staszów’s Jews were deported to Treblinka; some other sources, e.g., AŻIH, 301/4972, indicate Bełżec as the destination.

PRZEDBÓRZ

Pre-1939: Przedbórz, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Przedborz, Kreis Konskie, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Przedbórz, Łódź województwo, Poland

The town of Przedbórz is located 87 kilometers (54 miles) south of Łódź. On the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, Przedbórz had about 4,500 Jewish inhabitants.¹

In the course of heavy fighting, Przedbórz changed hands several times in the September 1939 campaign. As a result, 70 percent of Przedbórz was destroyed, especially the town center, which was predominantly populated by Jews. Looting, persecution, forced labor, and murder began almost from the first day of the occupation. In view of the difficult conditions, hundreds of Jews—especially the better-off—left Przedbórz permanently.²

The town’s Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created soon after the Germans arrived and was made responsible for the fulfillment of all German orders. Avigdor Tannenbaum, a lumber merchant and Zionist leader, was its first chairman. By May 1940, another Zionist, Zysman Tyberg, a former vice-mayor of Przedbórz, had replaced him. Other members of the Judenrat included Dawid Frydman (deputy), Dr. Juda Kamiński, Josek Rapoport, and Elias and Szachna Rozencwajg. Most of them had been community activists before the war. A soup kitchen for the poor was established in February 1940.³

In the spring of 1940, on orders from the Kreishauptmann in Końskie, Dr. Albrecht, an open ghetto was established in Przedbórz.⁴ All of the town’s Jews had to move across the

bridge to the predominantly Jewish suburb of Widoma. The ghetto consisted of Trytwa, Częstochowska, and Leśna Streets. The Poles living there had to vacate their houses. The transfer of people occurred immediately after the Germans announced the ghetto's establishment. The Jews moving in were forced to leave behind their sewing machines and other tools.

The ghetto initially had 2,800 residents. Large signs were posted on the streets warning ghetto inhabitants not to leave its confines; however, non-Jewish Poles were still allowed to enter the ghetto. Until October 1941, Jews caught outside the ghetto were fined between 5 and 50 złoty. Subsequently they faced the death penalty.⁵

Initially, there was no risk involved in smuggling food into the ghetto. One had to pass the Gendarmerie post on the bridge; but only occasionally did the Gendarmes turn people back. Yet with time, the Gendarmerie started shooting Jews for small misdemeanors—or for no reason at all. The executions were carried out at the local Jewish cemetery. A Gendarme by the name of Ettler reportedly terrorized Jews and Poles. In addition to the Gendarmerie, a unit of Jewish Police (*Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*) was set up to maintain order inside the ghetto.

In August 1940, about 150 young Jews were sent to the Zagacie labor camp, 14 kilometers (9 miles) from Przedbórz, where they drained land along the Czarna River. The laborers received insufficient food and no bedding. The Przedbórz Judenrat was ordered to provide them with food. A month later, when 180 Przedbórz Jews were working in Zagacie, a soup kitchen was established there. On November 13, 1940, 150 men from Przedbórz were released from the camp, only to be replaced by a new group of 200. According to one source, a number of Jews were also sent to a labor camp in Częstochowa.

In November 1940, the ghetto had 3,100 inhabitants, including 100 expellees from Łódź. The social branch of the Judenrat (run by Dawid Frydman) was able to obtain some help from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) based in Kraków. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was set up to take over the provision of aid for poor Jews from the Jewish Councils. The Kreis committee, based in Końskie, was established on September 26, 1940. The Przedbórz branch was launched in June 1941. Dawid Gottesman became its president, with Zysman Tyberg as his deputy. In July 1941, the rations and financial resources for Przedbórz diminished considerably, and the soup kitchen had to be closed. Kraków's JSS warned Przedbórz that their subvention would be cut if the Judenrat failed to reopen the kitchen. In August, the kitchen was feeding the poor every day except Saturday. About 200 children were receiving supplementary food rations. Despite these efforts, there was never enough food to go around. At this time, there were 3,150 Jews in the ghetto, 75 of them newcomers.

During this difficult period for the community, 23 poor Jews from Mnin—near Stopnica—were resettled into the ghetto on May 23, 1941. Due to extreme overcrowding, they were housed in the synagogue with other homeless Jews. To make matters worse, the Kreishauptmann ordered that the

ghetto's boundaries were to be reduced. Trytwa Street was then excluded from the ghetto. The unsanitary living conditions led to renewed outbreaks of typhus (the first were in 1940).⁶

In June 1941, there were 3,211 Jews living in the ghetto. Around 10 percent of Przedbórz's shop owners and craftsmen were still permitted to operate their businesses. In 1941, the town's carpenters manufactured 2,500 tables for the *Technisches Baubüro* (Construction Office), while lathe operators filled orders for the Magister Śliwa Company in Kielce.⁷

In October 1941, typhus claimed more victims. Out of 3,000 Jews in the ghetto, the JSS estimated that over 100 were infected. Hospitals overflowing with the epidemic's victims in neighboring towns began to refuse treatment to Jews from Przedbórz. On December 3, 1941, the German authorities ordered the Jews to set up an epidemic hospital in a ruined building at 18 Wierzbowska Street. The Jews living there were given only a few hours to vacate the property.

It has been alleged that, at the request of the Radoszyce Judenrat, 67 of its most impoverished Jews were transferred to Przedbórz on December 22, 1941. Within a week, this number rose to 95. Przedbórz complained to the JSS in Kraków that Radoszyce's behavior "deserved condemnation." These recent expellees were housed in the synagogue. From then on, Przedbórz's Jewish authorities expected the continued resettlement of Jews from neighboring villages without sufficient means to help them. Finally, the deported Radoszyce Jews were sent back on February 28, 1942. This did not, however, ease the situation, as 119 Jews from Góry Mokre, Mojżeszów, Wojciechów, and other nearby settlements arrived in their stead. By April 1942, the ghetto was still not fenced, yet the number of Jews confined within it reached its peak: 4,300, including 200 expellees. The ghetto consisted of 120 houses in which there were 500 rooms. On average, at least 8 people shared 1 room.

In February 1942, the only Jewish craftspeople working in Przedbórz were some carpenters manufacturing beds for the German army. When Kraków's JSS informed the Jewish community in Przedbórz of the possibility of organizing craft workshops, it was eager to cooperate, as 150 carpenters and other craftsmen were in desperate need of employment. The workshops were established after May 1942.⁸

In either the spring or the summer of 1942, the ghetto's area was reduced when the Germans excluded its only playground. At that time a child day-care center was organized for about 125 children, aged four to eight. A nurse from the epidemic hospital, with three assistants, ran the center. Apart from two daily meals, the children were kept busy with songs, walks, gymnastics, and reading religious stories. Twice a month the children were bathed.

The ghetto in Przedbórz was liquidated on October 9, 1942. The elderly and the children were shot in the town. The Germans promised to spare eight Jewish policemen and one Judenrat member from deportation, presumably in return for their help in organizing the deportation. All nine were shot while the remaining Jews were on their way to Radomsko, 33 kilometers (20.5 miles) away. Some of the Jews were transported

on horse-drawn wagons, while the rest had to walk. Near the village of Granice many Jews attempted to escape, but the German police shot most of these people.

The Przedbórz Jews arrived in Radomsko around 2:00 p.m., and along with 5,000 local Jews, they were taken to the train station. On a rainy day, they waited in the open for a cattle train to arrive. The transport departed for the Treblinka extermination camp around 8:00 p.m., on October 10, 1942. The remainder of Radomsko's Jews were deported two days later.

In the spring of 1945, nine Jews who returned to Przedbórz were murdered in a nearby forest by a group under the leadership of Dovski, who was known as an antisemite before the war. According to Polish sources, a squad of the Narodowe Siły Zbrojne (National Armed Forces, NSZ) led by Captain Władysław Kołaciński was responsible for the murders.

SOURCES Published sources on the fate of the Jewish community in Przedbórz during the Holocaust include: Shim'on Kants, ed., *Pshdebboz': 33 shanim la-burbanah: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv, 1977); and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 206–208.

Relevant information on the Przedbórz ghetto can be found in the following archives: APK (Akta miasta Przedborza 578–581); AŻIH (210/566 [AJDC]; 211/828–832 [JSS]; and 301/2513 [Relacje]); BA-L (B 162/6211); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); VHF (# 20127 and 20562); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Jerzy Tomaszewski and Andrzej Żbikowski, eds., *Żydzi w Polsce: Dzieje i kultura: Leksykon* (Warsaw: Wydawn. Cyklady, 2001), p. 377; Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach: FPHU “XYZ,” 2007), p. 387; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 152 (table 9), 175–176.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/566; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 40.

3. Ibid.; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/566; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 40.

4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 40, gives the date of March.

5. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/566; VHF, # 20562, testimony of Eugenia Magdziarz, 1996; # 20127–38, testimony of Morris Kornberg, 1996.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 40.

7. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/566.

8. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 40.

PRZYGLÓW AND WŁODZIMIERZÓW

Pre-1939: Przyglów and Włodzimierzów, villages, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Przyglów and Włodzimierzów, Kreis Petrikau, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Przyglów and Włodzimierzów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Przyglów is located approximately 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) and Włodzimierzów 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) southeast of Piotrków Trybunalski. These neighboring villages served before the war as resorts for middle-class Jews from Łódź and Piotrków. In 1939, there were 52 Jews living in Przyglów.¹ As the community was particularly small, the Germans initially did not establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat) there but rather subjected it to the supervision of the nearby Sulejów Judenrat.

In December 1939, a number of Łódź refugees settled primarily in the summer rental cottages and villas in Przyglów and Włodzimierzów. By August 1940, the number of Jews had risen to 600, of which, according to the newly established Judenrat, 92 percent were newcomers. “In connection with this great population growth, Przyglów has been recognized as a separate entity by the Kreishauptmann,” reported the Judenrat.

The following people were members of the Judenrat: teacher Szaja wel Stanisław Głogowski as chairman, industrialist Abram M. Potasz as deputy, H. Guterman as secretary (later replaced by lawyer Maksymilian Kon), baker Moszek Altman, and Josef Goldsztajn. The Judenrat set up a self-help committee in August 1940, with the goal of equipping the summer cottages with stoves and winter bedding.²

In December 1940, there were 550 Jews living in Przyglów and Włodzimierzów. At a conference of Judenrat chairmen that took place on January 19, 1941, in Piotrków, Głogowski reported on the situation in Przyglów: “Almost all families are unemployed. Apartments are lacking beds. There is an utter lack of fuel. There are cases of death from starvation.”

Nearly 500 deportees from Jeżów, Skierniewice, and Rogów arrived at the end of February 1941, increasing the number of Jewish residents in the two villages to nearly 1,000. By March 18, 1941, a number of Jews from Głowno, Łyszkowice, and Stryków, plus 50 from Piotrków, were transferred to Przyglów. A soup kitchen that opened and struggled to serve 200 meals daily was “besieged by lines of hungry people,” reported Głogowski. It was closed by mid-May 1941.³

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in May 1941. Its staff consisted of Judenrat members Głogowski, Kon, Altman, and Goldblum.⁴

On July 14, 1941, 100 to 120 men were taken to a labor camp in Wolbórz to regulate the Wolbórka River for the E. Jeglinsky Company. Terrible conditions in the camp, piecework, and low wages caused many laborers to run away. The Judenrat resorted to calling in the Gendarmerie to prevent work from ceasing in the camp and paid the 24 workers who remained a weekly salary of 25 złoty and a loaf of bread. Due to typhus epidemics in the vicinity, the camp was closed on November 25, 1941, on the orders of the Piotrków Arbeitsamt (labor office).⁵

In June 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out in Przyglów, populated at the time by 2,500 Jews. Some 6 to 8 persons were sharing a room. Most of the initial 18 cases of the sickness were sent to the Święta Trójca public hospital in Piotrków, while subsequently 100 persons were quarantined. Two patients had died by the end of the month.

The community employed Dr. S. Chwat and charged him with managing the Sanitation Committee. Two hospital

attendants, Krumhorn and Bajbuk, assisted Chwat. The German authorities pressured Przygłów: “The head doctor for the Kreis warns us constantly that if we cannot stop the epidemic, the isolation of our territory will be enforced.” On his orders, the community opened a public bath. In September 1941, 2,092 Jews were reported to be living in Przygłów. As of that month, the hospital in Piotrków frequently refused to admit sick people from Przygłów due to overcrowding. The epidemic reached its height in January 1942, when the local JSS reported that “20 persons were dying weekly of hunger and typhus.” Judenrat members Kon and Goldblum succumbed to the disease. Another lawyer—Abram Chojnacki—replaced Kon as secretary.

The total number of typhus victims remains unknown, but in January 1942, the Judenrat was forced to open an orphanage, initially caring for 25 children under 16 years old. Housing conditions became even more desperate after fire razed buildings housing 75 families (i.e., approximately 200 people). The number of orphans had risen to 44 by mid-April 1942. These were children of refugees from Łódź, Łowicz, Głowno, and Skierniewice. Most of them were suffering from scabies and frostbite. A refugee high school teacher from Skierniewice, Zofia Rajchman, managed the orphanage.⁶

The date on which the Przygłów ghetto was established is unknown. In April 1942, in response to a standard questionnaire regarding ghettoization, the local JSS stated that there was no Jewish quarter. At that time, the community numbered 2,251 Jews. It is most likely that around this time the authorities recognized the combined Przygłów and Włodzimierzów communities as a ghetto. It was a common German practice to announce that entire villages with predominantly Jewish populations were to be treated as ghettos. The reappearance of typhus also may have played a role. Because many families lived scattered in woodland summer houses, the Przygłów ghetto was never enclosed by a fence. Nonetheless, Jews were forbidden to leave the limits of the two villages.⁷

Residents of the ghetto received significant help from Teodor Jasiński, a Pole in charge of the population register in the Łęczno community, of which Przygłów was a part. At the request of Głogowski and Judenrat members Guterman and Daniel-Józef Uffner, Jasiński provided dozens of fake Polish identification cards for ghetto inhabitants. The Judenrat filled in fictitious Polish-sounding names that helped recipients to leave the ghetto safely. Apart from Uffner, whom Jasiński also provided with documents, Jasiński never knew the original names of the recipients. According to Uffner, thanks to “dead souls,” Jasiński was also able to obtain and smuggle flour and other produce into the ghetto. He was also the only source of radio and underground press information for the ghettoized community. In 1942 Jasiński was arrested, imprisoned in Piotrków, and later sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁸

Although the typhus outbreak was contained in April 1942, 16 new cases appeared six weeks later, in June 1942.⁹ In July 1942, there were reportedly 1,945 Jews living in the ghetto.¹⁰ The ghetto was liquidated on October 13–20, 1942, when its residents were sent directly to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/570 [AJDC]; 211/798; 211/801-803; 211/837-839 [JSS]; 301/5826 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 30554).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/839 (Przygłów Włodzimierski), p. 29.
2. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 3, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/837 (Przygłów Włodzimierski), pp. 1–2; 211/839, p. 29; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/570 (Przygłów Włodzimierzów), pp. 1–3.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/798 (Piotrków Trybunalski), pp. 4, 16–20; and 211/837, pp. 6, 10, 14, 20.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/837, pp. 18, 20.
5. Ibid., p. 39; 211/838 (Przygłów Włodzimierski), pp. 8–9; 211/802 (Piotrków Trybunalski), pp. 34–35.
6. Ibid., 211/801 (Piotrków Trybunalski), pp. 14, 64; 211/837, pp. 23, 25, 27–28; 211/838, pp. 13, 15, 19, 25; and 211/839, pp. 1–2, 9–10, 12, 23–24, 29, 32.
7. Ibid., 211/802, p. 29; 211/839, p. 29.
8. AŻIH, 301/5826, testimony of Teodor Jasiński, n.d.; 301/5826, testimony of Andrzej Adrian, 1949; 301/5826, testimony of Józef Uffner, 1961.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/839, p. 51.
10. Ibid., 211/803 (Piotrków Trybunalski), p. 83.

PRZYSUCHA

Pre-1939: Przysucha (Yiddish: Pshischa), village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Przysucha is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) southeast of Łódź. There were 2,007 Jews living in Przysucha in 1939.

The Wehrmacht entered the town on September 8, 1939, and began a typical program of persecution, robbery, forced labor, and murder. Przysucha's male Jews were immediately conscripted for labor three days a week, mostly in road construction and extracting peat. People who had money paid the poor to work in their place; these people in turn were keen to work in order to receive some pay. Many Jews, especially the young, fled Przysucha at the start of the occupation; but they were soon replaced, primarily with refugees from Łódź, who began arriving in great numbers on December 15, 1939.¹

The German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to organize the conscription of forced laborers and communicate new laws and regulations to the community. The Judenrat chair changed several times. Archival sources confirm that Abram Rozenberg acted as the chairman in July 1940² and that Moszek Frydrych had succeeded him by February 1941.³ In April 1941, the Judenrat consisted of the following seven members: Frydrych (chairman), Berek Krajewski (deputy), Lejzor Zylbersztejn (secretary), Pejsach Kozłowski, Lejbus Majzels, Chil Wajngarten, and Dr. Dawid Krongold.

In February 1942, the *Gazeta Żydowska* continued to refer to Frydrych as the chairman.⁴

In May 1940, the Judenrat counted 1,200 impoverished Jews in Przysucha, with refugees constituting a substantial part of this group. To assist the impoverished, the Judenrat set up a self-help committee and financed the distribution of bread, flour, and some meat. This effort was eventually subsidized by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). Moszek Kunowski, Josek Finkelstein, Pinkus Kozłowski, and Moszek Przytycki distributed bread directly from bakeries in return for a signed receipt. Although helpful, this action was insufficient, and the Judenrat was concerned that a letter of complaint from “a few Łódź brawlers” had caused the AJDC to withhold its subsidies in April and May 1940.⁵

The number of refugees was constantly on the rise. By August 1940, there were approximately 2,500 Jews in town, including 437 newcomers, the majority from Łódź and Kraków.⁶

The soup kitchen opened by the self-help committee in December 1940 initially served 75 meals per day; the poorest were fed free of charge, while others paid 10 groszy.

By the end of 1940, a total of 120 patients were being treated for typhus. The only Jewish doctor in Przysucha, Dawid Krongold, attended the sick. When a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Przysucha in November 1941, Dr. Krongold became its chairman.⁷

In May 1941, there were 3,360 Jews living in Przysucha, including nearly 800 newcomers. By August 1941, there were approximately 1,000 displaced Jews in Przysucha, primarily from Płock, Mława, Mogielnica, and Przytyk. By the end of 1941, new arrivals numbered more than half of the town's pre-war Jewish population.⁸ In October 1941, 150 Jewish laborers were conscripted for road construction work.⁹

To combat the spread of disease, the Judenrat was ordered in September 1941 to set up an epidemic hospital in Przysucha. Before then, the sick had been transported to the hospital in Tomaszów Mazowiecki. The Przysucha hospital was opened in the former rabbi's court on October 1, 1941. Within two months, 145 patients had passed through it. Furnished with 30 beds in six rooms, the hospital was too small, as sick Jews from the vicinity were also directed there. A total of 350 people were treated for typhus by the end of 1941. Although the epidemic worsened in the first months of 1942 (130 sick), the death rate, mostly of the old and undernourished, remained low. (Doctor Krongold assessed it at 2 percent.) Exacerbating matters, 159 people were diagnosed with tuberculosis.¹⁰

Although the date of the creation of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) is unknown, the *Gazeta Żydowska* states that in February 1942 its members were collecting monthly levies imposed by the Judenrat. Funds from these collections were used in part to finance breakfasts for poor children organized by the Women's Committee set up in September 1941 under the direction of Lea Berneman. As the Judenrat's welfare funds were insufficient, the JSS saw to the opening of “a café,” where “the young and elderly gathered from time to time for social and consumption purposes.” Although the revenue from the café initially doubled the num-

ber of breakfasts, some local “Jewish elements” were determined to close it. To stop the harassment, Przysucha's JSS asked the headquarters in Kraków to legalize the café immediately “under any name.” By the end of April 1942, the café was closed. At this time, there were 3,812 Jews living in Przysucha.¹¹

Although some sources report the establishment of a ghetto in 1940, late 1941, or the beginning of 1942,¹² it appears not to have come into existence until much later, on August 15, 1942.¹³ The German authorities announced that Jews living on the outskirts of Przysucha were to move to the town center and settle on a few streets around the synagogue. The ghetto was later surrounded by barbed wire, with its two gates guarded by Polish and Jewish Police. One source indicates that the Gendarmerie in Opoczno was in charge of the Przysucha ghetto. There are also testimonies stating that the ghetto was split into two separate areas, with communication between them limited to designated hours.¹⁴

Correspondence from the Przysucha branch of the JSS shows that the movements of Przysucha's Jews were restricted by November 1941, as they were obliged to obtain “a permit for leaving the quarter's extent.”¹⁵ Those who were found outside the quarter (and later the ghetto)—often caught smuggling or in its streets after the 7:00 P.M. curfew—were shot on the spot. Some sources state that a total of 5,000 Jews passed through the ghetto during its existence.¹⁶

From the beginning of 1942, the prospect that many of the Jews in Przysucha would become employed in workshops served to keep up their hopes of survival. The Judenrat even created its own Craftsmen's Department run by the engineer Berneman and started to register craftsmen seeking jobs. Boasting approximately 200 knitters, Przysucha Jews had been the sole suppliers of woolen gloves to pre-war Łódź and were now ready to produce over 2,500 pairs weekly. If the workshops had been approved, an estimated 200 to 300 skilled workers and 400 helpers would have been employed.¹⁷

In April 1942, Gendarmes and Gestapo men from Tomaszów Mazowiecki shot 11 members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police. The number of dead and the date of the massacre differ depending on the source; some report that all victims were Judenrat members. An inhabitant of the nearby Drzewica ghetto claimed that the execution was in retaliation for a partisan attack. Some sources cite another mass murder of 19 or 30 Jews that presumably took place in August 1942. The total number of victims of the two executions is impossible to establish, as a German detachment destroyed evidence of the crime in 1944.

The liquidation of the Przysucha ghetto took place between October 27 and 31, 1942, when approximately 4,000 ghetto inhabitants were sent from the Opoczno train station to the Treblinka killing center. Approximately 100 Jews were killed during the liquidation Aktion. One survivor, Szymon Rozenberg, reports that 116 Jewish craftsmen and policemen remained in Przysucha. This group was subsequently sent to the Ujazd ghetto in December 1942. Adam Rutkowski estimates the number of Przysucha Jews who volunteered or were sent to Ujazd at around 300. At the beginning of January 1943,

the Ujazd ghetto was liquidated, and its inhabitants were sent to Treblinka.

A group of several dozen refugees from the Przysucha, Drzewica, and Opoczno ghettos joined the Communist Gwardia Ludowa (People's Guard, GL) "Wilk" partisan unit. They soon split off and set up a separate Jewish unit named GL "Lwy," which was commanded at first by Izrael Ajzenman (aka Julian Kaniewski "Julek") and then by a man with the alias "Siemion." The squad conducted several operations, including the destruction of documents from the local administrations in Nieznanowice and Petrykozy, as well as the disarmament of the Polish (Blue) Police precincts in Gowarczów and Rusinów. Post-1989 publications suggest that the unit killed seven members of the Polish far-right-wing underground in Drzewica on January 22, 1943.

SOURCES The following publications include information on the fate of Przysucha's Jewish population: Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 209–212; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 1036–1037; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 412.

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/572 [AJDC]; 211/842–44 [ŻSS]; 301/3132 and 5414 [Relacje]); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS Przysucha], reel 41; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC Przysucha]; RG-15.084M, # 3132 and # 5414 [Relacje]; and RG-15.019M [ASG Przysucha]); VHF (# 14949); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/844, p. 34; and VHF, # 14949.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/842, p. 1.
3. Ibid., 211/843, pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., pp. 14–15; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1942.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/842. Because of this dispute, the archives of the JSS contain numerous name lists with dozens of names; some names naturally repeat.
6. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC Przysucha), 210/572, p. 5.
7. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/843, pp. 14, 60; and 211/844, p. 15; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 7, 1941.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/843, pp. 5, 38–39; and 211/844, p. 34.
9. Ibid., 211/843.
10. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 8, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/843, pp. 44, 62, 65; and 211/844, pp. 15, 34.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/844; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1942.
12. VHF, # 14949; Dąbrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 209–212; Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1037.
13. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG Przysucha). This date is repeated by Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 412. In

April 1942, the JSS in Przysucha stated that there was no Jewish quarter in the town; see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/844, p. 34.

14. USHMM, RG-15.019M.

15. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/843, pp. 62–63.

16. Ibid., RG-15.019M; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 412.

17. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 27, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/844.

RADOM

Pre-1939: Radom, city, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Stadthauptmannschaft, center, Kreis Radom-Land and capital, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Radom is located in central Poland, approximately 100 kilometers (62 miles) southwest of Warsaw. In the months just before the German invasion, 85,112 people were residing in Radom, including 24,745 Jews (29 percent of the total population).

Units of the German army entered Radom on September 8, 1939. With the German occupation, the first anti-Jewish measures commenced, including the looting of Jewish shops and apartments, the beating and abuse of Jews, and the imposition of forced labor. During the months that followed, the antisemitic regulations imposed throughout the Generalgouvernement were also applied in Radom, as well as some specific local restrictions. For example, German officials in Radom introduced a complete ban on Jews using the city's main streets. Initially the Germans required a quota of around 100 Jewish forced laborers, rising to 1,200 by the summer of 1940. The laborers worked daily for a very low wage. Wealthier Jews were permitted to pay for substitutes, which in turn raised money to pay the laborers. In the spring of 1940, the German authorities began to transfer male Jews to labor camps established in the vicinity (in Chruslice, Kruszyna, Kacprowice, Wolanów, and other places), where they had to work in the



Entrance to the "large" ghetto in Radom, ca. 1942.
USHMM WS #08307, COURTESY OF MUZEUM OKRĘGOWE W RADOMIU

fields and on road construction. In August and September 1940, approximately 2,300 Jews were transferred to labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, including those in Bełżec, Narol, Cieszanów, and other places.¹ During the transfer, much of the Jews' property was confiscated. In addition, Jews were forced to make "contributions" of money, precious metal, bed sheets, sewing machines, furniture, and other items. The German occupation forces introduced many other discriminatory measures against the Jewish population, such as the arrest and imprisonment of numerous Jewish lawyers, physicians, and individuals who had been active in public life before the war. In so-called special *Aktions* (*Sonderaktionen*) Jewish activists in the Socialist and Communist movements were arrested and killed.²

In November 1939, a Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) was established, which exerted considerable influence over the lives of Radom's Jews. The Jewish Council of Radom had a special position—its administrative authority also extended over the Jews of neighboring towns and settlements. The official administrative title of the Radom Jewish Council was the Head of the Council of Elders of the Jewish population of the Radom District and Radom city (*Der Ober-Ältestenrat der Jüdischen Bevölkerung des Distrikts Radom und Radom*). The industrial entrepreneur Józef Diament was appointed Head of the Council by the German authorities. The Jewish Council consisted of 24 members, and its entire apparatus of numerous offices employed several hundred people. The activities of the Jewish Council were in conflict: on the one hand, it had to obey and implement all German demands and orders, including roundups and contributions imposed on the Jews; on the other hand, it was actively involved in organizing Jewish welfare.³

In December 1940, the German authorities resettled 1,840 Jews from the city of Radom to other towns in the region, including Koprzywnica. The Gestapo ordered that many elderly Jews and children were among those resettled. Plans for a further resettlement of 2,000 Jews in January 1941, however, were not implemented.⁴

On April 3, 1941, the head of the city administration (*Stadthauptmann*), Hans Kujath, ordered the establishment of two "Jewish residential areas" (*Judenwohnbezirke*) in Radom.⁵ The two Jewish residential areas were not located next to each

other but were in separate parts of town. The first ghetto, the so-called large ghetto or "midtown ghetto," was located in that part of Radom where Jewish residents had lived for centuries. Its main street was *Wałowa*, from which dozens of smaller and larger streets branched out, such as *Szpitalna*, *Żytnia*, *Bóznicza*, *Peretza*, and others. One of the main reasons for the establishment of two ghettos was the fact that the city center was filled with compact and concentrated building areas. The neighboring houses at the edge of the ghetto served as a natural "wall" or demarcation to mark the borderline of the Jewish area. An extra wall, such as was constructed for the Warsaw ghetto, was not necessary. Instead of a wall, the German authorities ordered the sealing with stone or concrete of the lower windows of the apartment buildings along the perimeter of the ghetto. The only entrance to the ghetto was located at the intersection between *Rwańska* and *Wałowa* Streets, and it was guarded by the Polish and Jewish Police. The second Jewish residential area, the so-called small ghetto, was established in the *Glinice* part of town, a working-class and underdeveloped part of Radom. It consisted mostly of single-story wooden houses that had very poor sanitary and living conditions. *Słowacki*, *Biała*, and *Wyścigowa* Streets formed the borders of the small ghetto. In spite of the fact that the ghetto area was to a large degree open, the German authorities erected only a barbed-wire fence in a few areas. The settlement of the Jews into both ghetto areas and the relocation of the Polish population out of them were conducted during April 1941.⁶ In 1941, the occupation authorities issued strict orders threatening the ghetto residents with the death penalty for leaving the ghetto area. As Mania Salinger recalled, "[I]t was announced through a loudspeaker and on posted notices that anyone leaving [the ghetto] without permission would be killed instantly."⁷ According to the available documentation, a total of some 25,700 people were residing in the two ghettos once they had been established. Among the residents were also some refugees from *Łódź*, who had arrived in Radom during the first months of the German occupation. There were also a number of illegal refugees from Distrikt Lublin, Warsaw, and Płock, who had decided that the Radom ghetto offered more security than their former places of residence. In the spring of 1942, the German authorities transferred Jews from the neighboring villages to Radom and some smaller groups of Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) as well. It can be estimated that at the start of "Aktion Reinhard," approximately 33,000 people were residing in the two ghettos in Radom.⁸

Living conditions in the two ghettos worsened month by month. Ration cards were issued to the Jews, but food distribution remained uneven. At the time of the establishment of the ghetto, a Jewish police force, under the command of Joachim Gajger, the head of the Labor Department, was set up. Subordinated to the *Judenrat*, it consisted of 150 policemen, 100 of them on duty in the midtown ghetto, the other 50 in *Glinice*. The Jewish Police wore dark blue armbands bearing red stripes, the Star of David, and the inscription "Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst." They were not armed but carried rubber



Jewish men and women in Radom line up to register with the German authorities, 1940.

USHMM WS #05853, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

clubs. The members of the Jewish Council, the Jewish Police, and their families had a reputation for corruption, as they were known to enjoy a better standard of living than most other Jews. Some ghetto residents made a living by trading illegally with “Aryan” partners in Radom, and a few made large profits.⁹ However, the majority of the Jewish population fell steadily deeper into poverty and misery. The lack of food (food prices rose continuously and rapidly) and the overcrowded housing conditions increased the spread of infectious diseases, especially typhus and intestinal diseases. In the third quarter of 1941, 440 cases of typhus were reported in the city of Radom.¹⁰ Hygienic conditions in both ghettos became untenable. In November 1941, the Germans posted signs around the ghetto, warning of the danger of disease and threatening that Jews from other areas who entered the ghetto would be punished by death. Those Jews used for forced labor faced the worst conditions—the male workers spent 10 hours a day unloading coal, and they received as payment no more than a slice of bread and sometimes nothing at all.¹¹

At the beginning of 1942, an estimated 4,000 Jews in the Radom ghettos were living in extreme poverty, with no source of income. The only support these people received came from the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), which was administered by Abram Salbe and the physician Dr. Ludwik Fastman (Fasman). This organization was given full responsibility for the welfare of ghetto residents by the Jewish Council. The JSS established three public kitchens, and these provided daily a total of 2,700 free or very inexpensive luncheons (a bowl of soup and a slice of bread). It also opened three community centers that served as kindergartens for some 400 children. In addition, under the supervision of the JSS, two hospitals (one for regular patients and one for quarantine patients), two foster homes for children, and a nursing home were established. The organization also was in charge of workshops in which shoes were repaired without any payment for the needy. It provided the poorest Jews with some meager financial support and infants with milk. The JSS registered every piece of land within the ghettos (including grassland) and organized them for agricultural use under the supervision of farmers. Special attention was given to the children, to give them the opportunities to play, sing, and be involved in outdoor activities that helped them to forget the horrors of war, at least for a few moments.¹² The members of the JSS actively supported all efforts to establish cultural activities in the ghettos and to keep hopes for the future alive. They organized classes in agricultural, mechanical, metalwork, and tailoring skills, because most ghetto inmates were convinced that basic professional skills would save them from deportation. They tried to encourage ghetto residents to read books and become active in public life. The Radom ghettos had their own orchestra, a choir, and a quartet of male singers. In December 1942, the theater show “*Aby dalej . . .*” (*To Carry on . . .*) was performed—it was a parody of the Radom ghetto Jewish Council. Later, another play, “*Glinice*”, was performed.¹³

Daily life in the enclosed ghettos was characterized by an atmosphere of permanent terror inflicted by the German

occupiers. For instance, waves of arrests were carried out, against all pre-war political activists, all the kosher butchers in the city (to deny the Jews access to kosher meat), and among former representatives of public life.¹⁴ Between April 1941 and August 1942, approximately 700 Jews were arrested in Radom for a variety of reasons. These people were shot or deported to concentration camps. The largest such Aktion took place on April 27–28, 1942, under the direction of SS-Hauptsturmführer Paul Fuchs of the Radom Gestapo. This was part of a centrally coordinated wave of arrests against alleged Jewish Communists and members of the intelligentsia throughout Distrikt Radom. In the city, 70 Jews were arrested, and another 100 were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp, including Józef Diamant, Joachim Gajger, and about 20 officers of the Jewish Police. After this Aktion, the German authorities ordered that Dr. Fastman become the head of the Jewish Council.¹⁵

The liquidation of both ghettos in Radom marked the start of “Aktion Reinhard” in Distrikt Radom. On the evening of August 4, 1942, the small ghetto was surrounded by heavily armed German police and a unit of Polish (Blue) Police. Then several large military searchlights were installed along the ghetto perimeter. A short time later, Polish policemen sealed the ghetto borders to prevent any attempts at escape. The German police prepared to enter the ghetto area. At 10:00 P.M., the floodlights were switched on, and the German SS, together with the Polish police, started to drive the Jews from their houses. They forced the Jews to gather at two locations. During this Aktion, several dozen Jews were shot, mostly elderly people and children. At the collection points, a selection was carried out. As a result, 1,000 young men and women were selected. These people were laborers working in factories for the needs of the Reich. The remaining ghetto residents, an estimated 8,000 people, were herded into columns and marched to the railroad station, where a train with some six to eight dozen railcars was awaiting them. After loading the wagons, it became clear that the number of Jews rounded up from the small ghetto was insufficient, as some wagons were still empty. Therefore, the German police went to the large ghetto on August 5, and at 5:00 A.M., they continued the selection among the Jews there. Using prepared lists, the police drove approximately 2,000 people out of their houses and marched them to the railroad station. After a short time, the train departed for the extermination camp at Treblinka.¹⁶

On the evening of August 17, 1942, the Germans commenced the liquidation of the large ghetto in Radom, in which about 25,000 Jews were then residing. This Aktion was supervised by the assistant to SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Herbert Böttcher in Radom, SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Blum. In an effort to avoid panic and resistance among the Jews, the German authorities falsely spread word among the Jewish Police and the Jewish workers in some factories that there would not be any deportations. The ghetto liquidation Aktion was carried out as on the first occasion: exactly at midnight, after the floodlights were switched on, the German police, Ukrainian collaborators, and members of the Jewish Police

began to chase the Jews out of their houses. The Jews were gathered at preselected locations. This roundup lasted until early the next morning, and approximately 10,000 people were herded to a train waiting on a siding. During the Aktion, many Jews were killed, including the patients of both ghetto hospitals and the inmates of the nursing homes in the large ghetto.

On August 18, 1942, the ghetto was quiet. Its remaining residents were waiting for the second phase of the Aktion. In the afternoon, the Jewish Police announced that the second phase would start at midnight. At the same time, part of the German security forces went to the courtyards of the houses and assured the Jews that those people able to work need not have anything to fear. It was known that the Jewish Police ordered their family members to go to the collection point voluntarily, to increase their chances of remaining in Radom. As a result of these efforts, most of the Jews gathered at the Stare Miasto Square by 11:00 P.M. At midnight, the floodlights were switched on again, and the German police launched the next Aktion. Approximately 3,000 men and women were selected and taken to several buildings on Szwarlikowska Street. Approximately 200 elderly, handicapped, and sick people were assembled and told that they would be transported in cars out of Radom (in fact, they were shot shortly afterwards). Hundreds of others were killed on the streets during the roundup. All the remaining Jews (around 10,000 people) were marched to the railroad station and loaded into train cars, which departed for Treblinka.¹⁷

After the Aktion, the 3,000 or so Jews capable of work (including more than 700 women), who were kept in Radom, were soon joined by hundreds of others who emerged from hiding in and around the city. Some of these people continued to work in the factories, while others had to bury the corpses of the Jews murdered locally and salvage property from the empty houses in the ghettos. In the fall of 1942, the two remnant ghettos in Radom were converted into forced labor camps—one on Szwarlikowska Street and one on Szkolna Street. Jews from the Szwarlikowska Street camp conducted various tasks such as sorting property collected from other liquidated ghettos in Distrikt Radom, digging peat, cleaning houses, and breaking up Jewish tombstones for use in road construction. A small Jewish resistance group was organized in Radom in the fall of 1942, and some Jews escaped into the countryside. It seems, however, that many of the escapees were caught and killed by German patrols, and some were even forced to return to the Radom camps.

On December 4, 1942, 800 Jews were transferred from Radom to the official remnant ghetto in Szydłowiec. In January 1943, 1,500 Jews from the Szwarlikowska Street camp were deported to Treblinka. Some Jews were also transferred subsequently to other forced labor camps in the vicinity, including the camps in Wolanów and Bliżyn. The Szwarlikowska Street camp was liquidated in November 1943, when more than 100 women, children, and elderly Jews were shot.¹⁸ The remaining inmates were then transferred to other camps, including Płaszów, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, and the labor camp

for Jews on Szkolna Street. After mid-January 1944, the factory camp at Szkolna Street became a subcamp of the Majdanek concentration camp (KL Lublin-Majdanek). It was liquidated on July 26, 1944, when the remaining prisoners were transferred west towards Łódź and presumably to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

SOURCES Two yizkor books record the history and fate of Radom Jewry: Icchak Perlow, ed., *Sefer Radom* (Tel Aviv, 1961); and Alfred Lipson, ed., *A Memory Book of Radom: The Story of a Jewish Community in Poland Destroyed by the Nazis* (New York, 1963). There is also a detailed account of the Holocaust period in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 538–543. In Polish there is an account by the author of this article, Sebastian Piątkowski, *Dni życia, dni śmierci: Ludność żydowska w Radomiu w latach 1918–1950* (Warsaw, 2006), which includes a more extensive bibliography of relevant publications on this topic.

Published memoirs concerning the Radom ghettos include the following: Jacob Gutman, *A Survivor's Memoir* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights, 1999); Mania Salinger, *Looking Back* (Northville, MI: Ferne Press, 2006); and Joseph Horn, *Mark It with a Stone* (New York: Barricade Books, 2008). On the labor camps that succeeded the ghetto in Radom, see Sebastian Piątkowski, "Obóz pracy przy ul. Szkolnej w Radomiu (1942–1944)," *Zeszyty Majdanka* 19 (1998): 41–44; and the entry by Evelyn Zegenhagen, "Radom [aka Radom (Szkolna Street)]," in Geoffrey Megargee, ed., *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945*, vol. 1, *Early Camps, Youth Camps, and Concentration Camps and Subcamps under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), pp. 892–893.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR (GDR 956; ZP 277); AŻIH (301/28, 56, 58, 59, 2559, 4501; 302/25; 210/237; 211/428–430); BA-L (e.g., B 162/4873, 14521); IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-50.120*0162; RG-50.407*36); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/828, 1825, 2717).

Sebastian Piątkowski
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Jan Franecki, "Powiat radomski w latach wojny i okupacji," *Biuletyn Kwartalny Radomskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 13 (1–20) (1976): 118; Sebastian Piątkowski, "Deportacje Żydów z dystryktu radomskiego do obozów pracy przymusowej na Lubelszczyźnie w 1940 roku," *Almanach Historyczny* 1 (1999): 188–189.

2. AŻIH, 301/56; 301/59; APR, GDR 956.

3. AŻIH, 302/25; Lipson, *A Memory Book of Radom*, p. 43; Sebastian Piątkowski, "Organizacja i działalność Naczelnej Rady Starszych Ludności Żydowskiej dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942)," *BŻIH*, no. 3 (2000): 31–38.

4. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 538–541.

5. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 38 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), Lfd. Nr. 786a, p. 213.

6. APR, ZP 277; *Dziennik Radomski*, nos. 80 and 82 (1941).

7. Salinger, *Looking Back*, p. 53.
8. AŻIH, 301/56; 301/59.
9. Ibid., 301/28; 301/58; 301/59.
10. Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, eds., *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1975), p. 433.
11. AŻIH, 301/28.
12. Ibid., JSS, 211/428–430; AJDC, 210/237; YVA, O-3/2717; O-3/828; Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, pp. 210–212.
13. AŻIH, 301/56; JSS, 211/430.
14. Horn, *Mark It with a Stone*, p. 52.
15. BA-L, B 162/14521, Verdict of LG-Darm, December 7, 1972, pp. 31–32.
16. YVA, O-3/1825; AŻIH, 301/2559; 301/4501; Horn, *Mark It with a Stone*, p. 61.
17. YVA, O-3/1805; AŻIH, 301/56; 301/4501.
18. BA-L, B 162/4873, p. 567.

RADOMSKO

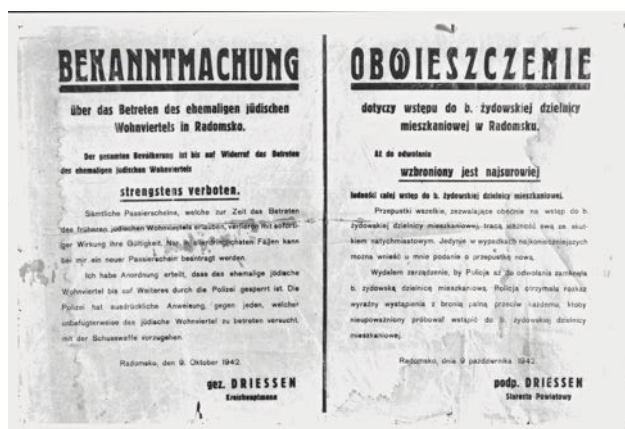
Pre-1939: Radomsko, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: center, Kreis Radomsko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Radomsko is located 134 kilometers (83 miles) east-southeast of Radom. There were 6,500 Jews living in Radomsko prior to the outbreak of World War II. Over 100 bombs fell on Radomsko's Jewish neighborhood in air raids on September 2 and 3, 1939, obliterating some streets completely and leaving 1,300 Jews homeless and over 100 dead. After gaining control of the town, the Germans put Radomsko's Jews to work clearing the rubble.¹

A ghetto was set up in December 1939. The ghetto's establishment in Radomsko was largely due to pressure from the large ethnic German (*Volksdeutsche*) population in the town, which demanded the "Aryanization" of Jewish businesses. On November 25, 1939, the Radomsko Kreishauptmann Kobelt informed his superiors that, in response to Volksdeutsche demands, he had excluded Jews from trade entirely. Adolf Halama was reportedly the main commissar in charge of seizing Polish and Jewish property, including accounts held in Radomsko's banks. Another reason for the ghetto's creation was the severe housing shortage, resulting from the air raids and the influx of refugees seeking shelter in Radomsko.

The ghetto's establishment was not announced in advance. When it was determined to create the ghetto, two thirds of Radomsko's Jews—those living outside the ghetto's delineated borders—were given only 20 minutes to move into the ghetto, while the Germans and local Volksdeutsche looted their belongings left behind. Poles living within the ghetto were reportedly allowed to stay. There is no information on guards or how the ghetto was physically enclosed, but its population of 7,000 Jews was restricted to its borders. The Polish police force was disbanded, and a newly created Selbstschutz (Auxiliary Police) composed of Volksdeutsche took over its duties.²

The ghetto was set up along one of the town's main streets, Radom (later Przedbórz), and small streets leading off it, in-



Announcement in German and Polish prohibiting unauthorized entry into the former Jewish residential district in Radomsko, October 9, 1942. From the German, the text reads:

"ANNOUNCEMENT about entry into the former Jewish residential district in Radomsko.

Until further notice the entire population is strictly forbidden entry into the former Jewish residential district.

All passes permitting the bearer to enter the former Jewish residential district are henceforth invalid. Only in very urgent cases will anyone be allowed to submit to me an application for a pass.

I have issued the order that the former Jewish residential district be closed until further notice by the police. The police have explicit instructions to shoot anyone who attempts unauthorized entry into the Jewish residential district.

Radomsko, 9 October 1942

Signed DRIESSEN

Kreishauptmann"

USHMM WS #33495, COURTESY OF GFH

cluding Fabianiego, Stodolna, Wąwózowa, Rolna, Szpitalna (later Wyszyński), Joselewicz, and Mickiewicz. According to the Jewish Council (Judenrat), there were 10 Jews living in each room. These unsanitary living conditions led to a typhus epidemic. In response, the Jewish community opened a hospital.

Tradesman Moses Berger chaired the first Judenrat located at 5 Mickiewicz Street. Reorganized in May 1941, it was then run by Wiktor Gutstadt and included two deputies, Józef Pański and Samuel Spiro (Szpiro; a pre-war community leader), Jasek Berger (treasurer), Izaak Wygodzki, and Dr. Henryk Różewicz (in charge of health affairs). Its main function was Jewish labor conscription. As it enlisted only the poor and refugees, a crowd of Jewish laborers one day burst into the Judenrat's headquarters, demolishing the offices and driving out its members. The Judenrat called for the Gestapo's help, resulting in a three-day pogrom and looting of the ghetto.³

To better organize conscripted labor, the German authorities divided Jews into three categories: free professionals (as well as the Judenrat members) had to wear pink patches on their clothes, signifying the need to perform forced labor only when necessary; red patches, for those working three days per week; and yellow, for those laboring six days per week. At the beginning of July 1940, the Judenrat sent 400 Jews to perform drainage work in Przyrów (Kreis Radomsko). They returned

in January 1941, as did some of the laborers sent to camps in Distrikt Lublin. Out of several hundred youths sent from Radomsko and its vicinity to Maków Podhalański, 200 returned in October 1940. The Judenrat provided small benefits for the families of forced laborers, part of which was provided by those Jews unwilling to work.

The Judenrat opened a soup kitchen in June 1940 and had 3,000 applications for support by November of that year. In January 1941, there were 7,500 Jews residing in the ghetto. The 230 refugees from Łódź, Płock, and Ozorków were subsequently moved from the synagogue to a barracks, while another 120 lived with local families.

The number of Jews in the ghetto remained fairly stable throughout its existence; for example, July 1941 statistics reported 7,195 residents. Another 9,000 Jews lived in the 17 communities within Kreis Radomsko. The Radomsko Judenrat presided over all the other Jewish Councils in the Kreis.

A Jewish arbitration panel composed of 14 mediators representing all religious orientations was established to resolve conflicts among the Radomsko Jews. The Jewish Police was charged with traffic regulation and curfew supervision. The ghetto had its own post office, postmen, and clerks. There was also an epidemic hospital attended by three Jewish doctors. This hospital served all the Jews of the Kreis and provided an ambulatory clinic and a pharmacy. Despite the dire conditions, the death rate reported by the Judenrat for June 1941 stood at only 0.05 percent. The soup kitchen served 1,500 meals daily.

Some 300 or 400 Jews laboring in the so-called Work Battalion in Radomsko proper cleared rubble, performed leveling tasks, and maintained parks and squares in the summer of 1941. Three days of labor were paid at the rate of 9 to 12 złoty and 2 to 4 kilograms (4.4 to 8.8 pounds) of bread, while the other three days of the week remained unpaid. A number of workers labored in Dęblin, Garnek, and Topisz, all in the vicinity of Radomsko. By the end of September 1941, the Garnek laborers had been transferred to Topisz. A total of 140 Radomsko Jews labored there. In December 1941, 25 Jews were sent to Rudniki (near Częstochowa) to labor in lime production, and they stayed there at least until July 1942. The area of the ghetto was reportedly reduced in the autumn of 1941.

Various workshops operated in the ghetto. For example, a carpentry workshop producing beds employed approximately 100 Jews in September 1941. Craftsmen were ordered to register with the office of the Kreis Judenrat, for permission to keep their workshops open. Two fires broke out in the Mundus-Thonet furniture factory in November 1941. As a result, 180 of the factory laborers—including 35 Jews—were arrested for alleged arson and held in the Radomsko prison (set up in 1940). Some of the Jews were shot on the edge of town, as were some others after being sent to Częstochowa; the Germans deported the remainder to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

In December 1941, the German authorities intensified regulations governing the ghetto's sanitation and living conditions. Food rations were only to be issued upon the presentation of a doctor's certificate confirming vaccination, bathing, and delousing. Each building had to have a sanitation warden reporting any signs of sickness or unsanitary conditions. Inhabitation of the ghetto by nonghetto residents was strictly forbidden. Newcomers required special permission from the municipality, and later from the Kreishauptmann, prior to moving into the ghetto. Changes of address within the ghetto had to be reported within 24 hours. Noncompliance was punished with a 2,000 złoty fine and/or four weeks of arrest.

From the beginning of 1942, Jews were shot for leaving the ghetto; there were a few casualties. In March 1942, those who had moved in after June 1, 1941, were to report to the Jewish Police to obtain permission to "prolong their stay and start legalizing their residency." In April 1942, there were 220 refugees in the ghetto.⁴

From February 1942, a day-care room and additional food were provided to 400 to 600 ghetto children. An orphanage for 28 children, comprising two bedrooms and a playroom, opened in April 1942. The same month, Jews aged 3 to 70 were issued with special "sanitary IDs [identifications]" based on their forced labor assignments. The Work Battalion laborers had to bathe every 8 days. For example, 60 Jews sent in May 1942 to perform drainage work in Gidle returned to the ghetto every Sunday to bathe and be disinfected. Holders of green IDs were exempted from labor and forced to bathe only every 14 days. As of February, the renovated public bath could bathe and delouse a person in 25 minutes. A 12-man Sanitary Column of the Jewish Police was established shortly afterwards.⁵

In August 1942, the remaining non-Jewish population was forced out of the ghetto, and its area was again reduced. Poles were told that their expulsion would be only temporary. With their departure, the Germans began to concentrate in the Radomsko ghetto Jews from several localities in the Kreis, including Gomuńce (500 people), Mstów (600), and Kłomnice. The deadline for completing this transfer was September 28, 1942.

The liquidation of the Radomsko ghetto started on October 9, 1942, and 5,000 local Jews, along with 3,000 Jews from the liquidated Przedbórz ghetto (33 kilometers [20.5 miles] away) in Kreis Konskie, were sent the following day to the Treblinka extermination camp. Several dozen elderly and sick Jews were selected and shot at the cemetery prior to departure. A number of Jews who were discovered in hiding or who refused to leave were also shot.

The remaining 9,000 Jews in Radomsko were held in and around the synagogue and deported to Treblinka on October 12, 1942. Then 150 Jews, composed of Judenrat members and craftsmen, were left to clear out the ghetto. The remnant ghetto attracted some Jews who emerged from their hiding places. When discovered, they were imprisoned and then shot by the Germans; very few were attached to the clean-up Kommando.

On October 29, 170 men and women were sent to the labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna, while 150 remained in the ghetto.

As large numbers of Jews had managed to evade the deportations throughout the region, on November 10, 1942, Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Krüger ordered the establishment of four remnant “Jewish residential areas” (*Judenwohnbezirke*) in Distrikt Radom, where Jews were free to gather with the promise they would remain unmolested. Radomsko was one of these four ghettos, attracting over 4,000 Jews, but now under strict guard.⁶

On January 6, 1943, the ghetto was surrounded, and its Jews were sent to Treblinka in cattle cars, after being stripped of most of their clothes; 320 were shot at the cemetery. The next day, 250 were sent to Skarżysko. Only about 40 craftsmen were left to complete construction of the Gendarmerie building. A few months later they were dispatched to the Pionki labor camp. About 1,200 Jews who were caught during and just after the last deportation were shot in mass executions at the Jewish cemetery on January 12 and 13, 1943.⁷

SOURCES The Radomsko ghetto is discussed in the following publications: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 80–81, 88, 118–119, 127–128, 143–144 (table 5); and Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 124–125.

The following archival sources were used to write this entry: AŻIH (210/583, 211/869, 301/31, 301/1697, 301/2090, 301/2429, 301/2813); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 42; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2813, testimony of Eliaż Markowicz, 1947; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 42, 211/869 (Radomsko), pp. 2, 6.

2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 42, 211/869, pp. 2, 6–8; AŻIH, 301/2429, testimony of Uszer Grossman, 1947; 301/31, testimony of Chemia Zylbersztajn, n.d.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 42, 211/869, pp. 1–2, 6–8, 17; *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 10, November 9, and November 12, 1941.

4. AŻIH, 301/31; *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 12, 1941, and January 14, March 26, 1942.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 1, 13, April 5, 22, and May 6, 1942.

6. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

7. AŻIH, 301/2090, testimony of Moszek Pantofel, 1947; 301/1697, testimony of Maria Widawska, n.d.; 301/2813; Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” pp. 101, 118–119, 143–144 (table 5); *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Wojewódz-*

two piotrkowskie (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), p. 91. See also Y. Lador, ed., *Kehilat Zarki; ayyarah be-bayeha u-ve-khilyonah* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Zarki in Israel, 1959), pp. 265–267.

RADOSZYCE

Pre-1939: Radoszyce, village and powiat center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Konskie, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village of Radoszyce is in southeast Poland, approximately 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Kielce. There were 3,200 Jews living in the village on the eve of war in 1939. At the start of the September Campaign, the Luftwaffe bombed the village, burning much of it and causing most Jews to flee. On entering the village, the Germans took hostage 10 prominent Jews and Poles. They threatened to execute them, should any of the locals harm a German. All were released after two days.

At some date prior to June 1940, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Mordka Rutkowski as its president and Lejbus Tenenbaum serving as his deputy until April 1941.¹ There was also a small German Gendarmerie unit stationed in Radoszyce.

Jews from Radoszyce worked mainly as forest workers or craftsmen and on public works.² A number of Radoszyce laborers were sent to the Zagacie camp to drain the land along the Czarna River. They were released from the camp on November 13, 1940. In that same month, 200 Jewish workers were sent from Radoszyce to Distrikt Lublin.³

The influx of refugees and deportees into Radoszyce added to the general impoverishment of the Jews. Between November 1940 and June 1941, the number of Jews increased to 2,200. Approximately 700 of them were refugees, mainly from the Warthegau region (part of Poland incorporated into the German Reich) and the Warsaw województwo. Later in 1941, Radoszyce's Jews numbered 2,400.⁴ In addition, four small Jewish settlements in the vicinity of Radoszyce were subordinated administratively to the Jewish community in Radoszyce: Pijanów (with a Jewish population of 250), Ruda Maleniecka (250), Miedzierza (20), and Grodzisko (110).

A special committee was organized by the Judenrat to assist the refugees. A small hospital was established with one Jewish attendant. A soup kitchen was opened; however, due to lack of funds, it could only provide dinners periodically. Prior to closure in April 1940, it served 450 meals daily. When it reopened in July, it was able to provide meals to only half of the village's 300 refugee families.⁵

To deal with the influx of refugees and deportees, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, based in Kraków, was established in Radoszyce. The Kreis committee, with its headquarters in Końskie, was established on September 26, 1940, with Josef Kinderlerer as its chairman. A local office was soon set up in Radoszyce, whose five members had

to be approved by the Germans. The president of the Radoszyce JSS branch was Mordka Montag. Most of the social relief was organized by the JSS and financed from Kraków via the Końskie committee. Subsequently the work of the JSS was hindered by accusations of corruption, embezzlement of public funds, and political infighting.⁶

In the winter of 1940–1941, the Judenrat, in cooperation with the JSS, collected warm clothing for the refugees and local poor. The soup kitchen was able to provide 400 people with a warm meal daily. Bread was distributed once a week. Once a month, the Radoszyce Jews also received rations of sugar, paraffin oil, soap, and medicine. In addition, each Jew in Kreis Konskie was to receive 200 kilograms (441 pounds) of potatoes for the upcoming winter; in the end, only some of the purchased potatoes were actually delivered. After a typhus epidemic broke out in February 1941, the Radoszyce Jews received slightly more than their share—approximately 30 percent of those potatoes actually delivered.⁷

In the face of ominous threats from the German authorities, the Jewish Council took measures to contain the typhus epidemic. A special medical committee was established, and the JSS committee in Końskie promised financial help to meet the conditions that the Germans demanded. These included the enlargement of the existing hospital from one to three rooms, the establishment of an isolation ward, and the reopening of the existing baths for use six days a week. After the Radoszyce Judenrat carried out these measures, the epidemic was contained after seven Jews had died.

The governor of Distrikt Radom, Karl Lasch, ordered the establishment of a number of ghettos in the Distrikt by April 5, 1941. According to the records of the JSS, however, by the end of May, no ghetto had been established in Radoszyce, and living conditions in the village were described as bearable.⁸ However, it is almost certain that the ghetto was informally established by the gradual relocation of Jews over an extended period of time. In any case, the ghetto had been fully established by December 10, 1941, at the latest, when Konskie's Kreishauptmann announced that all villages in his Kreis with Jewish populations were automatically recognized as ghettos. He also announced that the death penalty would be applied to any Jews caught outside the ghetto. Several Jews were shot for disobeying this order.⁹ The ghetto was not fenced. Those who lived among Poles had to move to the Jewish part of the village with all of their belongings.¹⁰ In 1941, there were about 2,400 Jews in the Radoszyce ghetto, but only 529 of them were locals.

On January 11, 1942, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was created at the request of the German authorities. Its main task was to keep order in the ghetto. The president of the Judenrat, Mordka Rutkowski, appointed Lejbus Tenenbaum as the head of the eight-man Jewish Police. Also at this time, the Union of Craftsmen in Radoszyce registered 100 Jewish craftsmen, including tailors, cobblers, haberdashers, carpenters, tinsmiths, bakers, and hairdressers, who were provided with raw materials in order to start production.¹¹

In the spring and summer of 1942, many Jewish conscripts or volunteers were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp, where they worked in the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory.

During the same period, the Germans moved Jews from neighboring settlements into Radoszyce. In April, approximately 200 Jews were transferred from Mnin, another 200 from Nieborów, and approximately 400 from Stąporków. A number of Jews were also moved from Pijanów, Ruda Maleńicka, and Duraczów. In August 1942, approximately 100 Jews were transferred from Miedziera. This relocation of the region's Jews to Radoszyce marked the beginning of the end for Jewish settlement in the area. With this concentration, the number of ghetto residents rose from 2,400 at the end of 1941 to around 4,000 just a few months before the ghetto's liquidation in November 1942.

Deportations of Jews from Distrikt Radom commenced at the beginning of August 1942; however, the Jews in Kreis Konskie were the last to be deported, at the beginning of November. On November 3, 1942, all 4,000 Jews concentrated in Radoszyce were escorted to the train station in Końskie. This was also the first day of the deportation from the Końskie ghetto, on which 6,000 of its 9,000 inhabitants were sent together with the Radoszyce Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹² Another source reports that the Radoszyce Jews were held for a few days in Końskie, and then, on November 11, they were transported to Treblinka along with the Jews of Końskie. During the Aktion in Końskie, the German police shot almost 600 Jews.

In March 1943, during the intense hunt for fugitives from the ghettos and those who had gone into hiding, the Germans murdered a number of Jews in Radoszyce. On September 29, 1944, SS forces and Gendarmes from Radoszyce shot 20 people, including both Poles and Jews. Their bodies were buried at the local cemetery. There were instances when Poles helped Jews and instances when local Poles murdered Jews in and around Radoszyce.¹³ On September 3, 1944, SS troops destroyed parts of Radoszyce in reprisal for an attack by the Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK) partisans. The part of the village where the ghetto had stood was razed to the ground.¹⁴

SOURCES There is no single publication specifically on the Jewish community of Radoszyce. Most of the information on which this article is based can be found in the following publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 75–182; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 256–257.

Information on the persecution of the Jews of Radoszyce and the history of the ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/159 and 879 [JSS]; 210/588 [AJDC]);

IPN (ASG); USHMM (1997.A.0124 [JSS]; and RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]); VHF (# 30970); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/681).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reels 29 and 43.
2. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 15.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 22, 1940; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
5. Ibid., reel 43.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29; see also VHF, # 30970, testimony of Maria Frocht, 1997.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 22, 1940; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 29.
9. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 15.
10. VHF, # 30970.
11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 11, 1942.
12. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 15.
13. VHF, # 30970.
14. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 15.

RAKÓW

Pre-1939: Raków, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Rakow, Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Raków, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Raków is located 39 kilometers (24 miles) southeast of Kielce. When the Germans entered Raków in September 1939, there were about 1,000 Jews living there. There was no Gendarmerie post stationed in the village, and for some time the German authorities left the Jews mostly undisturbed, only forcing them occasionally to pay “contributions.”

The Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to mediate between themselves and the Jewish community, appointing Henryk (Chaim) Zielony as its chairman.¹ They also chose Zielony as commandant of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) of about six or eight men, which had to assist the Judenrat in implementing German orders. The control of both these offices by one individual was somewhat unusual in occupied Poland. Jewish policemen were responsible for collecting monetary contributions and taxes and for rounding people up for forced labor. The opinions of survivors differ regarding the behavior of the Jewish Police, but some Jews felt that they were too eager to carry out German instructions. Very little is known about the extent to which the Jews of Raków were subjected to forced labor, although it is known that some worked clearing snow from the streets in the winter.

At the end of February 1941, a group of 400 Jews was transferred to Chmielnik from Płock and Bodzanów. These deportees had passed through the feared transfer camp at Działdowo (Soldau). Most of them arrived exhausted, brutally beaten, and without any luggage. A few days later, about 80 of them were

sent on from Chmielnik in horse wagons to Raków.² In March 1941, 108 Jews from Vienna were transferred to Raków. There were also deportees from Radom, Warsaw, Wieluń, and other places who had fled or were resettled to Raków. With the arrival of refugees and deportees, living conditions and sanitation in the village worsened. Often, three families were crowded into one room, where several people had to share a bunk bed.³

The Judenrat created a self-help committee and opened a soup kitchen, an ambulatory medical service, and an isolation ward, immediately following the deportees’ arrival. The kitchen distributed 250 meals daily. To help cope with the influx of deportees and refugees, a local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), headquartered in Kraków, was formally established in June 1941, following the creation of the Kreis committee in Opatów. Zielony was also nominated as chairman of the JSS branch. Bernard Wajnsztok acted as his deputy.

Several secondary sources indicate that an open ghetto was established in Raków in early 1940. This impression probably stems from a misreading of the account published by Mark Turkov, which states only that generally in Poland the Jewish Police was formed at the same time as the first ghettos at the start of 1940. He then states that “in Raków, no physical ghetto was ever set up.” Only on the streets leaving the shtetl were large signs put up warning that Jews were forbidden to leave the village on pain of death.⁴ This measure was probably taken in the fall of 1941, when the death penalty was introduced in the Generalgouvernement for all Jews who left their designated residential areas. Therefore, by November 1941, Raków had become a de facto “open ghetto” for the Jews living there.

The Jews lived in the poorer section near the center of the village. Fresh water had to be drawn from the nearby river. Since the open ghetto was not strictly guarded, Jews could still leave Raków and barter their remaining possessions for food with local farmers. They continued to do this even after the Germans imposed the death penalty for Jews caught leaving their residential area.⁵ On one occasion, however, a brutal Gendarme named Max caught the Jewish merchant Abish Langern outside the village. The Gendarme then tied Langern to a horse and cart and dragged him behind it until he was dead. Leaving the body at the edge of the village, Max then instructed the Judenrat to dispose of it. He also shot two Jewish youths from Raków he caught on the way to Łagów.

In April 1942, when there were 1,700 Jews living in Raków, the JSS committee assessed 400 of them as being extremely impoverished. Although the public kitchen was still open, Raków was not receiving any subsidies or medicine. Raków’s JSS appealed to the headquarters in Kraków but was informed that the Kreis committee in Opatów was responsible for allocating local resources. Two doctors—one Jewish and one Polish—were examining about 20 patients a day with barely any remuneration. The JSS was also trying to open a small hospital with at least 10 beds but was unable to obtain money to finance it. In May 1942, the JSS started an initiative to employ as many of Raków’s Jews as possible in agricultural work. Plans were made to solicit employment requests from the

owners of nearby estates, to obtain labor assignments for those capable of working.

In May 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów ordered the concentration of all Jews in the Kreis into only 5 towns and 12 settlements, including Raków, by the end of the month. The concentration of Jews in 17 small- and medium-sized ghettos was the first stage of the total expulsion of Jews from the region. The arrival of more Jews from nearby settlements produced further overcrowding in Raków, and living conditions deteriorated once again.

In the summer of 1942, the Gendarmerie arrived suddenly in Raków to arrest young Jews for forced labor in the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna. Raków's youth immediately went into hiding to avoid deportation. Gendarmes, assisted by the Jewish Police under the command of Chairman Zielony, prodded with bayonets the walls and floors of Jewish houses, dragging out all who had hidden. They caught between 30 and 40 young Jews. They locked them up in the synagogue for the night, then loaded them on trucks that headed for Skarżysko the next morning.⁶

By September 1942, the Jews of Raków had received news of the pogroms and mass murders in other towns and started to prepare hiding places and sell remaining property to non-Jewish acquaintances, in expectation of a forthcoming deportation Aktion. According to one account, the Jews mostly stayed away from the synagogue and prayed at home during the High Holidays in September and even on the Sukkot holiday in early October, fearing that such a gathering would be an easy target for a German roundup. But then when news spread that the Aktion was due the next day, almost everyone went to the synagogue to pray together one last time.

Available sources differ regarding the date of the Aktion in Raków. It was most likely in early October, just after the holiday of Sukkot, as indicated by Turkov's narrative, which specifically mentions this holiday just prior to the deportation. Most other ghettos in Kreis Opatow were cleared at the end of October or in early November. Several secondary sources claim that the Germans cleared the Raków ghetto in late August 1942, with all the Jews being transferred to the Jędrzejów ghetto (60 kilometers [37 miles] to the west). This seems unlikely and probably refers to the smaller village, also called Raków, in Kreis Jędrzejow, which had far fewer Jews.

No firsthand account of the deportation Aktion has been located. From secondhand accounts, it seems that a number of Jews were murdered in Raków during the roundup. The majority were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp. Searches for those in hiding went on for weeks afterwards. Some Jewish property was sold in Raków to peasants from the surrounding villages. One family that had to abandon their hiding place in the woods after it was discovered and looted, was then repeatedly robbed by local peasants as they made their way to join the few remaining Jews in Chmielnik more than 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) away. As the Germans continued to hunt down the fugitives from the liquidated ghettos, seven Jews were killed in Raków on December 20, 1942.

SOURCES The only publication focused on the Jewish community of Raków is the book by Mark Turkov, *Mlakab Ovshayani dertseyt: Khronik fun undzer tsayt* (Buenos Aires: Tsentrafarband fun poylishe Yidn in Argentine, 1946). Additional information for this article comes mainly from two publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

The main documentary sources for the Jews of Raków under the German occupation are the records of the JSS available in the following archives: AŻIH (211/893 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 43). Relevant survivor testimonies can be found in VHF (# 26627 and 31436) and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 26627, testimony of Leon Edberg, 1997.
2. Ibid., # 31436, testimony of Julie Nattel, 1997.
3. Ibid., # 31436; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 43.
4. Turkov, *Mlakab Ovshayani dertseyt*, p. 21.
5. VHF, # 31436.
6. Ibid., # 26627; # 31436.

RAWA MAZOWIECKA

Pre-1939: Rawa Mazowiecka, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Rawa Mazowiecka is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) east of Łódź. There were 3,018 Jews living in the town in 1921 (about one third of the total population). Air raids in the initial days of the September Campaign resulted in a number of civilian casualties. German forces shot a few dozen Poles and Jews on entering Rawa Mazowiecka. Jews were rounded up on several occasions at various points in the town, harassed for no reason, and then released.

In October 1939, the Germans selected the pre-war members of the Jewish community to serve on the Jewish Council (Judenrat). According to survivor Dawid Taśma, it was chaired by Aron Doner, a grain salesman.¹ Archival sources indicate that Michal Flom presided over the Judenrat at least between February and December 1940, followed by Hersz Grynszpan in May 1941. Its membership also included the following people: Salomon Targ, Icek Szwarc, Rachmil Dorn, Szyja Średni, Lajzor Wengrów, Icek Apfelbaum, M. Szmulewicz (secretary), and Abram Bekermos.

Zylberberg headed the Judenrat's Arbeitsamt (labor office); he later became the chief of the Jewish Police organized in November 1939. Judenrat members were also members of the Committee for the Relief of Refugees, established in January 1940 to help approximately 200 newcomers. The committee was chaired by Hersz Grynszpan and included only one refugee—Fiszel Goldrajch of Łódź.²

Survivors maintained that the Judenrat behaved very badly towards their own and even worse towards the refugees. One of its members, Abram Bekermos, was a Gestapo informant who denounced Jews who were trading illegally in foreign currency.³

In January 1940, the Judenrat was ordered to set up a “march camp” or transit camp around Skierniewice Street on the outskirts of the town. It was to hold deportees and refugees passing through or settling in Rawa. Their numbers were considerable due to the proximity of the Generalgouvernement’s border with the Reich. Most of the newcomers at the time were from Łódź, Brzeziny, Zgierz, and Pabianice, in Reichsgau Wartheland.⁴

In the spring of 1940, the community was ordered to pay a contribution of 75,000 złoty; the Germans made the Judenrat responsible for the sum’s collection. When better-off Jews refused to pay, the Judenrat identified them to the Germans. Following a few arrests, wealthier Jews soon contributed their share. In June 1940, Zylberberg was charged with collecting tens of thousands of złoty in overdue taxes from Rawa’s Jews.

By July 1940, 80 percent of the Jewish shops on the market square had been confiscated and “given to Christians.” Jews were also barred from setting up stalls there on market days. At that time, there were 3,200 Jewish residents registered in Rawa Mazowiecka.⁵

In July 1940, the Judenrat reported to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw that “the authorities pressure us either to feed the deportees or to resettle them.” There is no information available on whether any Jews were deported at this time.⁶ Abram Zand testified that after he moved to Rawa Mazowiecka in November 1941—then already a ghetto—“the Judenrat was sending transports of paupers to Warsaw [the Warsaw ghetto].”⁷

The soup kitchen regularly fed 250 local Jews but only 148 refugees in the summer of 1940. As it was providing support for these social services, the Warsaw AJDC claimed that the Judenrat had misrepresented the number of newcomers by counting together those who were registered as residents and also transients, to whom they afforded only temporary assistance; for example, 874 refugees were reported as living in Rawa in June 1940, while in fact there were fewer than 200 such persons. By August, their number had dropped to 129, rising again to 167 in October 1940.

In August 1940, a number of Jewish males were sent to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.⁸

Dawid Taśma dates the ghetto’s establishment in January or February 1941; however, secondary sources suggest that it was in March 1941. *Pinkas ha-kehillot* states that there was insufficient room for the large numbers of refugees, some of whom could not get permission to live in the ghetto and instead had to live on the town’s outskirts behind Skierniewice Street. Some of these people moved into the ghetto illegally. They were not included in the population registers, did not receive ration cards, and were at greater risk of being expelled or captured in the roundups than were the legal inhabitants.

Taśma, a Rawa Mazowiecka native, describes the Rawa ghetto as consisting of two parts. The main part encompassed the pre-war Jewish neighborhood and included Jerozolima and Berek Joselewicz Streets in the northeast. Taśma does not provide the location of the other part, but it was probably in fact the refugee camp in the vicinity of Skierniewice Street. These people had even less rights than those in the main ghetto. A special passage was constructed to connect the two ghettos, both of which were surrounded by barbed wire. As neither was sealed initially, it was possible to maintain contact with people in the surrounding areas and obtain food. The ghetto inhabitants worked for the Germans, regulating the Zawada River near Tomaszów Mazowiecki and building a bridge over the Rawka River in Rawa. Clandestinely, they also worked as artisans and sold their wares to the locals.⁹

A local Jewish doctor, Pinchas Kotok, reported that the first typhus cases occurred “solely among the newly-arrived refugees” in April 1941. A local hospital treated all the sick. When an epidemic broke out in May 1941, the hospital refused to admit those newly infected. At the time, the ghetto had 3,360 residents and, reportedly, close to 700 refugees. Rawa’s Jews were ordered to set up their own hospital; but initially the sick remained in their own households, as the community had nowhere to isolate them “in an overcrowded Jewish quarter.” A hospital staffed with 17 people was set up in June 1941, admitting also Jews from Nowe Miasto. It lacked basic provisions and was always in serious debt; by August 1941, 47 Jews were hospitalized with typhus.¹⁰

The ghetto was sealed at the beginning of 1942. At that time, the German police suddenly surrounded the Skierniewice neighborhood ghetto and transferred its inhabitants to the larger ghetto. The German authorities also stopped distributing ration cards to Jews. After the ghetto’s closure, Jewish agricultural laborers were forced to leave the ghetto under escort. Up to a dozen Jews who attempted to sneak out of the ghetto were shot during the ghetto’s existence.

On August 16, 1942, the Gestapo shot 17 Jews at the Rawa Castle who had been denounced by Judenrat member Abram Bekermos. Several members of the Judenrat were among the victims, for example, Icek Apfelbaum, Jakub Dorn, Hersz Grynszpan, and Icek Szwarc.¹¹

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, a second typhus epidemic broke out in September 1942. Jewish laborers returning from the Zawada labor camp, where they had been sent for 10 days, carried the disease.

As news filtered through about the liquidation of other ghettos by October 1942, the Judenrat demanded money from the ghetto residents “for expenses connected with the eventual evasion of resettlement.” Its members promised that those who paid would be spared from deportation.

On October 26, 1942, approximately 4,000 residents of the nearby Biała Rawska ghetto were brought to Rawa, where they were held in the open in one of the market squares.

The liquidation of the Rawa Mazowiecka ghetto took place on October 27, 1942. In its course the men were separated from the women and children. The Germans announced

that 220 craftsmen would remain in the ghetto; 500 remained in the end, while some of those with families managed to stay, based on the bribes they could afford. Approximately 70 people were murdered in the course of the ghetto liquidation; the remainder were taken to the Tomaszów Mazowiecki ghetto. The newly established cleanup group was housed next to the Judenrat, which later opened a soup kitchen for those who stayed. The cleanup group collected Jewish belongings, including furniture, in the synagogue.

On the following day—October 28, 1942—all who remained in Rawa were ordered to the market square where the Gendarmerie read out the names of 220 Jews who were to stay in Rawa, including certain Jewish policemen and Judenrat members. The remainder were deported to Tomaszów later that day. Prior to their departure, each person was forced to pay 300 złoty, allegedly to cover the costs of transport to Tomaszów.

A few days later, a new list of only 37 Jews who were to remain in Rawa was announced; only 30 people remained, as a few preferred to join their families being deported to Tomaszów. A Gendarme by the name of “Sas” is mentioned as taking part in the last selection. Their subsequent fate is unknown, although some Rawa Jews may have reached the remnant ghetto in Ujazd.¹²

The Tomaszów Mazowiecki ghetto was liquidated on October 31 and November 2, 1942, when its residents were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 423; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 153–155, 176–178; Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 257–260.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/592 [AJDC]; 301/1440, 301/2010, 301/3182 [Relacje]); BA-L (B 162/6090); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2010, testimony of Dawid Taśma, 1946.
2. Ibid.; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/592 (Rawa Mazowiecka), pp. 3, 15, 64, 74, 98.
3. AŻIH, 301/3182, testimony of Abram Zand, n.d.; and 301/2010.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/592, pp. 1–2, 4–15, 35.
5. Ibid., p. 68; and AŻIH, 301/2010.
6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/592, pp. 75–76.
7. AŻIH, 301/3182.
8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/592, pp. 77, 80, 85, 99.
9. Ibid., pp. 41, 96; AŻIH, 301/2010.
10. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/592, pp. 98, 101–102.

11. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo skierniewickie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), pp. 116–117; AŻIH, 301/2010.

12. AŻIH, 301/1440, testimony of Izrael Wagwajzer, 1948; and 301/2010.

RYCZYWÓŁ

Pre-1939: Ryczywół, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ryczywół, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ryczywół, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Ryczywół is located about 70 kilometers (44 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. There were 135 Jews living in the village of Ryczywół (pre-war gmina Świerże Górne) at the start of World War II. Most of the village was burned down in the course of hostilities, forcing many newly homeless families to scatter throughout neighboring settlements. In June 1940, there was an outbreak of typhus. Icek Mandel, a former pre-war community leader, reported this situation to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Radom, adding, “Under these circumstances, not even a Judenrat was established.” In the absence of a governing body for the community, Mandel requested that the AJDC send all subsidies and donations to his private address.¹

In April 1941, Ryczywół Jews sent a letter to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, based in Kraków, protesting Mandel’s alleged misappropriation of welfare benefits. “We have no faith in him, as he did not distribute fairly the rations and money sent for us . . . but instead took a large portion for himself and was [then] unable to explain it to us.” They also underlined that they had not authorized Mandel to collect and distribute these funds. The letter’s more than 20 cosignatories selected Szmerek Neimark, Szlama Lederman (Lejderman), and Maryś Lederman as their representatives to the JSS. This presumably meant that the Jews in Ryczywół were still without any official representation recognized by the German authorities.² In 1941, reportedly 160 Jews were living in Ryczywół, including 30 newcomers.

The precise date on which the ghetto was established in Ryczywół is unknown. According to historian Jacek Młynarczyk, the Kreishauptmann Radom-Land, Dr. Friedrich Egen, in December 1941 ordered the concentration of Jews from the local villages in a number of specified places in the Kreis, including in Ryczywół. These places were designated as *Judenbezirke*, or ghettos.³ This order was presumably implemented at the beginning of 1942, as part of the overall ghettoization process.

On August 4, 1942, the Kreishauptmann Radom-Land reported to the office of population and welfare of the Governor of Distrikt Lublin that a Sonderdienst detachment had transported 69 Jews from the village of Ryczywół to the Sobibór extermination camp.⁴ That same month, reportedly 160 Jews were transferred to the Kozienice ghetto. These Jews

were then deported to the Treblinka extermination camp on the liquidation of the Kozienice ghetto in September 1942.

SOURCES The following published sources were used in the preparation of this entry: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 158, 179; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122; and J. Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: 1946), pp. 55–56.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/606 [AJDC]; 211/925 [JSS]; and NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/606 (Ryczywół), p. 2.
2. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/915 (Ryczywół), pp. 1–2.
3. AŻIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 122.
4. Kermisz, *Dokumenty i materiały*, 2: 55–56, Kreishauptmann Radom-Land to Department of Internal Administration, Office for Population Matters and Welfare in Distrikt Lublin, August 4, 1942, Ref. I/J/4/42J.

SANDOMIERZ

Pre-1939: Sandomierz (Yiddish: Tsoymir), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Opatow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Sandomierz is a town located 88 kilometers (55 miles) southwest of Lublin, on the west bank of the Vistula River. Just prior to the German invasion in September 1939, Sandomierz had approximately 10,000 inhabitants, of which nearly 3,000 were Jews.¹

German forces occupied the town on September 9, 1939. A regime of murder, abuse, and plunder began immediately. On September 21, 1939, members of the SD from Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski arrived in Sandomierz and gathered about 30 Jews from all walks of life. From these men they appointed a Judenrat of 17 members headed by Henryk Goldberg. The Judenrat was obliged to carry out German orders and was made personally responsible for the compliance of the Jewish community. The Judenrat established five departments, including ones for housing, labor, and social assistance. It also established a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) composed of young men.²

In early October 1939, more than 1,000 Jewish refugees arrived who had been driven out of Kalisz and Sieradz follow-



Young Jewish men at forced labor hold shovels and wheelbarrows on a street in Sandomierz, 1942, with German troops in the background. Second from left (and marked with an "X") is 20-year-old Yitzhak Goldman. USHMM WS #44343, COURTESY OF YIVO

ing the incorporation of these towns into the Reich. Other refugees arrived in 1941 from Vienna.³

From the start of the occupation, the Germans imposed forced labor on all Jewish men aged between 12 and 60. The Jews had to work for the Germans three days per week, but the wealthier ones could pay for a replacement, creating a useful source of revenue for the Judenrat's social assistance projects. In May 1940, the Nazis rounded up about 40 Jews and sent them to various camps in Distrikt Lublin, on the border with the Soviet Union, to construct fortifications. The conditions for these laborers were very bad. The men had to work up to 12 hours a day with only meager rations. The Jewish communities and also the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) sent some aid to these camps. Most of those sent to Distrikt Lublin returned after a couple of months, but the raids to round up forced laborers continued.⁴

In October and November 1940, the Germans confiscated all Jewish real estate, and by November 1941 all Jewish stores had been transferred into Polish or German hands. In November 1940, Jews were forbidden to leave the limits of the town without special permission. Initially the punishment for disobedience was imprisonment, but from October 1941 such infractions were punishable by death. According to reports of the Polish underground, in April 1942, all Jews found illegally outside the town were summarily shot.⁵

The German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 worsened conditions for the Jews, as the Germans alleged that they sympathized with the Bolsheviks. Ration cards for Jews were introduced, limited to only 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day and 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of sugar per month. About three quarters of the Jews were now receiving assistance from the Judenrat, and no more money was being received from the AJDC.⁶ In December 1941, the German authorities demanded that the Jews surrender all their fur items for the use of the German army in Russia. The Germans were empowered to shoot any Jew retaining anything made of fur,

even if it was of no value. The Germans also established a Soviet prisoner-of-war (POW) camp in the town. Three young Jews were forced to bury the corpses of the many Soviet POWs who died there.⁷

On April 16, 1942, a meeting of the representatives of the Jewish Councils in Kreis Opatow was held. Among the questions discussed was the possibility of organizing some form of self-defense and the possibility of collecting funds to bribe the Germans.⁸

On May 13, 1942, the Opatow Kreishauptmann, Dr. Heinz Ritter, issued an order for the establishment of 17 ghettos in his Kreis, including one in Sandomierz, by June 1, 1942. As a result of this decree, a number of Jews were brought into Sandomierz from the surrounding area, bringing the total number of Jews to about 5,200, increasing the overcrowding and pressure on resources. A "Jewish residential district" (open ghetto) was established in the town, which, however, did not have a wall or fence. The district included the following streets: Joselwiczka, Zamkower, Bobola, and Podwale. Those Jews living outside this area had to exchange residences with any Christians living within it.

In August 1942, the Gestapo murdered the head of the Judenrat, Henryk Goldberg, following the disappearance of Judenrat member Appelbaum, who was suspected of resistance activities.⁹ By this time the Jews of Sandomierz had a good idea of their intended fate, as refugees from the Aktions in other towns brought news of the murder of entire communities. When rumors spread in October of an impending Aktion in Sandomierz, many hid in bunkers or bribed peasants to conceal them.

On Wednesday, October 28, 1942, the Germans ordered the Jews to assemble on the market square at 7:30 A.M. Those who appeared or were found in their hiding places were driven to the railway station by the German police, assisted by Ukrainian and Latvian auxiliaries. Several hundred Jews were murdered in the town during the Aktion. About 3,000 Jews from the Sandomierz ghetto were deported to the Bełżec killing center on October 28–29, together with several thousand more from Zawichost and Klimontów. Some 300 remained behind in the "Lyceum" labor camp at the Jewish cemetery, and at least 400 more survived in hiding. Over the following days the German Gendarmerie commanded by a man named Lescher continued to shoot any Jews they uncovered.¹⁰

On November 10, 1942, the German authorities announced that Sandomierz would be one of the four remaining towns in Distrikt Radom where Jews would be permitted to reside in a "Jewish residential area" (*Judenwohnbezirk*).¹¹ Over the following weeks, many Jews came to Sandomierz out of hiding and from ghettos in the surrounding area, such as Staszów, raising the Jewish population to more than 6,000. Most remained suspicious of German intentions but simply could not find any other way to survive. One reason for this desperation was the hostile attitude of many Polish partisan groups who turned away or betrayed Jews who fled to the forests. Only relatively few escapees, such as 10-year-old Sara Glass, whose parents found her a safe refuge with Janina Szymańska in the

village of Mokrzeszów near Tarnobrzeg, were able to remain in hiding for more than a few weeks.

The "Second Ghetto," which was located in about 20 single-story houses around Jewish Street ("Yiddisher Gas") and on part of Zamkower Street, was surrounded by a fence 2 meters (6.6 feet) high and guarded by German police.¹² Conditions in the ghetto are described by one survivor as: "terrible. It was so dirty. People were lying in the streets, hungry. . . . I've never seen such filth."¹³ About 12 Jews had to share a room, and some lived in attics or on the street. Jews were able to barter remaining valuables for food with local peasants across the fence, but the meager rations issued by the Judenrat consisted only of bread and a little soup once per day. Jews had to go out of the ghetto under close guard to reach the bathhouse and had to queue for water. A communal toilet was established on an elevation towards the Christian quarter, but sanitary conditions were appalling, and disease was rife. Those who fell sick and reported to the hospital were generally murdered after just a few days. Many Jews tried to flee from this hell.¹⁴

In the summer of 1942, three forced labor camps for Jews had been established in and around Sandomierz, partly on the initiative of the Jewish Council. Some Jews based at the Lyceum camp and those at Mokoszyń outside Sandomierz were used by the Germans to dismantle Polish farmhouses in preparation for the settlement of ethnic Germans on enlarged farms. Most of the remaining inmates from these two camps were transferred to armaments factories in Radom and Starachowice-Wierzbnik in the summer of 1943. The other labor camp was inside a glassworks named Metan in Sandomierz.¹⁵

On January 7, 1943, units of the SS, the Gendarmerie, Polish police, and Latvian and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto. During the night these forces threw in bombs, setting a few houses on fire, and shot at anyone who approached the ghetto fence. Then on the following morning, they rounded up and deported most of the roughly 7,000 Jews in the ghetto, together with about 100 Jews from the Metan labor camp. During the roundup the Germans selected about 300 men who were fit for work and sent them to the labor camp at Skarżysko-Kamienna. As the deportees were escorted to the railway station, the German police and their auxiliaries cruelly beat them with clubs and shot hundreds of them en route. The deportees were placed into freight cars holding more than 120 people, each destined for the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were all murdered.¹⁶

Following the Aktion, the Germans again announced that those who came out of hiding and returned to the ghetto would not be harmed, then established a "Third Ghetto." About 180 people emerged and returned to Jewish Street to join 120 Jews who had been excluded from the deportation. These Jews were employed in clearing out the ghetto. At this time the Gendarmes Lescher and Schumann frequently entered the ghetto, terrorizing and murdering Jews. On April 15, 1943, the Germans selected young and healthy Jews and sent them to the labor camp at Pionki. Those remaining, including 15 children, were shot. After the liquidation of the ghetto, the Germans ordered the demolition of the houses on Jewish Street, apart

from the synagogue building and Wasser's house. Local Poles searched through the ruins for any hidden valuables.¹⁷

The Red Army drove out the German occupants on August 18, 1944. At that time, only a handful of Jews who had hidden successfully with the assistance of Poles remained. Additional survivors returned from the Nazi camps and the interior of the Soviet Union, bringing the total registered to about 70; but by 1948 they had all left to start a new life in Israel or other countries in the West.

SOURCES A detailed account in English of the fate of the Jewish community of Sandomierz during the Holocaust can be found in the memorial book: Evah Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, ed., *Et ezkerah: Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir (Sandomiyez)* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Tsoizmir be-Yisrael: Moreshet, bet'edut "a. Sh. Mordekhai Anilevits," 1993). Two Yiddish-language publications are also relevant: Amnon Ajzensztadt, *Un di erd hot nisht tsugedekt dos blut* (Toronto: Tsentrale fun di tsozmerer organizatsyes, 1962); and L. Zylberberg, *A Yeed fun Klementov Dertzeilt* (Warsaw, 1947); and one in French, *L'Extermination des Juifs en Pologne: Depositions de témoins oculaires. Cinquième Serie: Lwów-Sniatyń-Sandomierz* (Geneva, 1945).

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Sandomierz can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/47, 125, and 2927; 302/54); CDJC; FVA (# 657); IPN; NARA (NO-5257); USHMM (RG-15.019M; RG-50.155*0007); VHF; and YVA.

Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 584–568.
2. Ibid., p. 564. Another source dates the formation of the Judenrat in October 1939; see AŻIH, 301/47.
3. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 565–562; *L'Extermination*, testimony of B.C., born 1925 [in French], located in CDJC; AŻIH, 301/47.
4. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 563–561; testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*; AŻIH, 301/47.
5. AAN, 202/III-7, p. 79, Informacja Beżaca 14/39, April 13, 1942; USHMM, RG-02.208 (AŻIH, 302/54).
6. Testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*; AŻIH, 301/47.
7. Testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*.
8. AŻIH, 301/47.
9. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 560–559; AŻIH, 301/1525.
10. Testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*; Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 557–555; AŻIH, 301/47.
11. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.
12. Ajzensztadt, *Un di erd hot nisht*, p. 72; Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, p. 555; testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*.
13. USHMM, RG-50.155*0007, Oral history interview with Ruth Muschkies Webber, February 2, 1987.
14. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, p. 554; testimony of B.C., in *L'Extermination*.

15. Feldenkraiz-Grinbal, *Sefer kehillat Tsoizmir*, pp. 551–548.
16. Ibid., pp. 553–552.
17. Ibid., pp. 552–551; see also AŻIH, 302/94.

SEǦZISZÓW

Pre-1939: Sędziszów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sedziszow, Kreis Jędrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sędziszów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Sędziszów is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) north of Kraków. The 1921 census registered 448 Jews living in Sędziszów.

Following the German occupation of Sędziszów in September 1939, Jews were beaten and rounded up for forced labor, which encouraged them to stay off the streets. They were further obliged to wear armbands with a Star of David. The Bet Midrash was razed by the year's end. By 1940, some Jewish shops, businesses, and nicer houses had been confiscated by the German authorities.

On the Kreishauptmann's order, elections to the Judenrat took place at the town hall in January 1940. Although voting was compulsory for all Jews, the mayor himself proposed the 12 candidates, all of whom were accepted with no objections. An owner of an iron warehouse, Załmen Szydłowski was appointed the chairman. By the year's end, some of the members had been replaced. In March 1940, the Judenrat estimated that 40 percent of the Jews in the village were refugees, most of them from nearby towns that had suffered war damage.

A Polish police force was stationed in Sędziszów. Jędrzejów's German Gendarmerie and Gestapo paid occasional visits.¹

Early in 1940, an open and unfenced ghetto was organized around the market square. Jews living there were required to admit other families. Some families, due to cramped living space, were forced to live in the synagogue. At some point that year, Jews living in nearby villages—presumably mostly farmers—were forced out and moved to nearby towns. Most of them were transferred to Jędrzejów and Wodzisław.

The basis for the ghetto's establishment in Sędziszów was possibly the decision of the German authorities to expand the train station, turning it into a major rail junction. The area populated by the town's Jews was designated for housing railway employees, and 12 buildings were erected to accommodate them. A German from Silesia named Reiz managed the Jewish laborers constructing the housing estate.²

A labor camp for Jews was established near the railway in 1940. It contained approximately 700 Jews from throughout the Kreis. The Jews from outside Sędziszów were quartered there, whereas the Sędziszów Jews laboring there returned home for the night. Work tasks included shipping-related activities and station modernization.³ Reportedly, there were a number of private companies performing various jobs at the station. It is not clear how many of the workers were forced laborers and how many—if any—had paying jobs. Some of the companies admitted limited numbers of volunteers, including women seeking the firms' protection from resettlement. The

women performed cleaning jobs and were paid with small rations (e.g., bread, soup, coffee, and tea).⁴

During the summer of 1940, the German authorities announced that the ghetto was closed, and only Jews conscripted for labor were permitted to leave. Polish and German police guarded its perimeters and were also tasked with escorting laborers to their workplaces. With the ghetto's closure, famine resulted, causing many of those escorted to work to beg for food. Despite this, there are no reports of epidemics during the ghetto's existence. The Polish Red Cross vaccinated Sędziszów's Jews for typhus in December 1940.⁵

Other jobs performed by Sędziszów Jews in 1940 included road repairs (approximately 20 laborers) and drainage works at the nearby Węgleszyn labor camp. Those laboring at the latter had been released by the year's end. In January 1941, 20 Jews were assigned to clear snow at the train station. An additional number reportedly worked at a sawmill and a mill in Tarnawa, outside of Sędziszów.⁶

In January 1941, 50 Jews expelled from Jędrzejów were transferred to Sędziszów, raising the number of ghetto inmates to 480. The Judenrat squeezed all but two families in with the ghetto's residents.⁷

In February 1942, the *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that the Judenrat had been reorganized "by its secretary Zylberberg." A sanitation committee affiliated with the Judenrat appealed to the ghetto's residents to keep their households, yards, and lavatories clean. Obtaining a permit to leave the Jewish quarter was at this time made dependent on first acquiring a de-lousing certificate issued by the Kreis doctor.⁸

Apparently, a number of Jews were resettled into the ghetto in early spring, although the total number of its residents had declined to 400 by April 1942. Survivor Mojżesz Najman, however, claimed that until the ghetto's liquidation, no Jews were sent to labor camps.⁹

Despite the Judenrat being reorganized, the welfare provided by its self-help committee remained limited, due to low cash reserves, to the distribution of food products provided by other organizations. In May 1942, the Sędziszów correspondent of the *Gazeta Żydowska*, J. Zaks, wrote to the Kraków Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS): "The Judenrat in our village consists primarily of the well-to-do, who can neither understand nor deal with the issue of providing help to poor laborers." J. Zaks proposed opening a soup kitchen and a branch of the JSS in Sędziszów.¹⁰

Following the registration of women aged 15 to 50 in July 1942, 50 young females were assigned to agricultural labor. They were quartered at their workplaces and were paid with money and meals. Several dozen Jews also worked at the Łownia estate, where they were brought daily on wagons and labored under the guard of two out-of-town Jewish policemen.¹¹

German police forces liquidated the Sędziszów ghetto on September 20, 1942. That morning, the ghetto was surrounded, and the Jews were ordered to gather at the square. From there, they were taken to a meadow near the train station, where they were held overnight. Jews from the liquidated ghettos of Szczekociny and Wodzisław were also brought there. The old

and sick were selected, shot, and buried in the meadow. A selection was also conducted at the labor camp, with all women, elderly, and boys less than 15 attached to the transport that left Sędziszów the next morning.¹²

Aside from the 350 Jews imprisoned in the enclosed labor camp, the Germans left in Sędziszów a handful of Jews, including the chairman Szydłowski with his family. At the beginning of November 1942, the remnant ghetto was inhabited by several dozen Jews.¹³

The 1947 to 1950 proceedings of the Kielce Appellate Court (SAK) include files on a group of policemen from the Sędziszów post and its environs who, in 1943–1944, took part in the murder of Jews found in hiding and plundered their property. The main defendant, Józef Godawa, was initially sentenced to death. Following the 1952 amnesty, his sentence was commuted to 15 years in prison. The others found guilty of some of the charges received 6 to 12 years in prison.¹⁴

SOURCES Relevant publications include the following: Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 480–481; and Wacław Cichocki, "Sędziszów–Sędziszowscy Żydzi (1918–1943)," available at www.sedziszow.pl/?c=mdTresc-cmPokaz-352.

The following archival sources include relevant information on the Jewish community and the ghetto in Sędziszów: AŻIH (210/620, 211/489, 211/947, 301/3549, and 301/7046); IPN (SAK 203 and 203a); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reels 26 and 45); and VHF (# 30065).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/620 (Sędziszów), pp. 3, 11; AŻIH, 301/3549, testimony of Mojżesz Najman, 1948; *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 24, 1940, and January 24, 1941.

2. VHF, # 30065, testimony of Regina Kluska, 1997; AŻIH, 301/3549.

3. Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998), p. 77.

4. VHF, # 30065; AŻIH, 301/3549.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 24, 1940; Cichocki, "Sędziszów"; VHF, # 30065. According to AŻIH, 301/3549, there was no special living quarter for Jews; however, starting from 1941, Jews were not allowed to leave their places of residence.

6. Fąfara, *Gebenna*, pp. 480–481; *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 24, 1940, and January 24, 1941.

7. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/620, p. 41; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 25, 1941.

8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 18, 1942.

9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 45, 211/947 (Sędziszów), p. 43; *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 1, 1942; AŻIH, 301/3549.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 45, 211/947, pp. 1–52; and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/620, pp. 1–45. The AJDC and the JSS archives do not contain any data related to welfare provision at this time, for example, statistics on refugees and deportees, forced labor, epidemics, or anything that

would depict conditions in the ghetto. Please note that some of the archival information in both files on Sędziszów refers to Sędziszów Małopolski in the Ropczyce-Sędziszów powiat.

11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 27, 1942. Cichocki, “Sędziszów,” dates the ghetto’s liquidation in 1943.

12. AZIH, 301/7046, testimony of Cz. Jelonek and M. Migacz, 1986; 301/3549.

13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS) 211/489 (Jędrzejów), reel 26, pp. 51–52, 55.

14. IPN, SAK 203 and 203a, as cited in Alina Skibińska and Jakub Petelewicz, “Udział Polaków w zbrodniach na Żydach na prowincji regionu świętokrzyskiego,” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, no. 1 (2005): 132–134.

SIECIECHÓW

Pre-1939: Sieciechów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sieciechow, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sieciechów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sieciechów is located 92 kilometers (57 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. By 1939, there were 120 Jews living in the village. Following its occupation, the Jews in Sieciechów were forced to perform various jobs for the few Germans present in the village, including cleaning stables and trucks. As payment they received lunch from a canteen. Jews were obliged to wear an armband with an emblem of the Star of David; the same Star also marked their dwellings. Apart from that (according to survivor Morris Blatman), Sieciechów’s Jews were able to lead their lives more or less as usual until 1941.¹

The precise date of the ghetto’s establishment is unknown. According to historian Jacek Młynarczyk, in December 1941, Kreishauptmann Radom-Land, Dr. Friedrich Egen, ordered the concentration of Jews from the local villages in a number of specified places in the Kreis, including in Sieciechów. These places were designated as *Judenbezirke*, or Jewish ghettos.² This was presumably implemented at the beginning of 1942 as part of the overall ghettoization process. Blatman describes the ghetto as being very small and fenced. Jews were forbidden to leave it, but they still went out to buy or barter items for food.

A number of young Jews were rounded up for labor conscription, including in nearby Dęblin (in Distrikt Lublin, where Jews worked extending an airfield) and in Mozelice. The latter was an open camp 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) northwest of Sieciechów, from which Jews were able to leave temporarily.

The ghetto’s residents were to some extent aware of the impending liquidation of the ghetto in August 1942; for example, the Blatman family managed to hide all their valuables with Polish friends in nearby Nagórniki.³

On August 17, the new Kreishauptmann Radom-Land, Dr. Justus Rubehn (who had replaced Dr. Egen), ordered that all the Jews of Mariampol, Magnuszew, Mniszew, and Sieciechów were to be transferred to the Koźienice ghetto by the end of the month.⁴ The precise date of the Sieciechów ghetto liquidation is unknown, but in its course, approximately 300 ghetto

residents were transferred to the Koźienice ghetto, which was then liquidated the following month, in September 1942. All Jews concentrated in Koźienice were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES The following published sources were used to prepare this entry: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 159, 179; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AZIH (NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63); USHMM (Acc.2003.406.1, Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Koźienice); and VHF (# 36957, testimony of Morris Blatman, 1997; # 28457, testimony of Gerszon Blatman, 1997; # 29682, testimony of Israel Blatman, 1997). Of the three VHF testimonies, only Morris Blatman gives clear evidence regarding the existence of a ghetto, but of the three, his recollections generally provide the most detail. Israel Blatman, however, states that there was not a ghetto in Sieciechów, as he was instead sent to the Koźienice ghetto.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 36957, testimony of Morris Blatman, 1997.
2. AZIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 122.
3. VHF, # 36957.
4. USHMM, Acc.2003.406.1, Aeltesten-Rat der jüd. Bevölkerung Koźienice, report (to the Security Police) on the mood of the Jewish population, August 31, 1942.

SIENNO

Pre-1939: Sienna, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Ilza (later Kreis Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sienna is located approximately 44 kilometers (27 miles) south-southeast of Radom. There were 826 Jews living in Sienna when the Germans captured the village in September 1939.¹ Following an initial wave of German brutality towards the village’s Jews, community life returned to normal in the months following the occupation. A number of refugees from the western parts of Poland decided to settle in the village.

The Germans set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Sienna on February 12, 1940. Rachmil Mosenberg (Mesenberg), the owner of an oil-press company, chaired the council. The other members of the 12-man Judenrat included B. Zylbersztajn, Ch. Wajcman, M.J. Goldberg, Chil Goldberg, Z. Goldberg, M. Szerman, Ch. Wajsbrot, Ch. Rubinsztajn, Ch. Kranc, M. Szyfman, and the secretary, Zylberman. The Judenrat was responsible for the conscription of forced laborers, while its members were exempted. It was further charged with orga-



A Jewish family poses in their living quarters in the Sienno ghetto, n.d. USHMM WS #75069. COURTESY OF HOOVER INSTITUTION ARCHIVES, WORLD WAR II PICTORIAL COLLECTION

nizing aid for the growing number of refugees (including many from Łódź) and local needy. By June 1940, there were 1,210 Jews in Sienno, 210 of them newcomers. Although the soup kitchen was launched with the help of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), it was more often closed than open, feeding on average 200 to 250 poor daily.²

By mid-1940, two jails were set up in Sienno. The first was supervised by the German Gendarmerie, the second by a squad of Polish police subordinated to the former. Out of approximately 500 people incarcerated altogether, the Germans murdered at least 200 prisoners (the number of Jews among them is unknown). The remainder were moved to prisons in Starachowice-Wierzbnik, Radom, and Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. According to one source, there was also a German Schutzpolizei unit stationed in Sienno.

An inspection carried out by Ostrowiec's Judenrat in June 1940 revealed the Sienno Judenrat's poor bookkeeping and lack of receipts for distributed goods. The Judenrat was soon at odds with most of the institutions with which it was supposed to cooperate in assisting the community. In February 1941, in a series of inflammatory letters Chairman Mosenberg accused the AJDC of intentionally excluding Sienno from assistance, and he refused to provide a report of its activities for 1940, claiming that it "would show only a deficit." Although Jewish Councils were obliged to procure money primarily from within the community, the Sienno Judenrat "refused any responsibility" to do so whenever there was a shortage of income from welfare organizations. The AJDC replied that this attitude would negatively impact Sienno's Jews, as the New York headquarters determines allocations of financial assistance based on such reports.³

Following further expulsions of Jews from the Polish territories annexed to the Reich, the number of newcomers rose to 457 (out of a total of 1,104) by May 1941. At that time, the Judenrat assessed 700 Jews as "poverty-stricken." Close to one half of the Jewish residents of Sienno (448) were under 18 years old. Records indicate the following age distribution: 48 children aged 2 to 3, 79 children aged 3 to 7, 190 children aged 7 to 14, and 131 youths aged 14 to 18. Aside from the

soup kitchen—when it was open—there was no social assistance provided for these children.

According to the Judenrat records for May 1941, 17 Jews (out of a pre-war number of 43) were permitted to keep their stores open, while 26 Jewish craftsmen (out of a pre-war number of 61) still ran their workshops. The workshops mostly were for tailors and cobblers, employing a total of 35 Jews. Records also show that 30 Jews were performing forced labor in the Kreis, with another 30 to 50 in labor camps. During a flood in May 1941, the river washed out two bridges in Sienno and a few Jewish houses, leaving their inhabitants homeless.

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was set up to take over the provision of aid to poor Jews from the Jewish Councils. The Starachowice Kreis committee set up its branch in Sienno on June 7, 1941, with Herszek Zylberman as the chairman, Chil Mosenberg as his deputy, and Mendel Tarłowski as the committee's third member.⁴

The Judenrat immediately sought the dismissal of all nominees, as "adolescent and unmarried," proposing themselves for the posts as "married and wealthy." The proposed candidates included: Moszek-Josek Goldberg (chairman), Chaim-Majer Wajman (deputy), and the Judenrat's chairman, Mosenberg. From then on, the self-nominee Goldberg signed all correspondence from Sienno. The rebuffed Zylberman commented to the JSS in Kraków that the real reason behind his exclusion was his high school degree. He further stated that the Judenrat "literally did nothing" to help the impoverished Jews in Sienno, all the while falsifying their reports on the welfare of the town's inhabitants.⁵

On the orders of the Ilza Kreishauptmann, an open ghetto was established in Sienno on December 6, 1941. Ghetto residents were permitted to leave for work and to acquire food during daylight hours. A unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was organized to maintain order inside the ghetto.⁶

A new JSS committee was appointed in December 1941, including tailor Moszek Chaim Grynszpan, the Judenrat's chairman Rachmil Mosenberg (as deputy), and a tradesman, Zysman Zylberman. Despite certain misgivings, Mosenberg was chosen, as Kraków believed he would set aside his personal animosities and allow the committee to do its job. *Gazeta Żydowska* reported on the accomplishments of the reorganized JSS: keeping the soup kitchen open for seven months, setting up a committee to provide care (including breakfasts and hygiene checkups) for 140 children in the ghetto, and in addition, raising money for the soup kitchen by organizing a charity concert on February 1, 1942. The audience filled up the Judenrat's office, where a fiddle quartet conducted by Arthur Gelbart rendered pieces by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, and Mendelssohn.⁷

A typhus epidemic broke out in the Sienno ghetto in February 1942; 47 patients were diagnosed as infected. A Polish doctor treated the patients at their homes, as there was no Jewish doctor nor a hospital set up in the village. The number of sick increased to 72 within a month; several died.

At that time, the ghetto had approximately 1,100 inhabitants. There is no information regarding the size of the ghetto or the housing conditions in it, but it is known that some of the newcomers were probably housed in mass quarters, as the *Gazeta Żydowska* notes in June, and that others were assigned to stay with local families for the Sabbath holidays.⁸

By March 1942, Mosenberg was again in conflict, withholding the Judenrat's subsidy for the purchase of goods to be distributed for the upcoming Pesach holiday and ordering the JSS to cease its activities due to lack of money. As an alternative response, Zylberman and Grynszpan went from door to door and collected the necessary sum. Mosenberg instructed them to record the sum as a Judenrat subsidy. When they refused, he sought to conscript them for forced labor. Their quarrel reached its peak in June 1942, when Mosenberg had both members of the JSS arrested by the Jewish Police. They were released after 24 hours but threatened with renewed imprisonment. According to Zylberman, Mosenberg obstructed the work of the new committee, to show the community that it was just as ineffective, as when he was in charge of welfare in Sienna. Despite these threats, the kitchen reopened on July 1, 1942, with Kraków's financial help. Finally Radom's Judenrat intervened, warning Mosenberg that lack of cooperation would result in the Judenrat's dismissal.⁹

In September 1942, the Jews from the nearby settlements of Karolowa, Tarnówek, Nowa Wieś, and Wodąca were brought to the Sienna ghetto. Following their arrival, there were 2,136 Jews living in the ghetto by October 1942.¹⁰

The liquidation of the Sienna ghetto took place on October 15, 1942, with approximately 2,000 of its residents being deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Two days later on October 17, 1942, approximately 800 Jews transferred from nearby Kazanów filled the vacated ghetto in Sienna.¹¹ Soon afterwards, they were likely sent to the ghetto in Tarłów and from there to Treblinka on November 29, 1942, after that ghetto was liquidated.

A number of escapees from Sienna, Ostrowiec, Szydłowiec, Kazanów, and Iłża joined a small partisan group in the Seredzki Forest near Iłża. The squad commander was "Garbaty"; Hill Brawerman (alias "Baca") was the commander of its Jewish section. The squad—numbering 38 men and two women—was poorly armed. It was decimated by the Germans on December 2, 1942. Brawerman was killed in the summer of 1943.

SOURCES Information for this article comes mainly from two publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

The main documentary sources for the Jews of Sienna under German occupation are the records of the JSS and the AJDC available in the following archives: AŻIH (210/626 [AJDC]; 211/955-57 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 46; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]). Although the above archives consist of nearly 200 pages mainly covering

the Sienna Judenrat's activities, they contain very little information on the life of Sienna's Jews before and after the ghetto's establishment.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/626; *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 10, 1941. According to *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 7, 1941, the Judenrat was set up in 1939.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/626.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
5. Ibid.; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/626. The three younger members of the JSS were officially dismissed in January 1942.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1942, March 27, 1942, and June 26, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 26, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46.
10. Ibid.
11. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," pp. 161 (table 12), 180–181; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 179; Shmuel Spector and Geofrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1180; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 577.

SKARYSZEW

Pre-1939: Skaryszew, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The town of Skaryszew is located 14 kilometers (9 miles) south-east of Radom. In 1921, there were 820 Jews living in Skaryszew, constituting 39.6 percent of the total population. On the eve of war in 1939, 993 Jews were residing in Skaryszew.¹

Damage resulting from German air raids in September 1939 seriously affected the community. Luftwaffe bombs destroyed several dozen houses. As a result, refugees that might have settled in Skaryszew refrained from doing so for some time following the bombardments. Local Jewish families tried to rebuild their lives by moving to other localities. It is possible that during the second half of 1940, the Germans relocated some of Skaryszew's Jews to another locality within Kreis Radom-Land. In the spring of 1940, there were 1,192 Jews living in Skaryszew,² but by December the number had declined to 810, including 64 refugees (mainly deportees from Łódź and Kraków).³ At the end of 1940, however, the Germans decided to build an airfield in Przytyk, just to the northwest of Radom. Consequently, many of the Jewish residents of Przytyk resettled to Skaryszew in the spring of 1941.⁴

The Jews of Skaryszew were subjected to a variety of anti-semitic measures enforced by the Germans. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established to represent the Jews to the German authorities. On its formation, it included Rabbi Lejzor Teitelbaum, Josef Mendel Goldberg, and five tradesmen: Lejbus Szajn, Izrael Herszenhorn, Noe Zajdman, Icek Frenkel, and Abram Goldberg.⁵

In early 1941, three local ethnic Germans were appointed to run the town. Their appearance made life more difficult for the Jews; they confiscated valuables and murdered the local butcher, Yitzhak Korman. In contrast, the local Polish police chief, Roczdinski, tried to help the Jews and assisted the Judenrat.⁶

In the second half of 1941, the number of Jews in Skaryszew began to increase considerably. This probably reflected an influx of Jews from Distrikt Warschau, looking for better living conditions in the countryside. By November 1941, there were 1,271 Jews in Skaryszew, most of whom were extremely impoverished.⁷ The Judenrat sought to ameliorate the awful living conditions for the Jews, and a public kitchen was opened to serve hot meals to the poor. At that time, the Judenrat included Salomon Zylbersztajn (chairman), baker Lejbus Zajde (deputy), and a gardener, Josef Mendel Goldberg.⁸ By 1942, there was also a branch of the Jewish Social-Self Help (JSS) active in Skaryszew.

On December 22, 1941, Kreishauptmann Dr. Friedrich Egen issued a decree on the creation of ghettos in Kreis Radom-Land. As a result a ghetto was established in Skaryszew, probably in January 1942 or at some time over the ensuing months.⁹ It encompassed numerous buildings on Kobylańska Street, as well as some houses likely located on Chomentowska, Iłża, and Poprzeczna Streets.¹⁰ The borders of the ghetto were densely constructed, and parts of the boundary were probably fenced in with barbed wire. With the ghetto's establishment, a seven-man Jewish police force was also organized.¹¹ Over the first six months of 1942, the number of residents in the enclosed Jewish quarter steadily increased, reaching 1,800 by June 1942.¹² This was due to the resettlement into the ghetto of Jews living in surrounding villages, as well as an influx of refugees from other localities. Due to extreme congestion, many ghetto residents were forced to reside in barns and sheds. Hunger prevailed in the ghetto, and epidemic disease spread among its residents. In the summer of 1942, young able-bodied Jews were registered for forced labor; about 50 young Jewish men were sent to a labor camp in Radom, and others were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp.¹³ In the late summer of 1942, some Jewish partisans were active in the area around Skaryszew, sabotaging German vehicles and railway tracks.

The Germans transferred all the residents of the Skaryszew ghetto to Szydłowiec on August 18, 1942. The Jews gathered in Szydłowiec were deported from there to the extermination camp in Treblinka in two large transports on September 23 and 25, 1942. During the war, material evidence of the Jewish presence in Skaryszew was destroyed, including the tombstones from the Jewish cemetery, which the Germans used as road construction material.¹⁴

SOURCES Details regarding the location of the ghetto in Skaryszew can be found in Włodzimierz Płowiec, "II wojna światowa," in Włodzimierz Płowiec, ed., *Skaryszew—dzieje, ludzie, jarmarki końskie* (Radom, 2006), p. 21. Other relevant publications include: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 453; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków, 2004); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 377–378; and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 75–182.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (JSS, 211/430, 963); IPN (ASG, sygn. 47, p. 170); IPN-R (SORd 273); USHMM; VHF (# 27989, 40874); and YVA.

Sebastian Piątkowski
trans. Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 159.
2. Sebastian Piątkowski, "Pomoc społeczna i działalność charytatywna w gettach dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942)," in Marek Przeniosło, ed., *Dobroczynność i pomoc społeczna na ziemiach polskich w XIX, XX i na początku XXI wieku* (Kielce, 2008), p. 176.
3. APR, Akta miasta Skaryszew, 2.
4. "Przytyk," at www.sztetl.org.pl.
5. APR, Akta miasta Skaryszew, 2.
6. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 377–378.
7. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 159.
8. AŻIH, JSS, 211/430.
9. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 453, date its establishment in April 1942; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 377–378, in May 1942.
10. Płowiec, "II wojna światowa," p. 21.
11. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 99.
12. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 159.
13. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 377–378; VHF, # 40874.
14. Adam Penkalla, *Żydowskie ślady w województwie kieleckim i radomskim* (Radom, 1992), p. 156; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 274.

SKARŻYSKO-KAMIENNA

Pre-1939: Skarżysko-Kamienna, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Skarżysko-Kamienna, Kreis Kielce-land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Skarżysko-Kamienna, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Skarżysko-Kamienna is located 120 kilometers (75 miles) west-southwest of Lublin, on the banks of the Kamienna River. In



Two German soldiers publicly humiliate a religious Jew in Skarżysko-Kamienna by cutting off his sidelocks, 1939–1940.
USHMM WS #42683, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

1937, Skarżysko-Kamienna had 19,700 inhabitants, among them 2,800 Jews, about 14 percent of the total.

Under German authority, living conditions for the Jews worsened significantly. Immediately Germans started putting Jews to forced labor. Five Jews were murdered for allegedly shirking forced labor, and other Jews were beaten and humiliated. On January 4, 1940, the special commissioner (Sonderbeauftragter) of the Nazi People's Welfare (Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt, NSV) agency in Skarżysko-Kamienna asked the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw to send cod liver oil and tea for the Jewish community and to pay the physician, Dr. Kachan, a monthly support of 300 złoty. He also requested food for the inhabitants of the city. On February 1, 1940, he requested 400 portions of typhus serum for the Jewish community.¹

The Skarżysko-Kamienna Jewish Council, headed by Rabbi Hirsh Feldman, turned to the AJDC for help. At that time, the Jewish soup kitchen provided 600 meals daily, which required the expenditure of 15,000 złoty every month. Additionally, 200 meals per day were prepared for children and

other meals for the sick and elderly. The AJDC in Warsaw had sent 3,000 złoty, but this was insufficient to combat hunger in the Jewish community, to improve the hygienic conditions in the bombed town, or to buy clothes for 360 Jewish children.²

Over the next months, food was provided from different sources. In April, the AJDC sent 1,200 kilograms (2,646 pounds) of matzot, to be given to the poorest Jews, especially refugees, for free at Passover. Some 200 additional kilograms (441 pounds) came from the Jewish community in Radom.³ In July 1940, the AJDC sent 45 kilograms (99 pounds) of sugar, 176 kilograms (388 pounds) of flour, and 21 kilograms (46 pounds) of lard, among other deliveries.⁴

In August 1940, the Jewish community reported that 90 percent of the male Jews had been drafted for forced labor. Most likely, many of them were employed by the Road Construction Group (Gruppe Strassenbau) within the Generalgouvernement, which from February 1940 was responsible for the construction of a highway between Skarżysko-Kamienna and Annopol. Others may have been sent to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.⁵

In the summer of 1940, first attempts were made to concentrate the Jewish population in certain parts of the town: 240 Jewish families were crammed into a small area, which led to terrible sanitary conditions and made it difficult for Jews to reach their usual work sites.⁶ The soup kitchen delivered more than 600 portions daily, but the funds of the community were exhausted. The Jewish outpatient hospital (*Ambulatorium*) treated 195 patients in August 1940, and doctors made 195 house calls. In the fall of 1940 and the winter of 1940–1941, food was still scarce, and an unknown number of Jews were homeless. The Jewish Council therefore again turned to the AJDC for help and groceries, including 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of cheese, 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of Ovomaltine, and 5.75 kilograms (12.7 pounds) of soup cubes; and 500 złoty also were delivered.⁷ But more help was necessary to support the homeless and to buy medication for the sick. In the spring of 1941, a number of Jews from Przytyk arrived in Skarżysko-Kamienna, as the Germans were constructing an airfield in Przytyk.⁸

In April or May of 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto, or—as it was officially called—a “Jewish residential area” (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in the town. The Office for Internal Administration in Distrikt Radom instructed the Stadtkommissar in Skarżysko-Kamienna that the ghetto should not be fenced but that its inhabitants should be subjected to certain restrictions. Entering and leaving the ghetto would only be allowed for those with a special permit issued by the Stadtkommissar.⁹ Furthermore, Jews could not enter several of the main streets of the town. For disobeying these rules, Jews faced a penalty fee of 1,000 złoty or three months’ imprisonment.¹⁰

The area of the ghetto was rather small, but according to German officials, it provided enough space for the 2,800 inhabitants. As Stadtkommissar Dr. Eberhard in Skarżysko-Kamienna noted on May 9, 1941, it was not necessary to fence

in the ghetto, since no infectious diseases had been reported among the Jews within the last months. On May 5, 1941, it was reported to the Department of Interior Administration for Distrikt Radom that the ghetto had been established.¹¹ As reported in the *Gazeta Żydowska*, with the establishment of the ghetto, a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was organized in Skarżysko-Kamienna, which controlled its interior borders.¹²

In June 1940, Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) became the sole trustee of the Skarżysko Kamienna munitions plant, mainly thanks to its general manager Paul Budin, a trusted Nazi. HASAG now ran the Skarżysko-Kamienna plant as a subcontractor for the Wehrmacht's Army High Command (OKW), a situation that subsequently had important consequences for the Jews in the ghettos of Skarżysko-Kamienna and its surrounding area. Between August 1942 and the summer of 1943, Jews from all over Distrikt Radom were brought to the Skarżysko-Kamienna factory and its three camps (A, B, and C)—in total 58 transports with 17,210 people. Of these prisoners, 6,408 managed to survive.¹³ Although Jews most likely had already been employed by HASAG in mid-1940, only in late March or early April 1942 was a first group of about 2,000 local Jews brought into the plant to serve as permanent workers.

Over the next months, a complex system of interaction developed between the HASAG management in Skarżysko-Kamienna, the Judenräte, and the SS. The labor exchange began to assign Jews to work at the plants, and the regional Judenräte cooperated, since this arrangement relieved them from paying wages and providing food for the Jews concerned. Very soon, Jews even began to bribe Jewish authorities to be assigned to work in the camps, and HASAG supported this development by spreading rumors that it would be willing to accept volunteers. Working for HASAG seemed to offer some security to the Jews from deportation to a killing center. HASAG even paid the Jews a token wage and allowed them to correspond with their families.¹⁴ There was an arrangement between HASAG and the SS authorities, too: whenever the SS organized a deportation or ghetto liquidation, Jews would find the means to bribe the SS officers in charge, and these officers would notify HASAG representatives, who would arrive at the scene of the Aktion to select those Jews from the ghettos fit to work in the ammunition plants.

Nonetheless, conditions in the forced labor camp were harsh, with long hours and inadequate food. Many Jews died there of exhaustion and disease, and their corpses were delivered to the Skarżysko-Kamienna ghetto, where Jerachmiel Feldman, the son of the Judenrat head, arranged for Jewish burials.

In August 1942, the camp already held 5,500 Jews, coming from Skarżysko-Kamienna, as well as from at least 17 transports from various ghettos. At that time, the Skarżysko camp was officially declared a *Betriebslager* (factory camp), and the Radom period of the Skarżysko-Kamienna camp began, with transports arriving from all over Distrikt Radom, as SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Herbert Böttcher and SS officer Franz

Schippers organized the deportations in the region. Between September and October 1942, two deportations from the Skarżysko-Kamienna ghetto to the HASAG camp, totaling 550 people took place.¹⁵ HASAG representatives most likely were present during each deportation. But HASAG also made its selection of slave laborers work in both directions. In late September 1942, exhausted workers in the HASAG factory camp were told that their names would be put on a list and that they would be allowed to return home to the ghetto. On October 3, the company—as Felicja Karay reports—selected about 1,000 workers, who were considered unfit to work. About 500 of them were shot in a nearby forest. The others were taken to the Skarżysko-Kamienna ghetto, where SS officer Franz Schippers was in charge of an ongoing deportation Aktion. More than 3,000 Jews were gathered at a central square in the ghetto, 500 of them were chosen by HASAG managers for work in the factory camp, and the others—including those returned from the HASAG camp—were put in cattle cars and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Many pregnant women and elderly or sick Jews were shot in Skarżysko during the Aktion. Some Jewish children, who had been entrusted to local Poles by their desperate parents, were betrayed and handed over to the Germans.¹⁶

Karay argues that in the summer and fall of 1942 the HASAG management did not need to increase its labor force, due to the *Munitionsstop* then in force in the German armament industry. Rather, the HASAG managers may have been interested instead in the profits to be gained from accepting Jewish bribes and plundering Jewish property (from parcels sent to the factory plants as well as during the deportations).¹⁷ This practice continued until October 1942, when the HASAG camp was put under the supervision of the SSPF in Distrikt Radom, while daily organization, supervision, and administration still remained under HASAG control. In a last big “grosse Filzaktion,” on October 25, 1942, all camp inmates were bodily searched and selected. The next day, 195 of them were “dismissed” and shot. October 1942 was also the final hour for the Skarżysko-Kamienna ghetto. Amid a steep increase in the terror against the Jewish population all over Distrikt Radom, that month 29 people were hanged in Skarżysko-Kamienna.¹⁸ In January 1943, HASAG obtained the Skarżysko-Kamienna plants from the Generalgouvernement. On March 17, 1943, the Skarżysko-Kamienna synagogue and the Jewish ritual bathhouse, both property of the “former Jewish religious community in Skarżysko-Kamienna,” were declared to be ownerless and confiscated in favor of the Generalgouvernement.¹⁹ The Jewish community in Skarżysko Kamienna had ceased to exist.

In the winter of 1945–1946, Skarżysko-Kamienna Jews that had been liberated from concentration camps returned home to retrieve their property. There they were greeted with open hostility, and in February 1946, five were murdered. Three of their murderers were sentenced to death.²⁰ In 1948 in Leipzig (Soviet Zone of occupation) trials took place to determine the guilt of 25 leading HASAG managers and members of the Werkschutz; 4 people were sentenced to death; 2 received

life sentences; and 18 others were given sentences of between one and five years.²¹

SOURCES Although the history of the Skarżysko-Kamienna HASAG factory camp is well researched, there is not much information available on the history of the Jewish community in the town. The most important sources for this include Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow. Skarżysko-Kamienna Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996); Eliezer Lewin and Jerachmiel Shier, eds., *Skarżysko Book—The Yizkor Book in Memory of the Jewish Community of Skarżysko* (Tel Aviv: Organization of Skarżysko former inhabitants in Israel and USA, 1973); Yerahmiel Siyar, ed., *Skarżysko Kamienna Memorial Book: Zekbor* (Tel Aviv: Organization of Skarżysko former inhabitants in Israel and USA, 1997); Krzysiof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach, 2007), pp. 133–135; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 373–376. Further information is provided by Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen. Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006); Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen. Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); and Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 453–454.

For information on trials against HASAG managers, members of the Werkschutz, and other people involved in the establishment of the Skarżysko-Kamienna HASAG factory camp and the extinction of the local Jewish community, see C.F. Rüter, ed., *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung ostdeutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1955–1990*, vols. 1–3 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press: K.G. Saur, 2000–2003); and Fritz Bauer, Adelheid L. Rüter-Ehlermann et al., eds., *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1999*, 26 vols. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1968–2008), among others, case 654 against Anton Ipfling, who supervised the Skarżysko-Kamienna factory camp.

Primary sources on the history of the Jewish community in Skarżysko-Kamienna and the ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/631; 301/3990); IPN (e.g., ASG, sygn. 47, p. 93; kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; CA MSW 183/129, folder 5); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC] 210/631; RG-15.031M [Der Kreishauptmann in Kielce], file 129).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/631, NS-Volkswohlfahrt-Sonderbeauftragter Skarżysko-Kamienna to AJDC Warsaw, January 4, 1940; and the same to AJDC Warsaw, February 1, 1940.

2. Ibid., Jewish Community Skarżysko-Kamienna to AJDC Warsaw, February 16, 1940.

3. Ibid., AJDC Warsaw to Jewish Community Skarżysko-Kamienna, April 15, 1940.

4. Ibid., District Inspector Radom to Jewish Council Skarżysko-Kamienna, July 12, 1940.

5. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 159.

6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/631, Jewish Community Skarżysko-Kamienna to AJDC Radom, August 9, 1940; and Jewish Council Skarżysko-Kamienna to AJDC Warsaw, September 23, 1940.

7. Ibid., AJDC to Jewish Council Skarżysko-Kamienna, October 23 and December 23, 1940.

8. “Przytyk,” at www.sztetl.org.pl.

9. USHMM, RG-15.031M, file 129, Amt des Chefs des Distrikts Radom, Abteilung Innere Verwaltung to Stadtkommissar Skarżysko-Kamienna, April 25, 1941.

10. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 119.

11. USHMM, RG-15.031M, file 129: note to Abteilung Innere Verwaltung beim Chef des Distrikts Radom, May 5, 1941; see also Stadtkommissar Skarżysko-Kamienna to Chef des Distrikts Radom, April 8, 1941, and Stadtkommissar Skarżysko-Kamienna to Kreishauptmann Kielce, May 9, 1941.

12. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 7, 1941.

13. Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow*, p. 51.

14. Ibid., p. 31, also based on *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubowinowicza* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1987), pp. 92–96.

15. Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow*, p. 36, based on Lewin and Shier, *Skarżysko Book*, p. 90.

16. Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow*, p. 38.

17. Ibid., p. 39.

18. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 198.

19. USHMM, RG-15.9031M, file 129, Einziehungsverfügung, Kreishauptmann Kielce, March 17, 1943.

20. Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow*, p. 232.

21. For more information on the trials, see Rüter, *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*. vols. 1–3, nos. 1369, 1432, and 1511.

SKÓRKOWICE

Pre-1939: Skórkowice, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Skorkowice, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Skórkowice, Łódź województwo, Poland

Skórkowice is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) west of Żarnów. Before the war, Skórkowice was 1 of over 30 settlements in the Machory rural community, with its seat in Marcinków. On the outbreak of World War II, there were 60 Jews residing in Skórkowice. In the fall of 1939, approximately 100 refugees from Łódź, Zgierz, Pabianice, and Ozorków settled in the village. At the beginning of March 1941, the Judenrat reported approximately 700 Jews living in the territory of the Machory community, the majority of whom were newcomers. At least half of them came within the jurisdiction of the Skórkowice Judenrat.¹

The Germans appointed Icek Wadowski as chairman of the Judenrat in Skórkowice. Other members included S. Szydłowski (secretary), Jankiel Wodowski, Ela Koziniecki, K. Frydman, and H. Czyżewski. The latter two were responsible for welfare.²

In September 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out in Skórkowice. Many Jews also suffered from dysentery. The Judenrat engaged a nurse, and then Dr. Jan Singer from Żarnów, to attend the sick. It also set up a Sanitation Committee to control hygiene among the Jews and to isolate and feed the sick. A total of 10 patients were so gravely ill that they had to be transported to hospitals in Opoczno and Piotrków Trybunalski. By mid-February 1941, 10 Jews had died of typhus.³

While fighting off the disease, a ghetto was created in Skórkowice in January or February 1942, after 160 Jews (40 families) from the vicinity were transferred there on January 21, 1942. Until then, they had been inhabitants of the following six villages, all within 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) of Skórkowice: Klew (15 families), Siucice (13), Zawada (4), Ruszenice (3), Sulborowice (3), and Chorzew (2).

In mid-March 1942, the newly established branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Skórkowice reported to Kraków that the Jewish families who had been transferred to Skórkowice were “in a very miserable financial and living condition, as they cannot move anywhere outside the ghetto.” Many of the newcomers were peddlers, now forbidden to go about their business. There is no information as to whether the ghetto was fenced or guarded.

The ghetto was extremely overcrowded, with 15 to 20 people quartered per room. On February 14, 1942, a fire razed a house inhabited by five families. There were 320 Jews living in the ghetto at that time.⁴

The composition of the JSS committee was proposed by the Judenrat and included among its members the tradesman Koziniecki as chairman, the sales clerk Szmul Sobel, and the shoemaker Zyskind Berliner. The town’s welfare administrators and members of the Judenrat’s oversight commission (Wodowski, Frydman, and Czyżewski) protested against this selection. The ghetto residents rebelled as well, sending letters to Kraków, demanding the committee’s disbandment and refusing to pay their welfare contributions. Their main objection was to Koziniecki, “who was trusted by no one” and who, allegedly, had falsified records concerning the expenditure of welfare funds.

At the end of April 1942, chairman Wodowski wrote to the Kraków JSS: “Outrage and arguments arise daily that the Judenrat had allowed the [JSS] branch to be composed in this way.” He described the JSS branch members as “unqualified” for social work, due to general mistrust among the ghetto residents and a lack of any experience in this field. Wodowski’s request for their dismissal and the confiscation of the official JSS stamp was denied.⁵

In May 1942, there were 300 Jews living in the ghetto. In July 1942, Arbeitsamt (labor office) employees escorted 30 laborers daily out of the ghetto for drainage works within the Machory community. They drained ditches, meadows, and swamps. Some ironworkers were sent away to perform forced labor in Lwów.⁶

The date on which the Skórkowice ghetto was liquidated is unknown. Adam Rutkowski established that 300 Jews concentrated in Marcinków-Machory were transferred to the ghetto in Żarnów on October 3, 1942. It is very possible that

this was also the fate of the Jews concentrated in the Skórkowice ghetto, that is, resettlement to Żarnów at the beginning of October 1942. The Żarnów ghetto was liquidated later that month, when its residents were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, via the Opoczno ghetto, which was liquidated on October 27, 1942.

SOURCES The article by Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 154 (table 10), 177–178, was used to prepare this entry.

Archival sources include AŻIH (211/969, 211/1039 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/969 (Skórkowice), pp. 1, 27.
2. Ibid., pp. 6, 8, 21.
3. Ibid., pp. 10, 20, 27–28.
4. Ibid., pp. 21–22, 25, 27, 31–32, 35, 62–63.
5. Ibid., pp. 27–30, 35–38, 40, 43, 46, 49–51; and Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1039 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), pp. 62–63.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/969, pp. 52, 62–63.

SKRZYNNO

Pre-1939: Skrzynno, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Skrzynno is located approximately 30 kilometers (19 miles) west of Radom. Before World War II, the Jewish population of Skrzynno was less than 200 people.

Between the summer of 1940 and the summer of 1941, up to 400 local Jews were conscripted to perform forced labor in a quarry. The material produced there was used for the building of roads and railway tracks within the framework of the “Otto Program,” a major infrastructure development project designed by the German authorities. The living conditions for the Jews working in the Otto program were tough. They had to work under the harshest conditions, and per week they received pay of only 20 złoty and a loaf of bread.

The ghetto in Skrzynno was established by an order issued on January 1, 1942, announcing that all localities with a predominantly Jewish population were to become ghettos. It is possible, however, that in Skrzynno, as one source states (Court Inquiries about Executions and Mass Graves), the order was implemented only in July of 1942. The Skrzynno ghetto held about 400 people and encompassed one quarter of the entire village.¹ The ghetto residents were permitted to leave only to work in the quarries.²

By the end of October 1942, the Jewish quarter in Skrzynno had been liquidated. Czesław Pilichowski and colleagues, Krzysztof Urbański, and Jacek Młynarczyk indicate that all the Jews were taken to the Opoczno ghetto. One source (Court

Inquiries), however, reports that the ghetto residents were resettled to the Przysucha ghetto.³ Both the Opoczno and Przysucha ghettos were liquidated at the end of October 1942.

A Polish employee of the Skrzynno gmina administration provided several dozen Polish identification cards for Jews living in the Skrzynno ghetto. These cards allowed them to move around unhindered; some recipients managed to make it to the Radom ghetto.

SOURCES The Skrzynno ghetto is mentioned in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), pp. 154, 272; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 151, 185; Adam Rutkowski, “Hitlerowskie obozy pracy dla Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim,” *BŻIH*, nos. 17–18 (1956): 106–128; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 78, 85, 155. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), delivers some basic facts on p. 456.

Documentary sources on the ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH, (301/4356); IPN (ASG [Court Inquiries], sygn. 51, p. 133); OKBZH-R (sygn. 101, p. 21); and USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG]).

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1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG Skrzynno), sygn. 51, p. 133.
2. AŻIH, 301/4356, testimony of Stefan Reguła, 1949.
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), sygn. 51, p. 133.

SŁUPIA NOWA

Pre-1939: Słupia Nowa, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Słupia Nowa, Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Nowa Słupia, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village's pre-war name Słupia Nowa is currently Nowa Słupia; however, some sources still refer to the village using its previous name. Słupia is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) east of Kielce. There were 950 Jews living in Słupia at the onset of World War II.¹

Following the village's German occupation, Gendarmes from nearby Bieliny paid frequent visits, terrorizing Słupia's Jews by cutting off their beards with bayonets, as well as extorting money and goods. Later, whenever Bieliny Gendarmes came to the village, they killed people; these atrocities were reportedly committed by their commander, Dunkier.

A Gendarmerie post was set up in Słupia later in the occupation, most likely following the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, at which time a prisoner-of-war (POW)



Five religious Jews seized at a synagogue in Słupia Nowa on Yom Kippur are photographed shortly before the Germans murdered them, October 20, 1940.

USHMM WS #44349, COURTESY OF YIVO

camp was set up on the village's Święty Krzyż Hill. The Gendarmerie was based in a pre-war tourist hostel and commanded by Hans Ritter. Despite the initial absence of Germans, Słupia residents had to be on guard against a network of German collaborators, organized by Franz (or Hans) Wittek (or Witek), a Croat who had settled in Słupia before the war. Its victims comprised both Poles and Jews. Słupia's Jews also suffered at the hands of the town's Polish (Blue) Police force. Its commander, Stanisław Dmochowski, allegedly executed five Jews; three of them were escapees who were passing through Słupia after the ghetto liquidations in the region.

There were also traitors among the Jews. According to survivor Ana Flaumembaum, a local Jew denounced the entire Judenrat, including Flaumembaum's father Joshua (Szyja) Kestenberg, her uncle, and cousin. They were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp following their arrests.²

The date on which the Germans established the Judenrat is unknown. The first mention of its composition in June 1940 includes Mordka Kleiner, Lejb Markiewicz, and a refugee from Łódź. Moszek Grelich, a gaiter-maker, is also named as having been the chairman for a time; the period when he presided is unknown.

By April 1940, the number of Słupia's native residents had declined by approximately 150, and there were only 870 Jews in the village, including 70 refugees (mostly from Łódź and Włocławek). From June 1940, all able-bodied men aged 16 to 60 had to perform forced labor. By then, most of the town's Jews had lost their means of income from businesses that German authorities had expropriated and given to ethnic German (*Volksdeutsche*) or Polish “commissars.”³

By January 1941, the Jewish population of Słupia had risen to 1,127. On March 12, 1941, a transport of more than 1,000 Jews from the towns of Płock and Wyszogród (annexed to Regierungsbezirk Zichenau in the Reich) arrived in Słupia on the orders of the Kreishauptmann Kielce-Land, Eduard Jedamzik, thereby more than doubling the number of Jews in the village. Efforts to distribute some of the Płock deportees to other localities remained fruitless.

At this time a number of Jews deported from Vienna and Prague were also sent to Słupia. Some were distributed among the neighboring settlements of Słupia Stara, Grzegorzowice, and Trzcianka. Those newcomers who remained in Słupia Nowa were housed with local Jewish families all over the village. Many (mostly Wyszogród Jews) were quartered en masse in the synagogue, drawing water from the nearby Słupianka River.

The situation of the deportees and refugees deteriorated as the winter of 1941–1942 approached, since the Zichenau deportees had arrived without any resources. In October 1941, a young Włocławek deportee named Dawid described his situation in a letter to his mother: “I am barefooted, tattered, with no money or work. . . . My compatriots are unable to help me as they are selling off the remainder of their stuff for food. Our situation—that of the deportees—is horrible: misery, fear of winter, anxiety for tomorrow, extreme despair.”⁴

Some historians have accused the Judenrat of Słupia Nowa for failing to provide sufficient help to the Płock deportees. By comparison, the foreign Jews were much better off, as the Germans had allowed trains filled with their belongings to follow the transports. There were 2,000 Jews living in Słupia in May 1941, including 1,129 newcomers, rising to 2,347 inhabitants one month later. According to another source, this number had declined to 2,079 by July 1941.⁵

While the date on which an open ghetto was established remains unclear, indirect evidence points to the autumn of 1941, when the *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that, in mid-September 1941, all Judenrat sections were reorganized, that is, their staff was replaced (sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp—see above) and its headquarters was relocated from the market square to “a roomier location.” The new Kreishauptmann, Han Drechsel, appointed Rudolf Margulies as “deputy commissar” and the new Judenrat chairman. Another man named Margulies became “the commissar” and Judenrat secretary.⁶

Słupia Jews were forced into a designated area of the village (e.g., Ana Flaumembaum’s family had to vacate their house located on the market square), and their houses were taken over by Poles. Jews were allowed access only along Opatowska and Kielce Streets up to the small bridges on the river, as well as the entire length of Bodzentyn and a section of Świętokrzyska Street.

According to Flaumembaum, Jews were at first able to leave the ghetto; then, however, a strict order forbade it. Those found outside were shot, some by Commander Ritter of the Słupia Gendarmerie. Poles discovered helping Jews were also subject to the death penalty. The ghetto was reportedly unguarded at night, which enabled many of its inhabitants to sneak out to buy food from the villagers. At this time there was terrible overcrowding in the ghetto, with people dying both of typhus and hunger.⁷

In 1941, Słupia’s Jews were employed to build a stone road leading to the POW camp at Święty Krzyż. Until the establishment of the Gendarmerie post in Słupia, Jewish laborers were supervised either by Polish or Jewish policemen and were able to simulate labor or send smaller labor details than those demanded by the Germans; however, the random raids

by Gendarmes from Bieliny usually resulted in 100 Jews being coerced into roadwork, as well as beatings, house searches, and ransom demands. By autumn 1941, out of a total of 250 Jews employed, 100 labored on the roads. Another 125 worked in the “Staszic” sulfur mine in Rudki, 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) north of Słupia. The remaining 25 Jews labored in Słupia proper, performing menial and cleaning work. Most of the workers were paid 5.20 złoty per day. The others received payment in kind in the form of food. The Judenrat issued a supplementary income for working Jews, comprising one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of bread and 2.50 złoty per week.⁸

A clinic and hospital for 35 patients had been set up by November 1941. Preparations were made to relaunch the short-lived soup kitchen and initiate child care. The number of ghetto inmates continued to decline, reaching 1,775 in January 1942. At that time, 1,600 ghetto inhabitants were asking the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee for help, but only 350 were receiving food, as the soup kitchen was again closed.⁹

The Słupia Nowa ghetto was liquidated in September 1942, when Gendarmes accompanied by dogs and Jewish policemen chased its residents onto Świętokrzyska Street. The men were separated from the women and children. Anyone who resisted or was too weak to leave was shot inside his or her dwelling. The Germans informed Słupia’s Jews that they would be resettled to Palestine. Driven by the Germans, the town’s Jews had to jump onto horse-drawn wagons that Polish villagers were forced to provide. The remainder were chased from Słupia on foot in the direction of Bodzentyn.

All the Jews were escorted to Bodzentyn, where the local ghetto was also undergoing liquidation. There, the Słupia Jews were added to the Bodzentyn Jews, then taken to Suchedniów and from there to the Treblinka extermination camp, when the Suchedniów ghetto was liquidated on September 22, 1942.

SOURCES Relevant publications concerning the fate of the Jews of Słupia Nowa under the German occupation include E. Fąfara, *Gehenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: LSW, 1983), pp. 333, 337–339, 343–344.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/640 [AJDC]; 211/997 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 47, 211/997 [Słupia Nowa]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/640 [Słupia Nowa]; and ITS Archive [1.1.2.1, folder 8a, and 84a]; and VHF (# 21424).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/997 (JSS Słupia Nowa), reel 47, 211/997, p. 3.

2. VHF, # 21424, testimony of Ana Flaumembaum, 1996.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/640, p. 5; and VHF, # 21424.

4. AŻIH, Ring I/562 (Ring I/663 is a copy), letter from Dawid in Nowa Słupia to his mother, October 18, 1941, as cited by Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 98–99.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/997 (JSS), reel 47, 211/997, p. 3.

6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 5, 1941.
7. VHF, # 21424; Fafara, *Gebenna ludności*, pp. 343–344. According to Stanisław Jop, “Tadeusz Rostański (Schramm),” *Teka Kom. Hist. OL PAN 2* (2005): 144, 146, the ghetto was delineated in 1940; it is possible that, lacking a German presence in the village, the order was not enforced until a later date.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 5, 1941; Fafara, *Gebenna ludności*, pp. 337–339; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 513.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 7, 1942.

SOBKÓW

Pre-1939: Sobków, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sobkow, Kreis Jędrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sobków, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Sobków is located 15 kilometers (9 miles) northeast of Jędrzejów. There were 565 Jews living in the village on the outbreak of World War II.

Izrael Brajbort was one of the prominent Judenrat members; names of other Judenrat personnel are unknown. In July 1940, the Judenrat entrusted Brajbort with establishing a self-help committee.¹

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, in September 1940, a number of Jews were transferred to Sobków from Kreis Jędrzejów, followed later by an additional number of refugees. In the meantime, the Germans established a ghetto in Sobków, where the Jews lived under extremely crowded conditions. The Jews suffered from shortages and hunger, leading to an outbreak of typhus in the ghetto. The same source stated that ghetto residents were assigned to forced labor, while skilled workers needed by the German arms industry were sent to labor camps.²

On January 15 and 16, 1941, the Germans deported 100 Jews from Jędrzejów to Sobków.³

According to the Judenrat's census, there were 810 Jews in Sobków at the end of May 1941; more than half of them requested assistance. At the end of October 1941, there were still 50 Jewish-owned workshops (mainly tailors and shoemakers) and five stores run by Jews open in Sobków.⁴

In June 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established with Brajbort as chairman. A soup kitchen opened later that month initially fed 170 people daily, charging 30 groszy for a meal. In October 1941, the kitchen served up to 250 meals daily.⁵

On December 16, 1941, two of the JSS members, Brajbort and Kałma Elia Goldfeld (40), drowned while crossing a ford over the Nida River on JSS business. The community appealed via the *Gazeta Żydowska* to those situated along the Nida to inform them if their bodies were found. The bodies were not found until March 31, 1942.

Following Brajbort's death, Berek Ginsberg chaired the JSS. Lejb Wajsbaum was the manager of the soup kitchen, while Lejb Fasbirowicz served as treasurer. In May 1942, Sobków reported the same number of Jewish residents—810.⁶

The Jewish community in Sobków was liquidated on August 28, 1942, when its residents, totaling approximately 800 people, were resettled to the Jędrzejów ghetto. The Jędrzejów ghetto was liquidated on September 16, 1942, when most of the Jews concentrated there were deported to the extermination camp in Treblinka. The Germans selected fewer than 200 Jews they deemed fit for work and sent them to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. It is possible that a few Jews resettled from Sobków were among this group.⁷

SOURCES The following publications contain information on the fate of the Jewish community of Sobków during the Holocaust: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 96, 101, 145–146 (table 6), 172–173; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 323–324; and *Gazeta Żydowska* (1941–1942). The existence of a ghetto in Sobków is mentioned also in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 732.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/642, 211/484, 211/494, 211/979); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6203); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/979 (Sobków), pp. 1–2; and *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 1 and December 31, 1941, and May 1, 1942.
2. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 324. This secondary source unfortunately does not indicate the basis for determining that a ghetto existed in Sobków.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 24 and February 11, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/484 (Jędrzejów), pp. 10–13.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/979, pp. 1–2, 15; *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 1, 1942.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/979, pp. 11, 17; *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 1, 1941.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 31, 1941, and May 1, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/494 (Jędrzejów), pp. 26, 40–41; and 211/979, pp. 15–17.
7. BA-L, B 162/6203, p. 569, as cited by Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 268; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 324.

SOLEC NAD WISŁĄ

Pre-1939: Solec nad Wisłą, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Solec an der Weichsel, Kreis Ilza (later Kreis Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Solec nad Wisłą, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

VOLUME II: PART A

Solec nad Wisłą is located about 10 kilometers (6 miles) east-southeast of Lipsko, on the Vistula River. In 1921, the number of Jews residing in the town was 735, which constituted 43.5 percent of the total. In 1930, the number of Jews reached its peak at 1,052, but by 1937 it had declined to 830.¹

The Jewish community of Solec was hit hard by the initial events of World War II. Shortly after the arrival of the Germans, several Jews were killed as a reprisal for shots fired at German troops in the town. In an undated letter (probably written before April 1940), the Jewish Council (Judenrat) asked the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) for help, as many Jews had become homeless due to the war, and all trades were suffering from the economic downturn. Nearly 500 members of the Jewish community were in urgent need of help.² The AJDC responded in April 1940 by sending 496 kilograms (1,093.5 pounds) of matzot, which were to be distributed for free among the poorest members of the community, especially the refugees.³ In July, more food arrived: 16 kilograms (35.3 pounds) of grits, 6 kilograms (13.2 pounds) of sugar, 42 kilograms (92.6 pounds) of flour, 6 kilograms (13.2 pounds) of lard, and 12 cans of condensed milk.⁴ In the fall of 1940, the Jewish Council reported that meals were being served to about 900 people every day, about 300 inhabitants of Solec nad Wisłą and 600 refugees.⁵ The continuous purchase of food supplies exhausted the community's funds, and in the fall of 1940, the Jewish Council again turned to Jewish aid organizations for help.⁶ The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) had opened a branch office in Solec by 1942.⁷

On December 6, 1941, Kreishauptmann Zettelmeyer in Iłża ordered the creation of ghettos in a number of places under his jurisdiction, including in Solec.⁸ Most likely, a ghetto was established in Solec nad Wisłą soon thereafter, which held around 800 Jews. The Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto only to go to their sites of forced labor and also at certain times to purchase food. Otherwise, Jews faced the death penalty for leaving the ghetto without permission. Jews from the surrounding villages were also brought into the Solec ghetto.

According to survivor David Levenstadt, his family was transferred from the nearby village of Dziurków to the enclosed ghetto of Solec nad Wisłą, probably in early 1942. Living conditions there were very overcrowded and primitive, with toilet facilities outside. As he did not have a typically Jewish appearance and also had false Aryan papers, David was able to sneak out of the ghetto to obtain food for his family. At that time, the Jews in the ghetto still had some money. During his stay in the Solec ghetto, there was an outbreak of typhus. Subsequently he left the ghetto and went into hiding, where he received assistance from non-Jewish acquaintances.⁹

In September 1942, the Jews of Solec were deported to the ghetto in Tarłów. During the deportation Aktion, some of the elderly and sick Jews were killed in Solec. The Tarłów ghetto was liquidated in turn on October 29, 1942, when the inmates were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹⁰

At the time of the liquidation of the ghetto in Solec nad Wisłą, several of the Jews were able to find hiding places with

local Poles. In February 1943, the Germans killed three members of a Polish family, who were accused of assisting Jews.¹¹

From June 1942, Solec nad Wisłą was also the location of one of the four penal labor camps in Distrikt Radom. More than 100 Poles (together with an unknown number of Jews), who had not fulfilled their work quotas or requisitions, were kept here and had to perform hard labor, mainly building dikes and regulating rivers.¹² The camp was run by the Water Regulation Administration (Wasserwirtschaftsverwaltung), and the working and living conditions in it were extremely hard. A number of inmates died at the camp. At the end of October 1942, an attack by partisans liberated 103 inmates, and in February 1943, the camp was relocated to Jedlnia Kościelna, east of Radom.¹³

SOURCES A description of the life of the Jewish community in Solec can be found in Krzysztof Urbański, "Solec nad Wisłą," in *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach, 2007), pp. 138–140; Krzysztof Urbański, *Gminy żydowskie małe w województwie kieleckim w okresie międzywojennym* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach, 2006), pp. 356–359; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 326–327. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), mentions Solec on p. 203; Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen. Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), on pp. 55, 166, 167, 247, 262. Solec is listed in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 463; and in Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 85, 162.

Primary sources on Solec can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/647); IPN (kolekcja "Ob," sygn. 177); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC] 210/647); and VHF (# 8400).

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NOTES

1. Urbański, "Solec nad Wisłą," p. 138.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/647, Solec Judenrat to AJDC, n.d.
3. Ibid., AJDC to Solec Judenrat, April 12, 1940.
4. Ibid., Distrikt Inspectorate Radom to Solec Judenrat, July 12, 1940.
5. Ibid., activity reports for August and September 1940.
6. Ibid., letters to American "towarzystwo 'Jeas,'" n.d., and to AJDC, November 11, 1940.
7. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 203.
8. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, p. 247.
9. VHF, # 8400, testimony of David Levenstadt.
10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 463.
11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 326–327.
12. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, pp. 55, 166.
13. Ibid., pp. 167, 262.

STARACHOWICE-WIERZBNIK (AKA WIERZBNIK OR STARACHOWICE)

*Pre-1939: Wierzbik, town, Kielce województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Starachowice-Wierzbik, Kreis Ilza (later Kreis/
Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998:
Starachowice, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland*

Wierzbik is located 43 kilometers (27 miles) south-southwest of Radom. By 1939, there were 3,880 Jews living in Wierzbik and only 40 in adjacent Starachowice. In April 1939, both were joined under the name of Starachowice-Wierzbik. As “Wierzbik” was dropped from the name of the town in 1952, many sources—especially Polish ones—refer to the ghetto by the town’s present name, Starachowice.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was organized in Wierzbik on November 26, 1939. It was charged with the provision of a daily quota of laborers and the assessment and collection of financial contributions extorted from each Jewish family. Comprising 20 members, the Judenrat included the following: the pre-war community activist Symcha Minberg (chairman), Moszek Birencweig (deputy, in charge of welfare), Moshe Adler (secretary), Szmul Isser, Shlomo Einesman, Szmul Kahan, Szaja Jojne Szaerfherc, Moszek Feldman, J. Tencer, Lejbuś Morgensztern, Josek Rozenberg, and draper Rachmil Wolfowicz, who also served as the Judenrat’s liaison to the German police.

By the end of 1939, the Judenrat had created a Jewish police force commanded by Kornblum. Jeremiah Wilczek and Nathan Gelbard served in it and were tasked with arresting and jailing those who failed to pay their assessed contributions and keeping order among Wierzbik’s Jews. Based on almost 300 interviews, mainly with survivors from Wierzbik, Christopher R. Browning maintains that the Wierzbik Judenrat received a “mixed” evaluation, although more survivors “were inclined toward a favorable rather than an unfavorable evaluation.” Browning adds, “[I]n contrast, the Jewish police . . . were remembered less favorably.”¹ Contemporary evidence from some of the deportees in Wierzbik presents a more critical picture. Płock deportees, who arrived in March 1941, stated that the local Judenrat “consists of individuals that stick at nothing, and even in the eyes of local Jews, arouse the worst opinions.”²

German police forces in Starachowice consisted of a small Schutzpolizei (Schupo) detachment commanded by Rudolf Angerer (supervising the Polish [Blue] Police), as well as a 15-member Gendarmerie post. Survivors mostly refer to the Gendarmes Ertel (or Ertl) and Schmidt. As of October 1941, Walther Becker was in charge of the nearest branch office of the Security Police. Although numerous survivors testified that Becker killed and terrorized the Jews, a Hamburg court acquitted him in 1972, when he was tried for his role in the liquidation of the Wierzbik ghetto.

In February 1940, the community was forced to pay a total of 48,735 złoty in contributions. It also had to deliver 15 laborers for menial assignments daily. The Judenrat further reported

that deportees from Aleksandrów and Wiśniowa Góra had increased the number of Jews in Wierzbik to 3,156. On March 2, 1940, 600 Jews arrived in Wierzbik. Within a week, another 358 Jews from Łódź were transferred for a “temporary stay.” On March 13, 1940, a transport of 960 Jews arrived from that city. As was typically the case, it was not clear how many would stay in the town. Browning estimates a total of 1,306 persons arriving on March 2 and 13 from Łódź. A short-lived soup kitchen opened, serving 300 meals daily.³

An informal census of the Judenrat registered only 374 newcomers in June 1940. Many of them soon departed, as Wierzbik was too small to offer any means of livelihood, the forced labor was unpaid, and Jews were not employed at that time in the steel or ammunition industries in Starachowice. Browning established that Jewish labor did not commence there on a large scale until the spring of 1940. First occasional and then regular quotas of 80 to 100 people were supplied via the labor office, mainly to load and unload cargo. Later much larger numbers of Jews worked there and were assigned to more advanced tasks.⁴

The refugees, intelligentsia in particular, criticized the local self-help committee for not establishing a soup kitchen; the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) also described its bookkeeping as “a lot of fiction.” As a result, the committee was reorganized, at least partially to separate it from the Judenrat and include representatives from among the newcomers. The new 13-member committee included three refugees. It opened a soup kitchen on July 28, 1940.⁵

In August 1940, possibly more than 100 men were selected by the Judenrat and sent to labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.

In December 1940, there were 3,600 Jews living in Wierzbik. By January 1941, the majority of them were employed in the Starachowice factories earning 4 to 6 złoty daily. In addition, laborers received supplementary ration cards (*Zusatzkarten*), which allowed them to buy additional food.⁶

In March 1941, a number of Płock deportees were transferred to Wierzbik. An open ghetto was established soon after their arrival, with only three days’ notice, on April 2 or 12, 1941. Adam Rutkowski states that Starachowice’s mayor announced the decree establishing the ghetto only on November 20, 1941, eight months after the accomplished fact.

Signs were posted to designate the ghetto’s borders. Poles were evicted from its grounds. Jews were required to obtain permission to leave it, but Poles remained free to enter. In such a situation, obtaining food was much easier than in closed ghettos, although those Jews sneaking out were taking great risks; several people were killed for this transgression. The ghetto included sections of Rynek, Kolejowa, Iłża, Spółdzielcza, Krótka, and Targowa Streets. Up to four families shared a single-family apartment. Factory-conscripted laborers left the ghetto only in work battalions.

The situation of those Płock refugees arriving in Wierzbik with no means was grave. A committee of people from Płockers established in Wierzbik complained that out of all transports it was “able to keep in Wierzbik only 300 people from Płock.” This number had increased to 400 by the end of

March 1941, after a group initially deported to Bodzentyn came in. The Judenrat withheld assistance and refused to register deportees, so precluding them from obtaining work in the factories, in hopes of getting rid of them. It also denied them contact with representatives of the Radom Judenrat visiting Wierzbnik to prevent the “revelation” of the Judenrat’s “perfidy.”⁷

By the summer of 1942, Wierzbnik was known for its higher chances of survival due to the need for labor conscripts in the steel and munitions factories crucial to the German war industry, such as the Braunschweig Steel Works Corporation, a subsidiary of the Reichswerke Hermann Göring located in Starachowice. Anticipating deportations to come, Wierzbnik inmates were frantically trying to procure work permits. Leopold Rudolf Schwertner, the head of the non-German personnel in the Starachowice factory, helped many Jews to obtain work permits in return for bribes.

Following the liquidation of the Szydlowiec ghetto on September 22–23, 1942, a number of its Jews were brought to the Wierzbnik ghetto and sent to work the following day. But in the case of Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, liquidated three weeks later on October 12, over 100 able-bodied Jews were directed to newly constructed camp barracks in Starachowice, not to the ghetto. The arrival of 700 Jews from nearby Wąchock in Wierzbnik on October 23, 1942, was a sign of the ghetto’s imminent liquidation.

On October 26, 1942, the evening before the deportation, the Jewish Police went around informing ghetto residents to report to the market square at 7:00 A.M. That night, some skilled workers and Judenrat members, together with their families, were transferred to the so-called Strzelnica camp in Starachowice.

Under Becker’s command, the Germans liquidated the ghetto on October 27, 1942; 60 to 80 Jews were murdered in the course of the Aktion. While Polish and Jewish Police helped to assemble the Jews and maintain order, none of the survivors suggest that they were involved in the killings. Browning estimated that in the course of selections, 1,600 Jews, including 400 women, were selected for work in Starachowice and marched to the so-called Tartak and Strzelnica camps, and some were later transferred to the Majówka camp. The remainder, approximately 4,000 people, were loaded onto 50 cattle cars and a few passenger wagons between 2:00 and 5:00 P.M. All were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

In his postwar testimony the Judenrat chairman made the rather expansive claim: “Through my efforts I succeeded in obtaining the approval of the SS and Police Leader, Böttcher . . . to establish a work camp at the ammunition factory in Starachowice for 1,500 people.”⁸

Between 60 and 70 people, including Jewish policemen, were selected to clean out the ghetto. The Kommando buried the victims in two mass graves and proceeded to sort Jewish belongings while continuing to live on its grounds. Several months later, the group was transferred to the Starachowice camp.

Browning notes: “The fact that more than 25 percent of the Jews rounded up in Wierzbnik were not sent immediately

to their deaths stands in sharp contrast to the fate of other communities in Radom district, where the deportation rate during the ghetto-liquidation actions routinely stood at 90 to 95 percent.”⁹

SOURCES The most detailed account of the Starachowice-Wierzbnik ghetto is in Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010), pp. 1–109. Additional information can be found in the following publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 83, 148, 197; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 83–84, 92, 93, 99, 162 (table 12), 180–181; and Yerahmiel Zynger, “Days of Decline and Destruction (the Destruction of Wierzbnik),” in Mark Shutzman, ed., *Sefer Virzbnik-Starakhovits* (Tel Aviv: ha-Va’ad ha-tsiburi shel yots’e Virzbnik-Starakhovits, 1973), pp. 144–145.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APK (sygn. 46, no. 94); AŻIH (e.g., 301/155); BA-L (ZStL, 206 AR-Z 39/62; Verdict of LG-Hamb [50] 35/70); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/653, 717; Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/1098; RG-15.079M [Ring], I/353; RG-50.030); VHF (e.g., # 3654, 5190, 9917, 26120); and YVA (TR-10/776).

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NOTES

1. Browning, *Remembering Survival*, pp. 38–39.
2. USHMM, RG-15.079M (Ring), I/353; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/653 (Starachowice), p. 1; and 210/717 (Wierzbnik), pp. 1, 20–23; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1098 (Wierzbnik), pp. 1–2.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/717, pp. 3–8.
4. Ibid., p. 11; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1098, pp. 1–2.
5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 21, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1098, pp. 1–3, 5.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 14, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/717, p. 32.
7. USHMM, RG-15.079M (Ring), I/353.
8. AŻIH, 301/155, testimony of Simche Minckerg (Symcha Minckerg), 1945.
9. Browning, *Remembering Survival*, p. 296.

STASZÓW

Pre-1939: Staszów, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Staszów, Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Staszów, powiat center, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Staszów is located in southeast Poland, 55 kilometers (34 miles) southeast of Kielce. The total population of Staszów in early 1939 was approaching 11,000, around half of whom were Jewish. On the night of September 7, 1939, the Germans occupied the town and immediately began a program of persecution, plunder, forced labor, and murder.

A permanent Gendarmerie post under the command of an officer named Braun was set up on October 26, 1939. There was also a small force of Polish (Blue) Police subordinated to the Gendarmerie.¹

In early November 1939, the Landrat in Opatów ordered the establishment of an eight-man Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Staszów to represent the Jews to the German administration. Jechiel Nejman was its first chairman, but because he was not sufficiently compliant for the Germans, he was dismissed and replaced by Efraim Zinger. Other members of the Judenrat included Herszl Goldberg, Lejbusz Szniper, Herszl Winer, Alter Bemel, Josef Kestenber, and J. Kirszenbaum.

Punitive expeditions by SS units became frequent; they were accompanied by beatings and demands for contributions. With time, harassment by the Germans and the new mayor Józef Suchan (appointed in August 1940) became more systematic.²

In December 1939, the first wave of deportees arrived in Staszów from Kalisz and Sieradz, followed by some from Łódź. The Judenrat opened a soup kitchen on January 26, 1940, to assist impoverished deportees. It provided three meals a day for nearly 400 people. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization also helped; the Kreis committee, with its headquarters in Opatów, was established on December 16, 1940, and the branch in Staszów was set up shortly afterwards. In May 1941, 2,600 people applied for social help; however, only 1,000 received it, mainly in the form of free or discounted meals, with some clothing and shoes when available.³

Following the arrival of the refugees and deportees, the Judenrat now had to deliver between 200 and 500 workers per day for forced labor. The employment office in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski issued an order that starting in July 1940, all Jews over the age of 15 had to perform forced labor two days a week. Approximately 200 Jews worked daily for the German "Oemler" Road Construction Company and also on landscaping and swamp drainage.⁴

The German authorities ordered the Judenrat to establish a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) in June 1941. At the beginning, it consisted of about a dozen members. Later, when the Germans promised that its members and their families would be protected from deportation and would be free to move to other ghettos, the number of volunteers increased to about 60. Piekarski was the chief, and Fiszman served as his deputy. Both treated the Jews well; however, in some key situations the behavior of the Jewish Police was quite brutal towards their own.

On March 27, 1941, a transport of 1,000 Austrian Jews arrived in Kreis Opatow. Many came to Staszów. In the same year a number of Jews arrived in Staszów from Mielec.⁵ According to the Judenrat records, there were about 5,500 Jews living in Staszów between 1940 and January 1942; 750 of them were refugees or expellees.⁶

Due to the influx of people, sanitary conditions in the town deteriorated, and cases of typhus, typhoid, and dysentery appeared. A system of inspections and the opening of a Jewish bath helped to contain the typhus.⁷

From January 1942, Jews were forbidden to leave the town under penalty of death. From January 15, 1942, Jewish shops could operate only under the supervision of a German, an ethnic German, or a Pole.⁸ According to the JSS records, there were 200 Jewish businesses operating in May 1941, most of them manufacturing shoes.⁹

Until the ghetto was established on June 15, 1942, the Jews still lived in their own homes and—for the most part—had their own shops. With the establishment of the ghetto, they were forced to move into two separate areas of the town, one in the east and one in the west, which included the streets Złota, Długa (Gęsia), Krótka, Stodolna, and Bóźnicza and, on the other side, Dolno Rytwiańska, Górno Rytwiańska, and Kapielowa. The marketplace and the main streets were to be free of Jews. In June 1942, the ghetto had 6,151 inhabitants. In total, 8,000 Jews passed through the ghetto during its existence.¹⁰

The ghetto was closed on July 1, 1942, with a gate across Krakowska Street. Contact between the two parts of the ghetto was limited to two to four hours per day. A 6:00 P.M. curfew was imposed. Illegal trade with nearby villages fell to a minimum, but many Jews decided to risk their lives by leaving the ghetto and buying food from Poles. Later, Jews could buy food outside the ghetto with a special permit from Mayor Suchan.¹¹

Tailoring shops were set up in August 1942, and German army uniforms were manufactured there. To equip workshops set up in the synagogue, the House of Study, and the high school, Jewish Police confiscated sewing machines from many Jews. At that time there were approximately 880 craftsmen, 360 tradesmen, and 270 laborers registered in Staszów.

At the beginning of October 1942, Staszów's Jews learned that the Germans had deported the Jews from many of the towns nearby, and more refugees arrived. The ghetto became more crowded than ever, and sanitary conditions worsened. Besides the 5,000 Staszów Jews, there were about 2,000 Jews from other places.

Many Jews fled Staszów; some tried to hide with Poles, while others built bunkers or went to hide in the Goliw Forest. There was also an attempt to organize Jewish armed resistance by the youth of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, Zionists, and Communists, but the Polish Communist Party refused to provide arms to Jews.¹²

On November 7, 1942, Judenrat chairman Efraim Zinger was ordered to prepare a meal for SS-Obersturmführer Schildt and the 150 members of a punitive expedition that was coming to town. In the afternoon, a group of 200 Jews from Kurozwęki and Szydłów arrived in Staszów. They were assembled and guarded by Ukrainian auxiliaries at the market square. Sometime on the same day, a Jew named Abraham Icek Kerbel came to Staszów with one SS man. He offered to take some Jews to a labor camp in Bodzechów near Ostrowiec for a fee of 1,000 złoty per person. Those who paid this large sum soon learned that it was a swindle.¹³

In the evening, the town was cordoned off by Germans accompanied by Ukrainian and Latvian auxiliaries and also

the Polish (Blue) and Jewish Police. Late in the evening, the Germans informed the Judenrat that the ghetto inhabitants would be deported the next day, November 8, 1942, and ordered all Jews to be present at the market square at 8:00 A.M.

The murder of Staszów's Jews started at sunrise on November 8, when two Gestapo men, Peters and Bruno, shot Zinger.¹⁴ At 10:00 A.M., almost 6,000 Jews were ordered to march to the Szczucin train station. When the column entered Kraków Street, the shooting and beating of Jews started. Those who could not keep up with the column were shot. About 700 to 740 collapsed Jews were shot and subsequently buried in a mass grave in the village of Niziny. The remaining Jews were loaded on trains and sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination center.¹⁵ The Polish underground press reported instances of individual armed self-defense during the deportation from Staszów.

After the column left the town, a search of the Jewish houses began, and anyone found hiding was shot on the spot. Jewish Police accompanied the search. Throughout the course of the day of the evacuation, the Germans and their auxiliaries murdered 450 Jews (189 of them were shot before the column left the town). Their bodies were buried in a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁶

Approximately 550 workers of the tailoring workshops, 250 employees of the Oemler Company, and the Jewish Police (now transformed into a cleanup Kommando) remained in Staszów. They were quartered on Bóżnicza and Złota Streets, which were fenced off with barbed wire. Shortly after the Aktion, about 1,200 "illegal" Jews emerged from bunkers or from the forests—some denied further help by Poles—and were crowded into the small remnant ghetto.¹⁷ After the liquidation of the ghetto, the Germans auctioned Jewish property: houses, shops, and furniture. There were very few buyers, but many Poles looted Jewish houses.¹⁸

In the weeks and months following the deportations, many of the hidden Jews were murdered in the course of German-organized roundups. There were also instances when Poles revealed bunkers and other hiding places. On December 1, 1942, the Germans announced that all "illegal" Jews who remained in Staszów after the expulsions could stay alive but had to move to Sandomierz, which was proclaimed as one of the few remaining Jewish refugee towns in the Generalgouvernement. The Jews could freely travel to Sandomierz for 10 days, until December 10, 1942. When the Sandomierz ghetto was liquidated on January 10, 1943, hundreds of Staszów Jews who had moved there were sent to Treblinka.¹⁹

On December 15, 1942, Staszów's tailoring workshops were liquidated, and the Jews employed there were sent to the Poniatowa labor camp in Distrikt Lublin. All those at Poniatowa were killed when the entire camp was liquidated in November 1943. The Oemler Company camp was liquidated on June 3, 1943, and its employees were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp and to Radom.

Despite the danger to those who gave refuge to Jews, there were a number of acts of rescue in Staszów and the surrounding villages. One of these rescuers was Maria Szczecińska, a

widow with five children who hid 14 Jews in a specially designed bunker for 22 months—from October 1942 until the liberation of Staszów in August 1944.

SOURCES Much information on the life and destruction of the Staszów Jews can be found in the yizkor book edited by Elhanan Erlikh, *Sefer Stashov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Štashov be-Yisrael, 1962). The publication *The Life and the Extermination of Staszów Jews* (Staszów: Staszów Cultural Association, 1992), by Maciej Andrzej Zarębski, is largely based on *Sefer Stashov*. It was also published in Polish as *Życie i zagłada Żydów staszowskich: W 50 rocznicę zagłady gimny żydowskiej w Staszowie* (Staszów: Staszowskie Tow. Kulturalne, 1992). There are also a number of survivor testimonies, which are briefly described in Marek Józwik, ed., *Relacje z czasów zagłady: Inwentarz* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny-Institut Naukowo-Badawczy, 1998–2005). The Staszów ghetto is mentioned also in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2004), pp. 182–183, 190; and in Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 116.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews in the Staszów ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/655; 211/989; and 301/13, 2790, 3633, and 4972); BA-L (e.g., B 162/4872); IPN (kolekcja "Ob," sygn. 177); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 47; and RG-15.073M [Rady Żydowskie], reel 1); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2790, testimony of Bina Pasmantier, Daniel Segal, and Samuel Szpic, 1947; and 301/3633, testimony of Basia Goldsztajn, 1947.

2. Ibid., 301/2790; Joseph Goldstein, "Extracts from a Ghetto Diary," in Erlikh, *Sefer Stashov*, pp. 26, 29; and A. Ehrlich, "The Path of Anguish and Destruction," also in *Sefer Stashov*, p. 41.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.

4. AŻIH, 301/2790.

5. Ibid.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.

7. Ibid., RG-15.073M (RŻ), reel 1; and RG-15.019M, reel 14.

8. Goldstein, "Extracts," p. 25.

9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.

10. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 14; Menahem Lifshitz, "The Last Struggle," in Erlikh, *Sefer Stashov*, pp. 23–24.

11. Lifshitz, "The Last Struggle," p. 24; Goldstein, "Extracts," p. 26; AŻIH, 301/2790.

12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47; Lifshitz, "The Last Struggle," p. 23; Goldstein, "Extracts," pp. 28, 30, 32; Ehrlich, "The Path," p. 36.

13. Goldstein, "Extracts," pp. 30–31.

14. AŻIH, 301/13, testimony of Gertner, 1944; Goldstein, "Extracts," p. 32.

15. BA-L, B 162/4872, Vorl. Abschlussbericht, April 21, 1960, reports that Staszów's Jews were deported to Treblinka; some other sources, e.g., AŻIH, 301/4972, indicate the Bełżec killing center as the destination.

16. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14; Goldstein, "Extracts," pp. 32–33.

17. Lifshitz, "The Last Struggle," p. 24; Goldstein, "Extracts," pp. 32–33; and Ehrlich, "The Path," p. 38.

18. Goldstein, "Extracts," p. 28; and Ehrlich, "The Path," pp. 38–39.

19. AŻIH, 301/4972, testimony of Meier Bydłowski, Bucharest, April 21, 1945.

STOPNICA

Pre-1939: Stopnica (Yiddish: Stavnich), village and powiat center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Stopnitsa, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Stopnica, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Stopnica is located in southeast Poland, 20 kilometers (12 miles) east-southeast of Busko-Zdrój. In 1939, the Jewish population was approximately 2,600.¹

German forces captured the town on September 8, 1939; killings, persecution, and thievery soon followed. There were only three German Gendarmes stationed in Stopnica to maintain order; there was also a small Polish police force.²

In early 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established by the Germans with Taubenblat as president. The Judenrat organized a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) to keep order in the ghetto. Jews took advantage of the fact that there were very few Gendarmes in Stopnica; they could not be everywhere, so many Jews risked going to nearby villages to buy food from the farmers. Those who were caught could be shot, and some were even captured by Poles and handed over to the German police in exchange for a reward of sugar or alcohol.³ The nearest large police station was in Busko. Sometimes Germans would arrive on motorcycles and randomly terrorize Jews or shoot them in the street. To pro-

tect Stopnica's Jews, the Judenrat collected money to bribe the Germans to stay away from town. Whenever Germans came to Stopnica, Jewish men went into hiding, often in places constructed especially for this purpose.⁴

From January 1940 onwards the Jews of Stopnica were subjected to forced labor. The Judenrat was responsible for providing the Germans with a specific number of workers and for paying them small wages. About 60 or 70 percent of the Jews in Stopnica would gather daily at the square at 7:00 A.M., and then they were marched to a site about 8 kilometers (5 miles) outside Stopnica to work. Usually, they worked on road construction under the eyes of German guards. If a Jewish laborer worked too slowly, these guards would take him away, after which he would never be seen again. There were also a number of Jews working at the nearby Wolica Manor. The Jews were paid with food for their work, receiving a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of wheat and 1 liter (34 ounces) of skimmed milk per day.

In the wake of the military campaign in September, the Jewish population in Stopnica was augmented by successive waves of refugees, mainly from areas of western Poland that the Germans annexed to the Reich. On December 6, 1940, 300 Jews from the Distrikt capital in Radom arrived in Stopnica. The group consisted of Radom's poorest Jews, as well as deportees from other cities and towns, including Łódź, Kraków, and Gąbin, who had been in Radom for only a short time. A group of 200 to 250 (mostly women and children) from Płock arrived on February 25, 1941. These deportees arrived without any necessities, and Stopnica's Jews were scarcely in a condition to help them. A soup kitchen was organized for their benefit in February 1941.⁵

To help cope with the influx of deportees and refugees, a local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in Stopnica on March 9, 1941, following the creation of the Kreis committee in Busko on November 4, 1940. The local branch in Stopnica received funds from the headquarters of the JSS in Kraków, and as a result it took over the organization of social relief from the Judenrat.⁶

The Kreishauptmann in Busko, Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer, ordered the establishment of several ghettos in the Kreis by April 15, 1941. Around this time, an open ghetto was created in Stopnica. Jews were strictly forbidden to leave the ghetto on penalty of death. Those who lived among Poles had to move into the Jewish quarter. These Jews were fortunate, at least in comparison with the refugees, as they were able to bring most of their furniture, bedding, and clothes with them.⁷

According to Judenrat records, there were about 1,500 laborers, 110 craftsmen, and 30 tradesmen in Stopnica in 1941. Tailoring workshops were set up, providing the craftsmen with some employment and small wages.⁸ There were about 20 or 30 stores open, including bakeries and grocers, which were still run by Jews. Jewish bakeries produced challahs and kept *cholent* (a Sabbath stew) overnight in preparation for Shabbat.

The deportees were kept in two prayer houses (110 in one, and 50 in the other), in which up to 40 people had to share one large room. Only one of the two prayer houses had some bunk



Dina Ofman wore the white cotton armband [center] while in Stopnica from 1939 to 1941.

USHMM WS #N04572.01, COURTESY OF DINA OFMAN

beds, while the majority of the people had to sleep on the floor. At the beginning of March 1941, the JSS described the housing conditions for the expellees as “catastrophic,” with many sick, 2 dead, a lack of medication, and deplorable sanitation. In May 1941, there were 4,600 Jews living in the ghetto.⁹ By June, 400 people had died of hunger and disease.¹⁰ While 1,900 applied for social assistance on a monthly basis, only 500 were able to receive it in the form of free or discounted meals, small loans, medication, or dry food (mainly potatoes and flour with insufficient quantities of eggs, sugar, and honey).

A hospital with 30 beds was soon opened. It was administered by the JSS and financed by the Judenrat. By the end of June 1941, it had admitted 147 patients. At that time the situation for the deportees was becoming even more desperate. They continued living in mass quarters and were given only 17 straw mattresses and six pairs of shoes. The organization of regular breakfasts and an orphanage for children whose parents had died in the ghetto became urgent matters. In August 1941, the children were receiving two cookies and a glass of milk for breakfast. Deportees were receiving a full ration of bread free of charge. About 250 poor Jews were receiving 0.5 to 2 kilograms (1.1 to 4.4 pounds) of bread per family per week. A special commission was set up to supervise its distribution.¹¹

In 1942, Jews from neighboring villages were brought into the Stopnica ghetto. There were 5,300 Jews living in Stopnica in April 1942, declining to 4,900 by June of that year. On the eve of Passover 1942, the president of the Judenrat and his son were shot. Between March and July 1942, many Jewish conscripts or volunteers were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp, where they worked in the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory. The volunteers were assured that they would receive wages and that their wives and children remaining in Stopnica would not be accosted. Many decided to go, as they believed that they could save their families’ lives and their own by working for the Germans. By the summer of 1942, rumors began to spread in Stopnica that Jews from nearby towns were being killed or deported to unknown destinations.¹²

The final liquidation of the Stopnica ghetto took place on November 5–6, 1942. It started when the Germans brought hundreds of Jews from Chmielnik to be deported together with Stopnica’s Jews on November 5. German police and Ukrainian auxiliaries, with the help of the local Polish police and fire brigade, shot some 400 elderly Jews and children at the Jewish cemetery. They were buried at the Jewish cemetery, and their bodies were subsequently dug up and burned by the Germans in a mobile crematorium. Of the other Jews in the ghetto, 1,500 young men were sent to the labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. Approximately 3,000 Jews were marched on foot to the train station in Szczucin, 20 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Stopnica, where they were loaded onto trains and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Jews caught hiding in the ghetto were shot on the spot or rounded up and included in this evacuation march.

In Stopnica itself, about 200 young men and women were kept in workshops and used for road building. In January 1943, this group was either sent to the ghetto in Sandomierz or to the labor camp in Poniatowa. All those at Poniatowa were killed when the entire camp was liquidated in November 1943.

The Stopnica Jews received some help from nuns in the local hospital. According to the report of the commander of the Armia Krajowa (Home Army, AK), dated June 21, 1944, there were instances of Jews being murdered near Stopnica by forces of the Narodowe Siły Zbrojne (National Armed Forces, NSZ), a right-wing faction of the Polish resistance. During military operations in 1944–1945, Stopnica was completely destroyed; not a single house remained standing.

SOURCES Brief articles on the Jewish community of Stopnica and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 19:237–238; and in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1248. The Stopnica ghetto is also mentioned in the following publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 474.

Documentation on the persecution of the Jews in the Stopnica ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/267, 993; 210/658); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6204, 6483); IPN (kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 47; Acc.1997.A.0404; and RG-15.022M, reel 9); VHF (more than 20 visual testimonies of survivors from Stopnica); WL (Microfilm series 34, Eye Witness Reports, reel 6); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1353; and M-1/E/1139, 1512, 1634, 1709, 1836, and 2655).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.
2. WL, London, Microfilm series 34, Eye Witness Reports, reel 6, (Skarżysko-Kamienna) No. 675, sworn testimony of an unnamed female Jewish survivor, Paris, February 15, 1954.
3. BA-L, B 162/6483, pp. 1064, 1071, witness statements of Pinkus G. and Moise W., 1954.
4. VHF, # 16472, testimony of Steven Dyzenhaus, 1996; # 43398, testimony of Rose Feintuch, 1998; # 12471, testimony of Alice Davis, 1996; # 15389, testimony of Paula Goldhar, 1996; and # 5306, testimony of Arthur Grossman, 1995.
5. USHMM, 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.
6. Ibid.; Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 108.
7. VHF, # 16472.
8. USHMM, 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.
9. Ibid.

10. VHF, # 5690, testimony of Esther Frenkel, 1995; # 5306.
11. USHMM, 1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47.
12. VHF, # 12471; # 5690; and # 15389.

STROMIEC

Pre-1939: Stromiec, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Stromiec is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) east of Białobrzegi. In 1937, there were 392 Jews living in Stromiec.

Following the German occupation of the region in September 1939, the German administration appointed a tradesman and pre-war secretary of the Jewish community, Josek (Józef) Fryszman, as the Judenrat chairman. The nearest German forces responsible for supervising the Jews in Stromiec were based at the Gendarmerie post in Białobrzegi.

On April 2, 1941, a number of Jews from the recently depopulated village of Przytyk were transferred to Stromiec.¹

As part of a larger ghettoization process of those Jews still living in the villages of Kreis Radom-Land, the Germans decided to liquidate Stromiec's community by transferring them to a larger ghetto at the end of 1941. However, according to the records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch based in Radom, "Thanks to efforts of the Supreme Council of the Jewish Community in Distrikt Radom," the Germans allowed several rural communities to remain in place by creating Jewish quarters for them.

The order to establish a ghetto in Stromiec was issued by the Kreishauptmann, Dr. Egen, in December 1941 and was implemented at the beginning of January 1942. Stromiec's Judenrat was further ordered to set up a hospital and open a soup kitchen.²

According to survivor Joseph Friedman, the ghetto was set up in early 1941. The same year, Friedman claims he witnessed the shooting of a married couple caught by Gendarmes from Białobrzegi as they were returning to the ghetto. Friedman stated that Stromiec's Jews remained in their own dwellings, as the pre-war Jewish neighborhood was chosen as the ghetto's location. While Jews were forbidden to leave the area of the ghetto, Friedman does not mention it being fenced or guarded, aside from two Białobrzegi Gendarmes who visited Stromiec every other day by bicycle.³ By 1942 the ghetto had 313 residents.

When it opened on March 8, 1942, the soup kitchen was serving 170 meals daily due to the efforts of Dawid Feldberg, Herszek Mandelbaum, and Szyja Racimora. All three were later appointed as members of the JSS branch established in Stromiec in April 1942. From the start, the JSS branch was in conflict with the Judenrat, which, as a representative of the Białobrzegi JSS noted, "simply assumed a negative attitude towards the work of the JSS branch" and helped very little with the maintenance of the kitchen's services. Nonetheless, the kitchen served over 8,000 meals in April 1942.⁴

According to Friedman, the Stromiec ghetto was liquidated in mid-June 1942. This assertion is partially corroborated by the documentation of the JSS Kreis office in Radom, which indicates that July 1942 was the last month the community was scheduled for the distribution of rations and cleaning products.

The liquidation of the Stromiec ghetto and the transfer of its 300 residents to the Białobrzegi ghetto were announced only one day in advance. Children were transported on wagons, while others were forced to walk the distance of 10 kilometers (6 miles). The Białobrzegi ghetto was already overcrowded with Jews transferred there from other towns in the vicinity.⁵

On October 1 (or according to some sources, September 1), 1942, German-led forces liquidated the Białobrzegi ghetto.⁶ Approximately 3,500 Jews were formed into a column and escorted through Stromiec to the train station in Dobieszyn, from where they were dispatched to the Treblinka extermination camp. During this march, police escorts beat or shot Jews who were unable to march. Judenrat chairman Fryszman was shot while the column was passing through Ksawerów Nowy.

SOURCES The pre-war figure for the Jewish population of Stromiec is from Krzysztof Urbański, *Gminy żydowskie małe w województwie kieleckim w okresie międzywojennym* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe, 2006), pp. 407–408.

For more details on the march of Stromiec's Jews via their native village to the Dobieszyn train station, see J. Kamiński and H. Stawiarski, "Żydzi w Stromcu," in *Stromiec. 750 lat osady i parafii* (Stromiec, 1992), pp. 86–87; an excerpt is cited in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawn. Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2004), pp. 84, 87. Urbański dates the transfer of Stromiec's Jews to Białobrzegi at the beginning of 1941 (p. 166).

Numbers for the Jewish population during the ghetto's existence are from Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955), who alternatively maintains that upon the liquidation of the Stromiec ghetto, its population was transferred to Kozienice, not Białobrzegi (see pp. 159, 179).

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/854-55 [JSS]; NMO [Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63]; BA-L (B 162/6305); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 1005).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/854 (Radom), p. 7.
2. Ibid, p. 5; AŻIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122.
3. VHF, # 1005, testimony of Joseph Friedman, 1995.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/855 (Radom), pp. 4, 5, 28.
5. Ibid., p. 45; VHF, # 1005.

6. October 1, 1942, is given by most Jewish survivors. See BA-L, B 162/6305, pp. 191, 196, 205, 209, 223, 226, 234. Others, however, date it on September 1; see pp. 213, 217.

SUCHEDNIÓW

Pre-1939: Suchedniów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Suchedniow, Kreis Kielce-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Suchedniów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Suchedniów is located 31 kilometers (19 miles) northeast of Kielce. The Jewish community of Suchedniów numbered 1,200 prior to the outbreak of World War II.

In the days that followed the German invasion, many of Suchedniów's Jews—including the community rabbi, Yisrael David Lajzman—fled eastward. The village was occupied on September 7, 1939. During one Sabbath, Germans burst into the synagogue and ordered the attending Jews to burn the Torah scrolls outside. Many of those gathered in the synagogue were taken that same day to perform forced labor on the outskirts of the village.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established by Germans in November 1939; it was chaired by Zelig Warszawski and included Chaim Reizman and Chaim Rozenberg. The following month, a large fine, according to one source of 500,000 złoty (although that seems too high), was imposed on the community. Then 15 local Jews, including two Judenrat members, were held hostage and freed upon receipt of the payment. By February 1940, Suchedniów's Jews were forced to wear armbands bearing the Star of David. There was a unit of German Gendarmerie and also Polish (Blue) Police based in the village.

In the first part of 1940, a number of young Jews were conscripted for work at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna, where they were used as unpaid labor to build roads, cut trees, and unload trains. By mid-1940, all Jews were laid off, followed by the introduction of a law ordering Jews to be paid for their labor; at that time the Jews were replaced by Poles.¹

Stanley Freed, a refugee from Łódź who settled in Suchedniów during the winter of 1940, remembers Jews walking home with their prayer shawls after services. The Polish and Jewish populations were still mixed at the time. Jewish store owners would pay poorer Jews to labor in their stead, as able-bodied Jews were conscripted to maintain the roads, cut trees, and hew stone. With time, these laborers, mostly newcomers, became “professional goers”; that is, the labor was unpaid, but workers were receiving food in lieu of payment.²

By September 1940, 300 newcomers had arrived in Suchedniów. The Judenrat attracted a doctor to the village and set up a self-help committee. The committee established a soup kitchen financed by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) but had to close it after two months due to a lack of funding.³

By November 1940, Wolf Sołomianik had become the chairman of the Judenrat. A. Nagiel was the Judenrat's secretary. In January 1941, there were 1,500 Jews in the town, including 350 refugees from Łódź. At this time, the committee was forced to discontinue the breakfasts fed daily to 180 poor children, as there were some cases of typhus among them. A number of children were sent to the hospital in Kielce, and their households were quarantined.⁴

On March 3, 1941, a transport of 300 Jews arrived from Płock, which had been incorporated into the Reich. On their route, they were held initially at the Działdowo (Soldau) transfer camp, where they were stripped of their belongings and starved for approximately one week before arriving in Suchedniów via Kielce. By the end of the month, a total of 650 Płock Jews arrived altogether. In April 1941, 2,100 Jews—including 900 newcomers—reportedly inhabited Suchedniów.

As early as May 1941, one of the deportees, Chaim Szafran, reported that watery soup was the only form of help Płock Jews were receiving from the Judenrat. He was paid 3 złoty for his daily labor, while a kilogram (2.2 pound) loaf of bread cost 9 złoty. He also believed that the Judenrat withheld financial assistance sent by other welfare institutions specifically for the Płock deportees; that it attempted to prevent Płock Jews from establishing their own representation in Suchedniów; and that it also prevented communication with representatives of welfare organizations visiting Suchedniów. With time, the situation for the Płock Jews deteriorated. Historians describe the attitude of the Suchedniów Judenrat towards Płock deportees as “misguided” (Krzysztof Urbański) and “reprehensible,” with a disproportionately high number of deaths caused by starvation (Adam Rutkowski).⁵

An open ghetto was established in the center of Suchedniów in the spring of 1941. According to the survivor Paula Mintz, loudspeakers and posted placards announced its establishment. The sources are not clear as to its size. While one states that three streets were included in the ghetto, others refer to just one (Handlowa Street). A curfew was introduced. The ghetto was unfenced, and there were no guards, except for boards posted at the ghetto limits announcing the death penalty for those caught crossing the ghetto boundary. Mintz recalls that Jews were very obedient and did not go outside the ghetto. Local Poles came to the ghetto to sell produce.⁶

A Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) unit of 40 men was organized to maintain order among the ghetto inhabitants. The family of Felix Brand, who moved to Suchedniów under an assumed Polish identity, had to flee the town after they were recognized as Jews and blackmailed by some members of the Jewish Police.⁷

There is no information as to when the Jews resumed their labor at the Skarżysko camp, but during the ghetto's existence, assembled labor brigades would leave the ghetto with special permission. Most were conscripts; however, there were also some volunteers. According to Anita Basen, some labor brigades were picked up each morning in Suchedniów and were driven back at night. There were also brigades, accord-

ing to Freed, that were stationed in the camp but would return to the ghetto each Saturday and then depart for another week of work on Monday morning. There is no information as to the form of payment at this time.

According to Freed, a group of 35 professional laborers from Suchedniów revolted at one point against a Jewish foreman who used to beat them and steal their food. The group refused to leave Suchedniów for Skarżysko under his supervision—this forced the Judenrat to appoint a new foreman.⁸

There were 2,375 Jews registered in Suchedniów in January 1942, 2,300 a month later, and 2,400 by June 1942. The ghetto had its own hospital, isolation ward, ambulatory, and public bath.⁹

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, the Germans enlisted more Jews for forced labor in June 1942, sending them to newly built camps in the vicinity of Kielce. Between August and September 1942, 570 Jews were brought in two transports from Suchedniów to Skarżysko-Kamienna. Shortly before the ghetto's liquidation, the Germans abruptly stopped bringing Suchedniów laborers back to the ghetto and held them permanently in the camp.¹⁰

German authorities chose Suchedniów as one of the locations for the concentration of the Jews of the Kreis before sending them to the Treblinka extermination camp. By late August 1942, approximately 600 Jews from Bliżyn and 350 from Samsonów had been transferred to the Suchedniów ghetto. Shortly before the deportation, in September 1942, 3,000 Jews from the Bodzentyn ghetto were brought in. Jews who were brought in during the last two days of the ghetto's existence were quartered on an empty lot near the river. Those interned there most likely included Jews from Łączna, Ostojów, Zagnańsk, and other settlements. They were not allowed to walk around but instead were forced to sit for about two days without any blankets or shelter.

The Suchedniów ghetto was liquidated on Yom Kippur, September 21, 1942. Following a selection, able-bodied individuals were sent to the Skarżysko camp. The remainder of the ghetto's residents were sent by train to Treblinka the following morning, September 22. Sources vary as to the number of Jews sent to Treblinka (3,000–4,500). The cleanup Kommando of 250 Jews that the Germans left behind was sent to the labor camp in Bliżyn on October 14, 1942.¹¹

Following the ghetto's liquidation, local Poles helped about 30 ghetto escapees to hide. In September 1944, they also assisted members of the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (Jewish Fighting Organization) following the Warsaw Uprising.

SOURCES The Suchedniów ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 325–326; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2004).

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (210/664 [AJDC]; 301/1157 [Relacje]; and Ring I/171-173); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and RG-15.079M [Ring I]); and VHF (# 2642, 5305, 8834, 10728, and 18557).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1157, testimony of Zająć, n.d.
2. VHF, # 18557, testimony of Stanley Freed, 1996.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 20, 1940.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/664, pp. 13, 15.
5. Ibid., RG-15.079M (Ring I/171, 172, and 173).
6. VHF, # 8834, testimony of Paula Mintz, 1995; # 10728, testimony of Anita Basen, 1996; and # 5305, testimony of Helen Lefkowitz, 1995.
7. Ibid., # 2642, testimony of Felix Brand, 1995.
8. Ibid., # 18557; # 10728.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 7, 1942.
10. VHF, # 18557; # 8834; and # 5305.
11. Ibid., # 5305.

SULEJÓW

Pre-1939: Sulejów (Yiddish: Silev), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sulejów, Kreis Petrikau, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sulejów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Sulejów is located on the Pilica River, 14 kilometers (9 miles) east-southeast of Piotrków Trybunalski. By 1939, Sulejów had a total of 6,500 inhabitants, 1,950 of whom were Jewish.¹

Immediately following the war's outbreak, Sulejów took on approximately 3,000 Jewish refugees escaping from larger, heavily bombed cities such as Piotrków Trybunalski, Tomaszów Mazowiecki, and Radomsko, as well as other places, including Kamieńsk and Rozprza.

Although initially spared, Sulejów also suffered from numerous raids from German Stuka dive-bombers on September 3 to 5, 1939. Some sources record that more than 1,000 Jews died in the course of two air raids on Sulejów on September 4. On September 5, a final Luftwaffe raid of 14 airplanes completed the town's destruction. Out of the 93 houses occupied by Jews, 80 were razed. The town's synagogue—and its Torah scrolls—went up in flames.²

Jewish victims were buried on September 10, 1939. The death toll of Sulejów's Jewish inhabitants cannot be calculated precisely. While a few of the victims were laid to rest in the cemetery, the majority were buried in two mass graves dug just outside the cemetery's walls. Jacob Kreitman, who owned a mill where many Jews sought refuge during the bombardments, supervised the ceremony. By setting up a shelter and a public kitchen in his sawmill, Kreitman also took care of many who were wounded and left homeless.³

More than a half of the Jewish residents of Sulejów who had fled during the bombardments—that is, primarily the

wealthy and all the members of the pre-war community council—either did not return to the occupied town or returned only briefly and then left for good. Sulejów's Jews were left without leadership until November 1, 1939, when the German authorities ordered the creation of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). Henocho Weintraub (Wajntraub) was nominated as chairman of the Judenrat.⁴ From the very beginning, Sulejów's Jews were grabbed off the streets and conscripted to fix roads and build drainage works in the town's proximity.

The only source providing a date for the establishment of the Sulejów ghetto is Krzysztof Urbański, who dates it in the late autumn of 1939 (presumably around the same time as in nearby Piotrków Trybunalski in October 1939). There is no information regarding the size of the ghetto or its location; however, the correspondence of the welfare organization Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) gives its address as Konecka Street 29.

The life of the ghetto inhabitants was especially oppressive, as it was located near an important ford over the Pilica River, as well as on a strategic road between Kielce and Łódź. For these reasons, forces of the Gendarmerie and the Wehrmacht diligently guarded it. The Gendarmerie prison that was set up on Piotrków Street in 1939 consisted of two chambers and a detention room. Many arrestees were sent on to the Gestapo in Piotrków, while some were shot outside the prison or in the streets of Sulejów.

An unknown number of Jews from Sulejów were resettled to the ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski at the end of 1939 or in the beginning of 1940, when transports of Jews were arriving there, primarily from parts of Poland incorporated into the Reich. In June 1940, the Sulejów ghetto housed 1,150 Jews. In the course of 1940, 90 Jewish workers from Sulejów were performing forced labor in labor camps, on average only 30 of them worked within Kreis Petrikau.

To ease the situation of Sulejów's Jews, a self-help committee led by the Judenrat's chairman, Henocho Weintraub, was established in April 1940. Sulejów was then sharing its subsidies with the nearby Przygłów settlement. Although there were only eight Jewish families in Przygłów before the war, the village was a summer resort with a number of intact empty lodgings, all of which had filled up quickly. By June 1940, 250 refugees and deportees from Łódź, Kraków, Płock, Głowno, Skierniewice, Stryków, Łyszkowice, Rogów, and other places had settled in Przygłów.

A number of newcomers settled in the Sulejów ghetto despite the terrible housing conditions. Available registers from January to April 1941 report 128 to 130 refugees. Unlike other ghettos, the refugee families benefited from only one third of the available social services, while the remainder were reserved for the local poor. The self-help committee set up a soup kitchen, which provided approximately 100 meals per day. Dr. I. Wajntraub oversaw an ambulatory that had been organized. By July 25, 1940, both the soup kitchen and ambulatory had been forced to close due to a lack of funds. When the kitchen was not operating, groceries were still distributed among the needy.⁵

In February 1941, the Judenrat reported to the main welfare benefactor for Sulejów's Jews—the American Jewish

Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC)—about the deteriorating economic situation, due to shrinking incomes and supplies. The same letter reports about the rising number of deaths and shortages of medicine.⁶ According to one account, some Jews were selected from the Sulejów ghetto and were transferred to the forced labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna.⁷

By August 1941, according to the Judenrat's census, the number of Jews in Sulejów had risen to 1,438. Out of that number, 192 were registered as working ("nonworking" included women, children, and forced laborers) in a total of 108 Jewish enterprises that were still permitted to operate. This included 52 workshop owners (employing another 20 Jews), 71 craftsmen, 56 laborers, and 8 professionals. On top of that, 100 men were performing forced labor. These numbers regarding the employed and forced laborers—as well as the total number of Jewish inhabitants—remained almost unchanged until the end of October 1941. The only numbers that witnessed a dramatic change were those of Jews requesting social help: rising to 750, of whom only one third received assistance.⁸

At the end of 1941, the Germans issued an order prohibiting Jews from leaving the nearby Piotrków ghetto and introduced the death penalty for Jews caught outside the ghetto. Although no similar information is available for Sulejów, it can be assumed that the same restrictions also applied there, especially for any Jews who left the town without permission.

The last registration of Sulejów's Jews took place in July 1942, counting 1,577 people. Most sources do not give a precise date for the liquidation of the ghetto, dating it only as October 1942. However, three separate records, included in *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo piotrkowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), clearly identify the date as October 15, 1942. During the course of the liquidation, the German Gendarmerie shot Dwojra and Moszek Feiman in their house. Another 7 Jews were shot by the Gestapo and Gendarmerie; the victims were Aidla, Fradla, and Berek Boruszek; Gołda Fuks; Josek Lahman; Moszek Nowak; and a woman by the first name of Brandla. The remaining Jews were expelled to the Piotrków Trybunalski ghetto, escorted by forces of the German Gendarmerie. On the way there, a 35-year-old tradesman named Gdala was shot. German postwar investigations indicate that the Jews from Sulejów were included in the next deportation from Piotrków on October 18, 1942, being sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁹

SOURCES There is not a single publication describing the life and the destruction of the Sulejów Jewish community. Brief descriptions and references are included in the following publications: Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 159–161; Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New

York: New York University Press, 2001); and Krzysztof Urbanowski, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004). See also Josef Kermish, "The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Piotrków," in Ben Giladi, ed., *A Tale of One City: Piotrków Trybunalski* (New York: Shengold in cooperation with the Piotrków Trybunalski Relief Association in New York, 1991).

Relevant information on the Sulejów ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/665 [AJDC]; 211/997 [ŻSS]; Ring I/151); BA-L (B 162/6234); USHMM (RG-15.079 [Ring I/151]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 47); VHF (# 6334); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47, 211/997.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/665.
3. See ibid., RG-15.079, reel 67, Ring I/151.
4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC) 210/665, Sprawozdanie za czas od 1 listopada 1939 do 31 maja 1941 and Nr. 85/40.
5. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/665.
6. Ibid., 20 lutego 1941.
7. VHF, # 6334, testimony of Abram Edelstein, 1995.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel 47, 211/997; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/665, Sprawozdanie za czas od 1 listopada 1939 do 31 maja 1941.
9. BA-L, B 162/6234, pp. 2259–2263, Einstellungsverfügung Sta. Giessen, March 29, 1968, as cited in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), p. 272.

SZCZOKOCINY

Pre-1939: Szczokociny, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Jędrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo śląskie, Poland

The town of Szczokociny is located 73 kilometers (45 miles) northeast of Katowice. On the eve of World War II, there were 2,590 Jews in Szczokociny, comprising approximately 700 families.¹

Following an intense battle with Polish cavalry, the German army occupied Szczokociny on September 3, 1939. With 250 houses destroyed and only 10 undamaged, Szczokociny was one of the most devastated towns in the Generalgouvernement. An estimated 60 percent of Jewish families left the town; many fled to eastern Poland, which was occupied by the Soviet Union after September 17, 1939.² Nonetheless, the German army administrator, due to fear of an epidemic, deported 200 Jews from Szczokociny to Jędrzejów and Żarnowiec during September. A few weeks later, a group of 300 Jews from Szczokociny (including a number just arrived from the town of Siewierz, in what later became Oberschlesien [incorporated into the Reich]) was transferred to Włoszczowa.

In the fall of 1939, the Jews of Szczokociny were obliged to wear armbands bearing the Star of David. Their businesses

were confiscated. The town's mayor, Johann Plutta (or Pluta), introduced a system of forced labor to clear the rubble. Each man had to work three days a week, 12 hours a day. Plutta appointed young and strong Jews as foremen. Their responsibilities included reporting to the German Gendarmerie those who dodged their assignments. At first, the punishment was 100 lashes, then 200. There were cases of people dying from these severe whippings.³

The 13-man Judenrat consisted of the pre-war members of the Jewish Council. Its premises were located at 4 Strażacka Street. Due to the lack of a consensus, the Germans quickly reduced the number of Judenrat members. The pre-war president of the community, Moszek Jakub Fajwicz (Fajwisz), chaired the Judenrat. Following his death in August 1941, Chil (Jeziel Mordechaj) Richt took over his function. Judenrat secretary H. Szwarcbaum died in a hospital in Kraków on August 22, 1941. The 40-year-old cobbler Dawid Izraelowicz served as the chairman's deputy until his death in the Jędrzejów hospital on May 25, 1942. Joel Dresner, a local tradesman, replaced him. Tannery owner Jakub Josek Ajzenberg (Ajzenberg) was also a Judenrat member. At the beginning of the occupation, the Judenrat reportedly organized a school for Jewish children.⁴

An open ghetto was set up in Szczokociny in 1940 or 1941. Located south of the market square, it included the following streets: Tylna, Strażacka, Wesoła, and the left side of Lelowska northeast of the market square. Another source places the ghetto on Leśna, Kraków, Ściegienny, and Wesoła Streets. It is possible that the ghetto's borders shifted during its existence.

Despite the ghetto being unfenced, Szczokociny's Jews could not leave it on pain of death. The exit streets were guarded. Jews caught outside the ghetto were shot by the Gendarmerie and buried in the Jewish cemetery. Polish farmers that found themselves living within the ghetto's limits were required to obtain special permits for entry and exit. Permits were also required of Jews who left the ghetto.

The ghetto was enclosed by a fence on June 22, 1941, and only after that date were Jews found outside its limits shot or sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

A five-man unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was set up by the German authorities to maintain order in the ghetto. The policemen wore yellow hats and were armed with rubber truncheons.

Following the ghetto's establishment, a typhus epidemic broke out, which caused the deaths of at least eight inmates. As there was no Jewish doctor in Szczokociny, the sick were sent to Jędrzejów, after a hospital was opened there in June 1941.

On September 18, 1940, 10 Jews were sent for labor on drainage works, most likely to Węgleszyn, located within Kreis Jędrzejów. The same year some Jews from Szczokociny reportedly labored in camps in Sędziszów and also at Skarżysko-Kamienna.

A self-help committee established by the Judenrat in Szczokociny opened a soup kitchen in December 1940. At that time, 1,245 Jews reportedly inhabited Szczokociny.⁵

On January 15 and 16, 1941, Jędrzejów's Kreishauptmann, Dr. Fritz von Balluseck, deported 150 Jews from Jędrzejów to Szczekociny. The Jews chosen were mainly the most impoverished in the Kreis center, including many refugees from other towns. The Judenrat housed most of them in the local synagogue. Terrible conditions in the still-ruined town prompted many of these deportees either to return to Jędrzejów or to move to some place else. Statistics from February 1941 mention only 69 refugees among a total of 1,300 Jews in Szczekociny. The soup kitchen was then serving 110 to 160 meals daily.⁶

By February 1941, the German authorities had set up an office of the Special Envoy for the Jewish Population in the Kreis (Sonderbeauftragter für die Jüdische Bevölkerung des Kreises Jędrzejów). The office was to handle all Jewish-related matters. Its three members were also on the Jędrzejów Judenrat and were charged with the supervision and control of all Jewish Councils in the Kreis, including that in Szczekociny.⁷

In May 1941, the ghetto was inhabited by 1,505 Jews. At that time, 100 Jews were performing unpaid labor tasks in the town allocated by the municipality in Szczekociny. Some 17 craftsmen could still operate their workshops; most were cobblers or fabricated the leather for shoes and boots. In addition, there were 30 other Jewish businesses still operating.

By March 1942, there were 1,300 Jews registered in the ghetto. In May 1942, the soup kitchen, then run by the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), which had been established in Szczekociny in September 1941, was serving 400 meals daily. The Judenrat members Richt, Izraelewicz, and Ajzenberg were nominated to chair the JSS Committee.⁸

At the end of August 1942, *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that almost all Jewish males had been conscripted for forced labor: 36 for the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna, 170 to the Chemische Werke AG Brieg (probably working on road construction), and another 40 for drainage work in Lipnica. The remainder of the able-bodied labored in Szczekociny for the Trading Co-operative, for the Gendarmerie and police, and at a German boarding school. At that time, the Germans ordered the registration of women aged 15 to 50. The number of Jewish policemen had increased from 5 to 12. They assisted the sanitary committee in maintaining the ghetto's cleanliness.⁹

The concentration in Szczekociny of the Jews inhabiting the surrounding villages began most likely in August 1942 and was completed less than a week before the ghetto's liquidation. Among other towns, it included the transfer of the Jews living in Radków, Dzierżgów, Moskorzew, Słupia, and Chlewice. The transfer, announced by the German authorities, was conducted with extreme brutality; for example, six elderly women and five men were shot by Gendarmes near Radków.

The newcomers were housed in the synagogue. Prior to deportation, contributions were levied on the community. According to one source, in the days before the ghetto's liquidation, all its original residents were transferred to the grounds of the local parish, that is, into a garden behind the presbytery.

The Szczekociny ghetto was liquidated on September 20, 1942, when Gendarmes and other police units escorted all the Jews to Sędziszów located 20 kilometers (12 miles) away. In the course of the liquidation Aktion, 15 Jews are reported as having been murdered. The elderly were transported on wagons, with the others marched in rows of 4. At the Mierzawa Brook near Tarnawa village, the men were forced to wade across only so that they would become drenched.

The Jews arrived in Sędziszów just as the ghetto there was being liquidated. The Jews from the nearby Wodzisław ghetto were most likely also brought there on that day. The able-bodied were selected and sent to work at HASAG in Skarżysko-Kamienna; the remainder were sent to the Treblinka extermination center the next day.¹⁰

Following the ghetto's liquidation, the municipality organized the auction of the Jewish property left behind. Then 27 Jews remained in Szczekociny to serve the Germans as forced laborers. This group included the Judenrat chairman Richt and the secretary of the Zionist youth, Jehuda Rafałowicz. Both were executed after being accused of the illegal act of listening to radio transmissions. On November 4, 1942, the remnant ghetto was reportedly still populated by 40 Jews. There is no information as to their subsequent fates.¹¹

SOURCES The Szczekociny ghetto is described in two articles: Mirosław Skrzypczyk, "Okaleczona księga. Rzeczy, miejsca, pamięć," pp. 122–124, and Edyta Gawron, "Szczekocińscy Żydzi w XX wieku, na przykładzie historii rodzin Leona Zelmana i Icka Kuperberga," pp. 65–68, both in M. Galas and M. Skrzypczyk, eds., *Żydzi szczekocińscy. Osoby, miejsca, pamięć* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Austeria, 2008). It is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 489.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/673, 211/488, 211/489, 211/492, 211/1001, 301/4633, and 301/7046); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reels 26 and 51; and RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, in provinces, and also in camps and ghettos]).

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1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 16, 1940; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1001 (Szczekociny), p. 1.
2. AŻIH, 301/7046, testimony of Czesław Jelonek and Mieczysław Migacz, 1986; Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 88; *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 16, 1940.
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, file 47 Kielce woj., pp. 220 and reverse (Szczekociny).
4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/673, p. 4; *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 1, 1941, June 3, 1942, and August 28, 1942; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/488 (Jędrzejów), p. 33; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1001, pp. 1–2.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1001, pp. 1–2.
6. Ibid., pp. 27–32; and Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/673, p. 10.

7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 27, 1941.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/488, p. 33; 211/492 (Jędrzejów), pp. 18–19; and *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1942.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 28, 1942.
10. AZIH, 301/7046; 301/4633, testimony of Róża Reiner, 1946; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, file 47 Kielce woj., pp. 220 and reverse (Szczekociny).
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489 (Jędrzejów), pp. 55–56; and RG-15.019M, reel 14, file 47 Kielce woj., pp. 220 and reverse (Szczekociny).

SZYDLÓW

Pre-1939: Szydłów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Szydłow, village, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Szydłów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Szydłów is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) southeast of Kielce. There were 540 Jews living there in 1939.

When the Germans occupied Szydłów in early September 1939, Wehrmacht soldiers plundered Jewish houses, shops, and craft businesses. The stolen goods were then loaded on trucks. Theft became a part of daily life. Often, Germans would knock on any door, enter the house, and drag the man found inside into the street. They would shave his beard, torture him, or shoot him for no reason. To avoid the terror, most men spent their days in the fields or in hiding, returning to their homes for the night. Later, the Jews would set up guards to alert the Jews if Germans were approaching the town. Some men were sent to labor camps in other cities.¹

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established as a liaison between the German authorities and the Jews in May 1940. L. Koralnik was its president. The Judenrat collected in advance money from members of the community to be prepared for imposed “contributions” or as bribes for Germans, when they rounded up men for deportation to labor camps. The Judenrat was also charged with providing the requested quota of laborers locally, which was on average about 80 workers per day. Jews repaired roads and worked in agriculture; only some of them received meager wages. They worked all day outside the town and returned to Szydłów in the evening.² A number of conscripts had to report in Chmielnik to be assigned to forced labor outside of Szydłów. In 1941, the German “Oemler” Road Construction Company established a forced labor camp for Jews in Szydłów.

There were about 200 refugees, mainly from Łódź, living in Szydłów in the summer of 1940. According to Judenrat estimates, 80 percent of them had no resources to support themselves. Szydłów Jews, numbering at the time 180 families (800 people), were scarcely able to help them. For a time, owners of Jewish mills supported them by providing bread, but by August 1940, the mills were no longer operating. Therefore, the Judenrat demanded that the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) headquarters in Kraków provide a

monthly subsidy to open a soup kitchen. Until then, Szydłów was receiving such small quantities of groceries from the AJDC that it was physically difficult to divide them up among the over 400 people in need. Four nearby small Jewish settlements were subordinated administratively to the Judenrat in Szydłów: Kurozwęki, 250 Jews (including 70 deportees); Raczyce, 105 (40); Tuczępy, 96; and Potok, 75.³ By September 1940, the pre-war number of Jews had almost doubled, as there were 1,000 Jews living in Szydłów.

In early December 1940, the Judenrat in Radom, the Distrikt capital, enlisted thousands of its poor Jews for deportation to places in Kreis Busko and Kreis Opatów. Many of them were transferred to Szydłów. Again, all were sent without possessions or means of existence. Another group of 150 deportees was transferred to Szydłów in February 1941 from Płock and Bodzanów. These expellees had been deported via the Działdowo (Soldau) transit camp. Most of them arrived exhausted and sick with flu. Because the Judenrat in Busko was unable to maintain its deportees, a number were transferred to Szydłów with permission from the German authorities. At some point Jews from the surrounding settlements were also moved to Szydłów. There were 770 Jews living in Szydłów in May 1941 (including 170 deportees); by September 1941, the total number had risen to 1,004.

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), based in Kraków, was created especially for providing social and medical relief for deportees and the needy. The local branch in Szydłów was organized in March 1941.⁴ At the end of 1941, I. Djament was its president.⁵ When malnutrition and poor hygienic conditions led to an outbreak of typhus, the Jewish Council established a hospital. The sanitation committee checked the Jewish quarter for cleanliness.⁶ On orders from the town’s mayor, a six-man unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was created in August 1941. In October 1941, a newly organized Association of Jewish Craftsmen registered 34 local craftsmen. M. Taub was elected as its president, with M. Cholewa as his deputy.⁷

In September 1941, deportees from Płock and Łódź complained to the JSS headquarters in Kraków, accusing the president of the Society for the Protection of Health (TOZ), L. Koralnik (who also held the position of president of the Judenrat), of denying them social help to which they were entitled. Unlike other towns in the Kreis, there was no soup kitchen in Szydłów, nor were they receiving their full food rations. According to the deportees, Koralnik was selling most of the food to other towns and pocketing the money, claiming to have saved it in case of illnesses. At the time, less than half of the deportees were receiving one small meal a day. More than six months after their arrival, most deportees were still quartered in shops without heating or access to water. The deportees demanded that they be represented on the TOZ committee to better manage ration distribution.⁸ A soup kitchen was opened on November 30, 1941, providing only 60 meals per day; a month later, up to 125 meals daily.⁹

On January 1, 1942, the Germans announced that the entire village of Szydłów would be recognized as a ghetto. The

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punishment for leaving it was death. There were 742 Jews (226 of them were deportees) living in Szydłów in April 1942. The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence, but Szydłów's borders were still marked by medieval defensive walls. Szydłów was one of the ghettos where access for non-Jews was not forbidden. Jews had to obtain special permits to leave the town. German Gendarmes shot a number of Jews during the existence of the ghetto. On July 5, 1942, Szapsia Wajnryb was appointed as the new president of the Judenrat.¹⁰

There is somewhat contradictory information regarding the last months of the ghetto, especially regarding the number of Jews living there and the transfers to other ghettos. According to two different sources, 2,000 Jews were resettled from Szydłów to Jędrzejów. One of the sources dates the resettlement in April; the other, in June 1942.

The liquidation of the ghetto took place on October 3, 1942. On that day 150 Jews capable of work were deported to labor camps, and the remaining 1,000 were transferred to Chmielnik, where they were added to the Chmielnik transport to the Treblinka extermination camp that left three days later. On the day of the deportation, Gendarmes shot 15 Jews. Their bodies were buried in the town's Jewish cemetery. Their names are not known.

A group of about 200 Jews who had probably gone into hiding outside the village before or during the liquidation of the ghetto returned to Szydłów. They were forced into a small ghetto consisting of a few buildings. On November 7, 1942, all of them, including a number of Jews from nearby Kurozwęki, were taken to Staszów. They were collected in the market square and guarded throughout the night by Ukrainian auxiliaries without food or water. The next day, together with almost 6,000 Staszów Jews, they were ordered to march to the Szczucin train station, and from there they were sent to Treblinka.¹¹ During military operations in 1944–1945, 90 percent of Szydłów was destroyed.

SOURCES Much information on the history of Szydłów's Jews can be found in a chapter of Agnieszka Sabor, *Sztetl: Śladami żydowskich miasteczek: Działoszyce-Pińczów-Chmielnik-Szydłów-Chęciny: Przewodnik* (Kraków: Wydawn. Austeria, 2005). Other relevant publications include Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach: FPHU "XYZ," 2007), pp. 152–153; and the official German-censored wartime publication *Gazeta Żydowska* (1941–1942). The ghetto is also mentioned in Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1282. There is also an article by A. Penkalla, "Synagoga i gmina w Szydłowie," *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (1982): 57–96.

Documentation on the persecution of the Jews in the Szydłów ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/1011; and 210/677); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN,

ASG], reel 14; Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); VHF (# 02406); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 02406-5, testimony of Helen Kupfer, 1995; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 14.
2. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154 (AJDC); *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 25, 1941; VHF, # 02406-5.
3. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154 (AJDC).
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 25, 1941.
5. Ibid., December 17, 1941.
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 14; VHF, # 02406-5.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 25, 1941.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS).
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 17, 1941, and February 11, 1942.
10. Ibid., August 5, 1942.
11. Joseph Goldstein, "Extracts from a Ghetto Diary," in Elhanan Erlikh, ed., *Sefer Stashov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Stashov be-Yisrael, 1962), pp. 30–31; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 14.

SZYDŁOWIEC

Pre-1939: Szydłowiec, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Szydłowiec, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Szydłowiec, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Szydłowiec is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Radom on the Korzeniówka River. On the eve of World War II, between 7,000 and 8,500 Jews lived in the town. About 150 workshops in the clothing and shoe industries employed about 1,400 Jews.

The Luftwaffe bombed Szydłowiec on September 4, 1939. Then on September 9, German forces entered the city and soon started to implement various antisemitic measures. The houses of Jews who had tried to flee the advancing enemy forces were looted by their Polish neighbors. On September 23, the Germans burned down the synagogue. Jews were seized for forced labor, mainly to clear the rubble from war-damaged houses. Later, they were used to dig up the bodies of Polish soldiers who had been buried where they had fallen in battle. These bodies were then reburied in Christian cemeteries.¹

Soon a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by Sh. Eisenberg. A Jewish police force, a Jewish labor office, and a sanitary committee were established as auxiliary organs of the Judenrat. Early in 1940, the Jewish community was forced to pay a "fine" of 5 million złoty. After already having paid 50,000 złoty a few weeks earlier, the Judenrat was unable to meet this onerous demand, and 23 prominent members of the Jewish community were executed, among them Sh. Eisenberg. He was replaced as Judenrat head by Abraham Redlich. According to survivor Abraham Finkler, the Jewish Council now planned a strategy of "intervention," using large amounts



German police inspect the household possessions of Jewish families loaded onto horse-drawn wagons, before granting admission to the Szydłowiec ghetto, 1942.

USHMM WS #83869, COURTESY OF YVA

of money to bribe people in charge, and three members of the Jewish community—Yerakhmiel Morgenbesser, Abraham Rosenbaum, and Pinchas Steinmann—were chosen to conduct the “negotiations.”²

In March 1940, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a ghetto in the town. Due to the large number of Jews in Szydłowiec, the German plan proved to be impracticable. Instead, rules were imposed that forbade Jews from leaving their houses in the evening and at night. It was also illegal for them to use Kościuszko Street between Kielce Street and the main road leading to Radom.³

This “open ghetto” made it much easier for the Jews to remain in contact with the countryside and obtain food, but a number of Jews were shot and killed when caught outside the town trying to smuggle food back in.⁴ Nevertheless, the relatively lax conditions made Szydłowiec an attractive destination for Jews from other parts of the country. Until the end of 1941, the Jewish underground press, printed in Polish and Yiddish, circulated in the Jewish community. Szydłowiec was also home to a group of Hasidic Jews, led by a student named Matus, which, despite the harsh conditions, continued to practice an optimistic religion, celebrating earthly pleasures like dancing, singing, and increasing their families.⁵ Also, a secret kindergarten was in existence to help take care of the youngest and most helpless in the community.⁶

Many Jewish refugees arrived in Szydłowiec. Most had no means of support and depended on the local Jewish community to provide them with food and shelter.⁷ Already in the winter of 1939–1940, the Judenrat had organized a soup kitchen to reduce hunger within the Jewish community. By June 1941, conditions had become so severe that the soup kitchen was no longer able to serve daily meals and instead provided only some bread. To celebrate Passover in the spring of 1941, money and flour were handed out to 859 Jews in need.⁸ Soon the provision of bread instead of meals became the main way to feed the Szydłowiec Jews. About twice a week, the Jewish Council

distributed bread, for instance, 750.2 kilograms (1,650.4 pounds) to 338 people between August 15 and 19, 1941.

The Jewish community was also in charge of providing food and shelter for Jews who passed through Szydłowiec while being resettled to other locations. For example, on July 23, 1941, about 200 Jews, mainly women and children, arrived from Wyszogród on their way to Suchedniów and Stupia Nowa (Kielce district). The Szydłowiec Jews provided medical assistance, food for the two days of their stay, and bath and disinfection, as well as shelter in the synagogue. On the morning of their departure, each person received 2 złoty for the trip. Many of the children, the sick, and the elderly were put on carriages owned by Jews and transported to their destination.⁹

Over time, assisted by the bribes, relations between the Szydłowiec Judenrat and the various German and local authorities in Szydłowiec and Radom improved, so the situation in Szydłowiec was more favorable for the Jews than in many other ghettos.¹⁰ According to Finkler, Szydłowiec became known as the “town of refuge,” where Jews could hide under assumed names and did not have to register—apparently, the Szydłowiec Judenrat never reported the correct figures for “immigrants” and “emigrants” to the Gestapo and other authorities.¹¹ The Jewish Council had obtained the right to issue travel permits for Jews (a privilege previously reserved only for the Radom Judenrat), and these permits became an important source of income for the Szydłowiec Jews—income that enabled the council “to distribute money left and right to the ‘murderers in white gloves’ in order to save Jewish lives.”¹² As Finkler states, this task was not an easy one for the members of the council: “Who can comprehend the deep inner struggles of a Jewish Council member who wanted to remain in harmony with his conscience?”¹³

Bribing authorities turned out to be an efficient way to save Jewish lives. As ordered by the head of the German labor office, Ribitsky (or Robitzky), in the summer of 1940, lists of all unmarried men between the ages of 16 and 60 had to be prepared; rumors spread that the young men were to be sent to forced labor camps. As a result, many weddings quickly took place within the Jewish community. On August 20, 1940, men from Szydłowiec were sent to labor camps in the Lublin area, in Józefów and Janiszów along the Vistula River near Zawichost. As a part of the road and railway construction program “Otto,” Jews from Szydłowiec also worked there in quarries and at construction sites. Furthermore, the Jewish community had to supply 500 Jews per day for work at German companies, offices, and institutions. Thanks to the good relations of the Judenrat with the Gestapo headquarters in Radom and the head of the labor office in Lublin, Dr. Hecht, the Jews succeeded in bribing officials, and on November 11, 1940, all 400 forced laborers from Szydłowiec were returned from the Janiszów forced labor camp to their hometown.¹⁴ After two weeks of rest, they had to perform forced labor in their hometown, clearing snow from the streets and doing other tasks.

On December 22, 1941, Kreishauptmann Dr. Friedrich Egen issued a decree on the establishment of ghettos in Kreis

Radom-Land. Jews from the smaller villages had to be resettled into a number of specified locations. In Szydłowiec, the poorest area of the town was designated to become the “Jewish residential area,”¹⁵ covering only one quarter of the town. Apparently, at that time there was also a typhus epidemic in Szydłowiec.¹⁶ The Jewish Council tried to negotiate with the local authorities, claiming that it would be impossible to force all the Szydłowiec Jews together with the new arrivals into such a small area. Finkler reports that their pleas were supported by “Madame X,” who was married to a high-ranking German official in the Distrikt Radom government but was also the mistress of Karl Lasch, the governor of Distrikt Radom. When approached by the Jewish Council, Madame X persuaded the governor to allow the Szydłowiec Jews to remain in their homes and was rewarded with a trip to the Warsaw ghetto, where she received jewelry, fur coats, and watches.¹⁷ In the end, the Szydłowiec ghetto was never enclosed by a fence, but on January 1, 1942, the Jews were forbidden to go outside the town limits, which made it impossible for them to buy groceries or sell their products, except at great risk. In late August and early September 1942, up to 9,000 Jews from surrounding towns and villages, including Wolanów, Skaryszew, and Wierzbica, were brought into Szydłowiec. This brought the total number of Jews in the Szydłowiec ghetto by mid-September up to between 12,000 and 15,000 people.

The liquidation of the Szydłowiec ghetto began on September 23, 1942. At 6:00 A.M., it was surrounded by large numbers of Lithuanian and Ukrainian auxiliaries, Polish police, and local firemen, commanded by SS-Untersturmführer Franz Schippers of the headquarters of SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Herbert Böttcher, who had already supervised expulsions from other towns in the area.

The Jews had to gather at a square, the Straw Market, and Schippers announced that those who were able to pay 1,000 złoty would not be deported or could at least stay in the area, being sent to the recently established labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna.

The first deportation train left Szydłowiec on September 23, the second one, on September 25, 1942. Each train comprised 50 wagons; in this deportation, more than 10,000 people were deported. The Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Several hundred Jews were shot on the spot or on the 4-kilometer (2.5-mile) march to the railway station, among them the patients of the Jewish hospital, including Rabbi Neta Rosenberg.

A group of 150 Jews and the Jewish Police were kept in Szydłowiec to remove Jewish corpses from the roads, to collect Jewish belongings that had been left behind, and to clean out the houses. They were kept in the building of Pinkert’s tanning factory. Very soon they were joined by other Jews who had remained in hiding. Thus, the remnant group rose to about 600 people. On September 30, 1942, 50 of them were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp, with most others following them on October 2. There they were selected. Those not fit for work at the labor camp were sent to Treblinka.

Only about 70 or 80 Jews were left behind in Szydłowiec. They were now housed at Fishl’s tannery, and conditions were worse than ever.¹⁸ As throughout the Generalgouvernement, the terror had increased, and still more Jews had emerged from hiding to find refuge in the few remaining “remnant ghettos” (*Restghettos*). In October 1942, in the Szydłowiec camp, 29 people were hanged. It was probably this severe cruelty that motivated some people to help the Jews. For example, Bazyli and Zofia Antoniak, a Ukrainian couple, assisted in hiding the two daughters of a Jewish friend. The girls were six and seven years old, and the Antoniaks took them to relatives in Galicia who had no idea that the girls were Jewish. Once the deed of the Antoniaks was uncovered, Bazyli was sentenced to death and his wife to three years in prison. On November 1, 1942, Jews were selected again, with the strongest ones being sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp.¹⁹ Over the following days, probably all the remaining Jews were taken to Staszów. From there they were sent to the Bełżec killing center.

But this was still not the end of the camps for Jews in Szydłowiec. Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Krüger encountered difficulties in completing the “Final Solution of the Jewish question” as ordered by Himmler by December 1942. Therefore, on November 10, 1942, he issued a decree recognizing “Jewish residential quarters” (*Judenwohnbezirke*) in several towns in Distrikt Radom, including Szydłowiec, as well as in other towns in Distrikt Krakau and Distrikt Galizien. The goal was to lure Jews out of hiding and into these designated camps by December 1, 1942. These camps (so-called *Sammelghettos*) offered to provide shelter, food, and safety, while all Jews found outside these camps after December 1, 1942, were to be executed. On December 4, 1942, 800 (according to some sources, 1,000) Jews from Radom were brought into the new ghetto, which was located in a former tannery on the outskirts of Szydłowiec and surrounded by barbed wire. Very quickly, the population of this new Szydłowiec ghetto rose to about 5,000, mostly composed of Jews coming from the Końskie and Skaryszew regions. Again a Judenrat was established, with Yerachmiel Morgenstern as its leader. Even people from forced labor camps risked their lives by escaping from there to find a new home in the ghetto. Survivor Abraham Brojnborg describes terrible conditions in the camp including unsanitary conditions, starvation, and disease. People died everywhere, and dogs running around were carrying human limbs in their mouths—which they had torn off the corpses.²⁰ There was also an epidemic of typhus.

The new camp only existed for less than five weeks. On January 8, 1943, it was surrounded by SS and German police under the orders of the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) Radom. Food was no longer provided. On January 13, the ghetto was liquidated. About 80 people were killed during this Aktion; the others were selected. About 1,000 were sent by truck to the forced labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna, and all the others were deported by train to Treblinka.

According to one source, about 3,000 Jews from Szydłowiec survived the war, but this presumably included those who fled successfully into the Soviet Union in 1939.²¹

SOURCES A number of valuable sources are available on the history of the Jews of Szydłowiec. The most useful for the preparation of this summary was Berl Kagan, ed., *Memorial Book Szydłowiec* (New York: Shidlowtzer Benevolent Association in New York, 1989), which contains a number of personal testimonies by survivors such as E. Lifschutz, “An Outline of the History of the Jews of Szydłowiec,” pp. 21–32; Berl Kagan, “Life in Szydłowiec before the Holocaust,” pp. 86–90; Isaac Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction of Szydłowiec,” pp. 93–137; Abraham Finkler, “A Ghetto without Barbed Wire,” pp. 137–161; and Berl Kagan, “Summary,” pp. 345–349. Other important sources include *Żydzi Szydłowieccy* (Szydłowiec, 1997); and B. Cohen, ed., *Szydłowieczer Yizkor Bukh* (New York, 1974). The Szydłowiec ghetto and its successor camps are also described in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 557–561; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom, 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 507, no. 4867. Felicia Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), describes the creation of the HASAG factory camp and its interaction with the ghetto in the town.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Szydłowiec during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/55, memoirs of Abraham Finkler); BA-L (B 162/4872; 206 AR-Z 19/64; 206 AR-Z 15/65); CAHJP (HM/3540a, 6711); IPN (Sn 5/6/67); and YVA (O-2/999; O-3/3185, 3244, 3985, 4120, and 4234; M-1/E/264, 1707, and 1752; M-1/Q/452, 453; for SS officer Franz Schippers, see JM/3786, Nr. 602). Relevant collections at USHMM include Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC), 210/676; and RG-15.019M (IPN—ASG).

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1999 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1968–) contains, among others, case no. 786, including the report of Johann Reichl of Polizei-Kompanie Münster about events during the liquidation of the Szydłowiec ghetto in August–September 1942 and the statement of Abraham Brojnberg about the conditions in the Szydłowiec camp at the end of 1942. These sources can also be found in BA-L, 206 AR-Z 19/64. The documentation of the trial against the Antoniaks who had tried to hide Jewish children is held at APR (sygn. Sondergericht 2).

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NOTES

1. Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction,” p. 98.
2. Finkler, “A Ghetto without Barbed Wire,” p. 143.
3. Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction,” p. 109.

4. Kagan, “Summary,” p. 346.
5. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 226, based on AŻIH, 301/55.
6. Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction,” p. 107.
7. Kagan, “Summary,” p. 346.
8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/676, Jewish Council Szydłowiec report, July 9, 1941.
9. Ibid., Jewish Council Szydłowiec to AJDC, July 24, 1941.
10. Kagan, “Summary,” pp. 345–349.
11. Finkler, “A Ghetto without Barbed Wire,” p. 146.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., pp. 150–151.
14. See Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction,” pp. 104–105; and Finkler, “A Ghetto without Barbed Wire,” pp. 151–154.
15. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 122, based on Kreishauptmann an die Bürger im Kreise Ilza, December 22, 1941, AŻIH, Niemieckie materiały okupacyjne, Fot. Dok. niem., no. 60.
16. Finkler, “A Ghetto without Barbed Wire,” p. 139.
17. Ibid., pp. 139–140.
18. Milstein, “Chronicle of the Destruction,” p. 129.
19. Kagan, “Summary,” p. 348.
20. BA-L, B 162/6375, pp. 802–807, statement Abraham Brojnberg, May 20, 1971. See also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 38 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 786, pp. 207–270.
21. Kagan, “Summary,” p. 349.

TARŁÓW

Pre-1939: Tarłów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Tarlow, Kreis Ilza (later Kreis Starachowice), Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tarłów, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The village of Tarłów is located approximately 90 kilometers (56 miles) east of Kielce. Tarłów had approximately 1,500 Jewish residents at the outbreak of the war in 1939.¹ Immediately upon arriving in the village, the commander of the Wehrmacht troops summoned Tarłów’s two priests, Madejski and Wójcik, and the local rabbi. The three were ordered to go from house to house and collect all the men at the town’s school, as the commander had an announcement for them. According to one testimony, the German authorities executed a number of Jews soon after entering Tarłów.

A number of Polish and Jewish hostages from Tarłów were sent to a civilian prison camp in Zochcin (near Opatów) that had been hastily organized by the Germans. Poles and Jews from Lipsko, Opatów, Sandomierz, Zawichost, and other towns were kept there on an open field, surrounded by barbed wire. The prisoners were released within a week and returned to their homes.

The plunder of Jewish property started immediately; endless searches of Jewish houses were conducted, and the owners’ possessions were taken away in trucks. Jewish businesses were confiscated, and Jews were conscripted for forced labor.

The Germans also carried out frequent roundups; few were successful. Usually, by the time the Germans were able to surround the village, local Jews had run into the fields or hid with their Polish neighbors. There is one report of a group of escapees who were detained but were saved by a sudden downpour; as the Germans took cover in the nearest house, the Jews escaped.

The German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and ordered its members to collect contributions from Tarłów's Jews. According to one testimony, despite the poverty of local Jews and difficulties collecting them, the Judenrat "racked up double the sums" demanded.²

When the first deportees from Łódź were transferred to Tarłów in March 1940, the Judenrat organized a self-help committee. Deportees arrived at the peak of a serious epidemic that broke out in December 1939 and lasted until June 1940. The Judenrat appointed wealthier families to provide for their sustenance. In April 1941, alehouse owner Chaim Rychtenberg was the chairman of the Judenrat, and the pre-war community secretary Szymosz Gruman was the Judenrat's secretary.³

In the spring of 1941, large numbers of escapees from the Warsaw ghetto, where living conditions had deteriorated, settled in Tarłów. By May 1941, there were 1,960 Jews in Tarłów, close to a quarter of them newcomers. To cope with the growing number of deportees, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in Kraków to take over the provision of welfare from the Jewish Councils. Starachowice's JSS committee set up a local branch in Tarłów in September 1941. Josek Lederman led the committee; the other two members were the Judenrat's chairman Rychtenberg and the secretary Gruman. The JSS opened a soup kitchen serving initially three meals to 85 people daily.⁴

In March 1942, all the JSS members suddenly resigned, explaining that they were unable to carry on due to a lack of funds. Tarłów approved a new committee consisting of Icek Zylber, Herszek Mendelbaum, and Fiszek Zylberman. Tarłów was not authorized to make personnel changes in the JSS composition, and the headquarters refused to accept the new appointments. Then Lederman revealed the real reasons behind the resignations. He and Rychtenberg had been summoned to appear before the Sondergericht (special court) in Radom on May 12, 1942, charged with "conveying food products for the American (Jewish) Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw in April 1940." They resigned from their JSS posts, as they expected they would be convicted and wanted to give the new committee time to be ready to take over their posts. In the meantime, these charges were dropped, and the former JSS committee went back to work.⁵

An open ghetto was set up in Tarłów on May 12, 1941, in a part of the village already populated by Jews. The forced labor and deterioration of living conditions in the overcrowded ghetto resulted in a typhus epidemic. The Sanitation Column opened a delousing facility, but it was still unable to completely prevent the spread of the disease. The synagogue initially was used as a quarantine ward, and those who were

severely ill were transported on wagons to the hospital in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. When the German authorities prohibited sending the sick to Ostrowiec, the synagogue was turned into an epidemic hospital. The only doctor in Tarłów, a Pole, attended the sick for no payment, but medication, provided primarily by the AJDC, remained scant. After the Germans proclaimed the ghetto closed in December 1941, the only open pharmacy remained on the Aryan side. The epidemic lasted nine months and was eventually contained in March 1942.⁶

According to the Judenrat, by April 1942, 2,200 Jews were squeezed into the ghetto, 700 of them refugees. Besides Warsaw and Łódź, they also came from smaller towns including Józefów nad Wisłą and Zwoleń. Now the JSS converted the Tarłów synagogue into a shelter for homeless Jews. Since the JSS "was convinced that refugees are dying mostly of dirt, not hunger," the synagogue was sanitized, fitted with a stove, and given beds padded with straw mattresses, a tub for washing clothes, and a broom. A Sanitation Column of 22 volunteers under the command of two honorary JSS members, Gerszoch Kuperbum and Boruch Wajnberg, kept the shelter clean.⁷

Despite the death penalty for Jews leaving the ghetto and any Poles who helped them (effective in the Kreis from December 15, 1941), hunger in the ghetto compelled Jews to risk their lives, buying food from villagers. In the Radom prison, Pinkus Wajsbium was sentenced to death for smuggling food and leaving the Tarłów ghetto.

In June 1942, German forces arrived in Tarłów and rounded up 70 young men and women. For six days they were guarded "earnestly" by the Jewish Police and unable to see their families. They all were then loaded onto a single truck and taken to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna.⁸ From July 1942, 100 Jewish laborers worked in the newly opened phosphor mine in Tarłów. The following month, the number of Jewish laborers there doubled. The nature of the work caused frequent lacerations, and a Jewish nurse was sent daily to dress the wounds.⁹

The Germans selected Tarłów as a place of concentration for Jews from Kreis Starachowice before their deportation to extermination camps. Approximately 800 Jews from Kazanów (October 17), 3,000 from Lipsko (October 17), 800 from Solec nad Wisłą (September), 400 from Chotcza and surroundings,¹⁰ 600 from Ciepiałów (October 24), and 100 from Bałtów-Pętkowice (September 24) were brought there. There are also reports of a number of Jews being transferred from Opole Lubelskie and Kozienice.¹¹

The ghetto in Tarłów was liquidated on October 29, 1942. All the ghetto's Jews were driven to the train station in Jasice, which was guarded by SS and Ukrainian militiamen. In Jasice, they were loaded onto trains destined for the Treblinka extermination camp. Approximately 100 Jews were killed before reaching the station, most of them children or the elderly. One account states that Jews were deported from Tarłów on trucks with the assistance of Jewish policemen.

The search for the ghetto escapees started on the day of its liquidation, as Germans troops combed nearby villages. Avail-

able sources differ regarding the number of Jews deported from Tarłów, ranging from approximately 5,000 to 10,000 people; around 8,000 is likely most accurate.

SOURCES The Tarłów ghetto is mentioned briefly in Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955); Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979); and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 248–249.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/681, 211/101, 301/1067, 301/1513, 301/2016, 301/3678); USHMM (RG-15.084M [AŻIH Relacje]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 47; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (e.g., # 22009); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47.
2. AŻIH, 301/1067.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC).
4. AŻIH, 301/3678, testimony of Regina Gerszt, 1947; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. AŻIH, 301/1067.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47.
10. More than 400 Jews were concentrated in Chotcza from August to late October 1942, including some brought in from a nearby labor camp. However, available sources do not use the term *ghetto* for this concentration. See *ibid.*, 211/308 (Chotcza); and AŻIH, 301/1513, testimony of Gerszon Edelman, 1946.
11. VHF, # 22009, testimony of Dora Hershman, 1996.

TOMASZÓW MAZOWIECKI

Pre-1939: Tomaszów Mazowiecki, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Tomaszów, Kreis center, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Łódź województwo, Poland

Tomaszów Mazowiecki lies approximately 60 kilometers (37 miles) southeast of Łódź on the Wolburka River. In 1939, there were approximately 13,000 Jews residing in Tomaszów, which was famous for its textile factories that were mostly owned by Jewish businessmen.

German troops occupied the town on September 6, 1939. During the first weeks of the occupation a detachment of Einsatzgruppe III (Security Police) was active in Tomaszów, searching Jewish apartments for weapons. Jews were mistreated

and about 300 were arrested, along with many non-Jews. Some 90 Jews were sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Many Jews were evicted from their apartments to provide living quarters for German officials; Jewish businesses were marked with a Star of David and placed under trusteeship. In November 1939, the synagogue on Jerozolim Street was set on fire, and the Jews were prevented from extinguishing it.¹

In the fall of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat), under the leadership of Baruch Schoeps and his deputy Leibush Warsager, was established in Tomaszów. The Judenrat had to organize the collection of a large contribution for the Germans and meet their demands for forced laborers. Other tasks for the Judenrat included registering the Jews, establishing a medical support system, maintaining contact with the Jewish Councils of other ghettos, dealing with social welfare, and maintaining cultural life.

When the Nazis established the Generalgouvernement in the fall of 1939, the town became the center of Kreis Tomaszów within Distrikt Radom. The first Kreishauptmann was Dr. Fritz von Balluseck (until November 1940); he was succeeded by Dr. Karl Glehn, who served in that capacity until the town's liberation in January 1945. From May 15, 1940, the head of the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tomaszów was SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Thiel.

In 1940, a number of Jewish men were rounded up and sent to work in various labor camps in Distrikt Lublin. Around 1,000 Jews were required to perform forced labor in and around Tomaszów.

In December 1940, Kreiskommissar Glehn ordered the establishment of three separate Jewish residential districts (open ghettos) in Tomaszów. The Jews were forbidden to leave these residential districts and faced a fine of 100 złoty for their first offense; the sum increased considerably for subsequent transgressions.² Mira Ryczke Kimmelman has described the relocation efforts:

The order to move was announced at the beginning of December 1940, giving us just a few weeks to find a place to live. When the Polish population moved out of their houses, Jews were moved in. Until now most of the Tomaszów Jews lived in apartments. Now they had to squeeze into one room, in some cases two and three families to occupy one room. The Jewish Council . . . was in charge of assigning living quarters.³

Altogether about 16,000 Jews were confined within the three ghettos in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, including approximately 3,000 Jews from the surrounding villages. Only 250 houses had to provide living space for all the residents—that is, more than 60 people per house.

The Jewish Council was obliged to organize an internal ghetto police, which maintained order and guarded the ghetto borders internally. The Jewish Police was also entrusted with enforcing the fixed prices for food, shop opening hours, the cleaning of the streets, and the curfew. The German

Schutzpolizei was responsible for securing the ghetto border externally.⁴ Hans Pichler of the Schutzpolizei was the officer in charge of ghetto affairs in Tomaszów.

In the summer of 1940, the German civil administration had set the following official ration levels for Jews—2.8 kilograms (6.2 pounds) of bread, 0.2 kilograms (7 ounces) of sugar, and 0.16 kilograms (5.6 ounces) of artificial coffee per person per month—about half that for the Polish population.⁵ According to Kimmelman: “Ration cards for bread, sugar, jam, or a little margarine were issued for a whole month, but this barely sustained us for a week.”⁶

As in other ghettos of the Generalgouvernement, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, which was based in Kraków, played an essential role in the provision of social welfare and food to the needy Jews in Tomaszów. Food, medicine, and other material deliveries were transferred to the ghetto as well as money. Using this support, the Jewish Council established two public kitchens, a special food kitchen for children, a nursing home, a medical clinic, a hospital, a hostel for refugees and Jews passing through the ghetto, and a department for housing issues.⁷ There is little information regarding religious or cultural life in the ghetto. However, Ludwik Druszczyk mentions sporadic performances by a puppet cabaret.⁸ Kimmelman recalls an extensive system of clandestine schooling, and she also participated in Zionist youth activities without informing her parents.⁹

In March 1941, around 1,000 refugees from Płock arrived in the Tomaszów ghetto. At this time, about 300 Jews from Tomaszów were assigned to a forced labor camp established 6 kilometers (4 miles) outside the town in the village of Zawada to work on river canalization work. The conditions in the camp were so appalling that even the Sipo-Aussendienststelle in Tomaszów complained in October 1941 that the unsanitary and inadequate sleeping quarters rendered “the measures of the German authorities to combat typhus illusory.”¹⁰ As the Jews who fell sick were transferred back to the Tomaszów ghetto, this in turn spread typhus among the ghetto inmates.¹¹ In the third quarter of 1941, 1,129 cases of typhus were registered in Kreis Tomaszów, which was the highest rate of any Kreis in Distrikt Radom.¹²

To combat the spread of typhus, the German authorities intensified the isolation of the ghettos. In late November 1941, almost 600 refugee Jews were transferred from the Tomaszów ghetto to the ghetto in Koluszki, and more were sent to other small ghettos. The Judenrat was instructed to report immediately any of these Jews if they returned to Tomaszów, making all the Judenrat members personally responsible, on pain of death, for the enforcement of this regulation. Subsequently 33 Jews who did return were executed.¹³ By this time, the death penalty had been introduced within the Generalgouvernement for Jews caught leaving the ghettos without permission. On December 11, a circular was distributed within Distrikt Radom instructing the Stadt- und Kreishauptmänner to put up signs on the borders of the ghettos informing the Jews of this penalty.¹⁴ Initially Kreishauptmann Glehn responded by putting up such signs around all three Jewish residential dis-

tricts in Tomaszów. He also introduced new regulations, which permitted Jews to move from one ghetto to another within the town only at certain set times in columns, escorted by the Jewish Police. Only a few days later, however, Glehn ordered the two smaller residential districts (ghettos) on Szeroka Street and Władysław Street dissolved. The Jews from these areas were distributed among smaller communities nearby or were moved to the larger ghetto. Then on December 15, 1941, the remaining ghetto area was officially enclosed. Some witnesses remembered the construction of a wall, some, a fence.¹⁵ The new barrier probably consisted of a combination of a wooden and barbed-wire fence, together with the walls of the ghetto houses themselves.¹⁶ On December 20, 1941, detailed regulations concerning the houses along the ghetto perimeter were issued. All windows and doors along the perimeter were to be boarded up. The Jews residing in these houses were forbidden to use the front rooms and could only reside in the courtyards and the rear parts of the buildings.¹⁷

The ghetto that remained was located on the following streets: Kościuszko, Antoni, Piłsudski, Jerozolima, Legionów, Listopada, Kieracki, Wojciechowski, Długa, Projektowa, Warszawa, Szeroka, and Niebrowska. The office of the Jewish Council was located at Cicha Street 15. This reorganization of the ghetto was combined with strict sanitary measures. Many of the Jews in the ghetto area had to have their heads shaved.¹⁸

Those Jews who had worked in various forced labor camps and working places in Tomaszów Mazowiecki before the ghetto's enclosure continued to leave the ghetto daily under the supervision of the Jewish Police, but by 1942 they were permitted to use only certain designated streets. The only income for the ghetto inmates was from the salaries working Jews received for forced labor. The average wage after the deduction of all taxes and other expenses was generally insufficient to cover even the living costs for a single person, and it was completely insufficient to feed a family.¹⁹

In the six months after the ghetto was enclosed, a number of Jewish refugees continued to arrive from other places, including towns in Distrikt Warschau, which increased the pressure on scarce living space and food.²⁰ In January 1942, a second major typhus epidemic broke out inside the Tomaszów ghetto. The ghetto hospital did not have sufficient space to treat all the infected Jews, and starvation and a lack of medicine and sanitary facilities exacerbated the problem considerably. Furthermore, during this winter, the Jews in the Tomaszów ghetto were ordered to deliver all their fur coats and other winter clothing to the German police to support the soldiers at the front in a so-called fur Aktion.²¹

On top of the disastrous living conditions in the ghetto, frequent killing Aktions, selections, and punishments for even minor transgressions decimated the ghetto population continuously. Many Jews fell victim to the so-called Shooting Order (Schießbefehl) that allowed the German Order Police to shoot every Jew without warning if spotted outside the ghetto. As one survivor has recorded: “There was not a day, on which the Gendarmes did not kill a Jewish man or woman on the ghetto

border for buying potatoes or other foodstuffs. . . . Every day also small children went out of the ghetto to obtain a bit to eat . . . more and more of them were killed.”²² Kreishauptmann Glehn reported cold-bloodedly in March 1942: “in the previous month, around 30 Jews who left the ghetto without permission and tried to flee, were shot.”²³

On April 27–28, 1942, the German Security Police carried out an “intelligentsia Aktion” in the ghetto. The victims included lawyers, doctors, members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police, and pre-war Jewish activists. Many Jews were shot in the streets, allegedly for “trying to escape” as they were arrested. On the following mornings, thousands of mourning Jews accompanied the bodies, as they were taken to be buried in the Jewish cemetery outside the ghetto. A further shooting Aktion took place a few days later in early May.²⁴

For many ghetto inmates, nevertheless, a position in the Jewish Police was attractive, and many people tried to get a job there through bribery, as they believed it would protect themselves and their families from the expected deportation Aktions. During the deportations the Jewish Police were required to assist the German police in rounding up the Jews, and this earned them a very bad reputation among most of the ghetto inmates.²⁵ As rumors spread from August 1942 of the clearance of other ghettos in the region, the Jews looked to obtain a secure place of employment or to prepare hiding places in case of need. In the last days of October the other ghettos of Kreis Tomaszów were liquidated systematically.

On Saturday, October 31, 1942, the Germans commenced the liquidation of the Tomaszów ghetto. The ghetto residents living on the eastern part of Jerozolima Street were ordered to gather at the square by the Jewish hospital and to take only a few indispensable items with them. After a selection, those Jews in possession of special work papers were sent back to the yard of the hospital, while the remaining Jews were marched to the railroad station. There they were ordered to leave behind their hand luggage, to take off their shoes, and to enter the freight wagons of the train. About 120 individuals were squeezed into each wagon. The entire procedure was carried out by an SS unit that had arrived from outside the town, with the assistance of Trawniki men and local forces of the Sipo, the Order Police, and Polish (Blue) Police. During the roundup the Jews were brutally mistreated. On November 1, 1942, the empty part of the ghetto was searched, and the Jews found there were shot on the spot. On November 2, the inmates living in the second part of the ghetto were deported in the same way. Both transports—altogether approximately 15,000 individuals—were sent to the extermination camp in Treblinka.

After this major Aktion, probably around 900 working Jews still remained in the Tomaszów ghetto, who may have been joined by others who emerged from hiding. They resided in a small part of the former ghetto, known as “the Block,” which became a remnant ghetto with many of the characteristics of a forced labor camp for Jews. In the first days of January 1943, 250 Jews were transferred from Tomaszów to the remnant ghetto in Ujazd, which itself was liquidated on January 6 with the inmates being sent to Treblinka. Also in January, the

so-called Palestine Aktion took place. As part of an exchange for German prisoners of war (POWs), 67 Jews from Tomaszów were actually released via Vienna and Turkey on to Syria and then Palestine. But most of the others who registered in January 1943 in Tomaszów and other remnant ghettos were transported away and either shot locally or sent to Treblinka.²⁶

A further Aktion took place at the time of the Purim festival, on March 21 in 1943. More than 20 members of the Jewish intelligentsia and patients at the hospital were arrested and shot at the Jewish cemetery. In the spring of 1943, groups of Jews were transferred from the Block to the forced labor camps in Pionki, Skarżysko-Kamienna, and Bliżyn. On May 29, the Block was finally liquidated, and the 650 men, women, and children there were deported to the labor camp at Bliżyn near Radom. The last 40 or so Jews were sent to the labor camp in Starachowice soon after they had cleaned out the ghetto/labor camp area.²⁷

SOURCES Information about the history and fate of the Tomaszów Jews under Nazi occupation can be found in the following publications: Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); Mosheh Visberg, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kebilat Tomaszów-Mazovjetsk* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Tomashov-Mazovjetsk be-Yisrael, 1969); and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 123–130.

Relevant published survivor memoirs include Mira Ryczke Kimmelman, *Echoes from the Holocaust: A Memoir* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997); and Ignacy Berzynski Burnett, *My Life and My Struggle* (Sydney: Vit Publishing, 1996).

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Tomaszów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/1031-1039; 301/1450, 3184, 4071); BA-BL (R 52II/254); BA-L (e.g., B 162/14521); IPN (Case against Ludwig Fischer and Josef Bühler); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1995.A.522); VHF (e.g., # 15964, 44328, 48119); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, B 162/14521 (Verdict of LG-Darm, 2 Ks 1/69, December 7, 1972, in the case against Boettig, Fuchs, and Reichl), pp. 14–15.

2. AŻIH, 301/3184, testimony of Samuel Talman; 211/1031, Glehn an Judenrat in Tomaszów, December 20, 1942; BA-L, B 162/14521, pp. 15–16.

3. Kimmelman, *Echoes*, p. 28.

4. VHF, # 48119, testimony of Ludwik Druszcz.

5. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 159.

6. Kimmelman, *Echoes*, p. 29.

7. AŻIH, 211/1034, pp. 17–18.

8. VHF, # 48119.

9. Kimmelman, *Echoes*, pp. 29–31.

10. Sipo-Aussendienststelle Schlussbericht, October 16, 1941, BA-L, B 162/Vorl. Dok. Slg. Verschiedenes 301 AAm, Bl. 51, 49, as cited by Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 152.

11. BA-L, B 162/14521, pp. 15–16.
12. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 127.
13. Eugeniusz Fąfara, *Gebenna ludności żydowskiej* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1983), pp. 120–121; and AŻIH, 301/4071, testimony of Samuel Talman, 1948.
14. BA-BL, R 52II/254, Rundschreiben Oswalds, Leiter der Abteilung Innere Verwaltung im Distrikt Radom, December 11, 1942, as cited by Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 121.
15. VHF, # 48119; # 15964, testimony of Mary Siegelbaum.
16. BA-L, B 162/14521, p. 17.
17. AŻIH, 211/1031, pp. 11–14.
18. Ibid., 211/1035, p. 46.
19. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, pp. 218–219.
20. AŻIH, 211/1034, p. 18.
21. BA-L, B 162/14521, p. 31.
22. AŻIH, 301/5361, testimony of E. Skórnicki, as cited by Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 221.
23. IPN, Verfahren gegen Ludwig Fischer and Josef Bühler, 285, p. 18, Glehn's Lagebericht, April 8, 1942.
24. Kimmelman, *Echoes*, pp. 35–36; BA-L, B 162/14521, pp. 31–46.
25. VHF, # 44328, testimony of Riva Bojarski.
26. Testimony of Dwora Leja B, March 7, 1963, BA-L, B 162/6922, pp. 1250–1251, as cited by Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, p. 283; Kimmelman, *Echoes*, p. 41.
27. Kimmelman, *Echoes*, pp. 42–43; BA-L, B 162/14521, p. 49; AŻIH, 301/1450.

UJAZD

Pre-1939: Ujazd, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tomaschow, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

The village of Ujazd is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) northwest of Tomaszów Mazowiecki. By 1921, out of 1,987 residents, 792 were Jewish.

An estimated 95 percent of the village was razed in the course of the September Campaign in 1939. Some Jewish residents, including Rabbi Łaznowski, fled to Łódź and then to the Warsaw region.

The Germans organized a Judenrat, chaired by Pinkus Gerber. It included S. Wygodzki and M. Feller.

Despite the substandard housing conditions, some deportees and refugees settled in the village in 1940.¹ In the spring of 1941, there were 351 Jews living in Ujazd, including 70 newcomers. In May 1941, the Judenrat reported that due to an order forbidding Jews to settle in Distrikt Warschau, “all our [former] residents returned.” It further stated that there were “scarcely three, precisely—three small houses where 500 people are located.” Apart from the returnees, the village also was visited daily by streams of Jews leaving Warsaw on their way to Piotrków Trybunalski, who were asking for help.²

In June 1940, all men and women aged 16 to 60 were forced to clear the rubble of burned buildings. As they also had to perform other forms of forced labor, the Judenrat reported that they were unable to make a living. A number of them worked on constructing the Ujazd-Lubochnia road, in the Kingeburg

sawmill, and on the estates of Ujazd and Buków, in the settlement of Ciosny. At the end of August 1940, all young Jews were sent out of the village to perform forced labor. In the summer of 1941, the community had to fully support 20 laborers working in the vicinity of Ujazd.³

In August 1941, many Jewish refugees who had died in the nearby ghetto of Koluszki were sent for burial in Ujazd, as the cemetery that served Koluszki's Jews in Brzeziny had been incorporated into the Reich. “Note,” the Ujazd Judenrat reported, “that two members of the Jewish Council are hospitalized in Tomaszów, sick with typhus they had contracted while arranging for the burial of corpses sent from Koluszki.” There was no Jewish doctor in Ujazd. By January 1942, the community's sick were being sent to a hospital in Tomaszów for treatment.⁴

A ghetto was established in Ujazd, most likely in the summer of 1942. According to Czesław Pilichowski and colleagues, the ghetto was located in the Lidera neighborhood, where Jews were permitted to inhabit 32 houses on eight streets; however, according to other sources (e.g., the Gmina Ujazd Web site), the ghetto was located on Zagajnikowa Street, from which Polish residents had been expelled.⁵

Sometime in 1942, young and healthy ghetto residents were rounded up and driven to an unknown destination, probably to be sent to perform forced labor at various camps.

The ghetto in Ujazd was liquidated at the end of October 1942. Its estimated 800 residents were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

On November 10, 1942, the Higher SS and Police Leader of the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Krüger, issued an order creating remnant ghettos in Distrikt Radom. Ujazd was to be the only such ghetto in Kreis Tomaschow and one of only four in the entire Distrikt.⁶ A survivor of this remnant ghetto, Sophie Pollack, recalled that the Germans announced that Ujazd was declared “an exceptional ghetto.” It was announced that all those “who had hidden or escaped should feel free and safe to register” there. “Most of these people who came were young. . . . It was the cream of the ghettos: the healthiest, the smartest, those who had the most money. Everybody came there because there were not that many places to go, and whether they believed in those wonderful promises or not. . . . We wanted to believe in it,” said Pollack.⁷

The ghetto attracted approximately 2,000 Jews mostly from other places in Kreis Tomaschow, including Przysucha, Rawa Mazowiecka, Opoczno, and Drzewica. The ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by the German Gendarmerie from Tomaszów and the Polish (Blue) Police. Within the compound, the Jewish Police maintained order.

On the night of January 5, 1943, German forces surrounded the ghetto. Approximately 30 people were shot in the course of the ghetto's liquidation on the next day, January 6. The remainder of the ghetto's inmates were taken to the train station in Skrzynki. On the way, about a dozen more Jews were shot. The transport ended at the Treblinka extermination camp.⁸

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada

ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 118–119, 154 (table 10), 178; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 134, 187–189; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 534; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo piotrkowskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1983), pp. 139–140.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/697, 211/1055); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); and VHF (# 25485).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/697 (Ujazd), pp. 9, 11; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1055 (Ujazd), p. 15.
2. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1055, pp. 8–9; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/697, p. 11.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/697, pp. 2, 7, 19.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1055, pp. 15, 22.
5. See www.ujazd.ovh.org.
6. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.
7. VHF, # 25485, testimony of Sophie Pollack, 1997.
8. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG, Ujazd), reel 14, pp. 14–23.

WIERZBICA

Pre-1939: Wierzbica, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The village of Wierzbica is located 20 kilometers (12 miles) south of Radom. A Judenrat chaired by H. Hochman was established following its occupation.

By March 1941, there were 152 Jews living in the village, of which the Judenrat assessed 40 percent as unable to provide for themselves. Some 18 of these people lived entirely from the support provided by the Judenrat.

The number of residents almost doubled when 129 Jews (28 families) from the recently depopulated village of Przytyk arrived on March 10, 1941. Of those, 16 families (48 persons) were unable to pay rent. The Judenrat introduced a system of “forced dinners” by assigning 20 newcomers to local Jewish families. The Judenrat then compensated the host family with 1 złoty per meal, while the assignee paid the Judenrat 0.20 złoty.¹

As part of a larger ghettoization process of those Jews still living in the villages of Kreis Radom-Land, the Germans decided to liquidate Wierzbica’s community by transferring them

to a larger ghetto at the end of 1941. However, according to Radom’s Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), “thanks to the efforts of the Supreme Council of Jewish Communities of the Radom District,” the Germans allowed several rural communities to remain in place by creating Jewish quarters for them. The order to establish a ghetto in Wierzbica was issued by Radom’s Kreishauptmann in December 1941. Nonetheless, resettlement to the closed ghetto was not implemented for several months.²

The leadership of the Judenrat was changed on March 1, 1942. B. Milsztajn became its new chairman. He believed that “Wierzbica never received any social help from the JSS” because the former Judenrat “did not demonstrate any activity to ease the misery of our community.” By May 1942, the community had set up its own hospital.³

Survivor Ester Hakman recalls that from March 1942 until that summer, she was able to get hired on the Zalesice estate, located 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away from Wierzbica, to which she walked daily. She worked in agriculture and was compensated with some of the goods she harvested. Hakman’s mother was still able to barter textiles for food with villagers; her sister, a dressmaker, continued her craft in exchange for food. It was at this time that a commissioner was assigned to run Wierzbica affairs.⁴

By July 1942, there were 500 Jews living in Wierzbica, of which only 30 percent were native residents, whereas another 40 percent had been deported from Przytyk. The remaining 30 percent were Jews resettled from Pruszków, Mogielnica, and Grójec (Distrikt Warschau), who initially were deported to Jastrzab and Rogów, both located approximately 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Wierzbica.⁵

By July 17, 1942, the German authorities informed the community that an enclosed ghetto would be established in the village on August 1, 1942. It was to be surrounded by a wooden fence and barbed wire. The German authorities assigned only a few houses for the Jews, which could house 200 people only with the greatest difficulty according to the assessment of the Judenrat. For the remaining 300 people (60 families), the Germans ordered the community to build barracks. The Judenrat estimated the costs of their construction at 25,000 złoty. The Judenrat was also ordered to remodel the hospital (estimated at 4,000 złoty) and to construct a delousing facility. The date of the ghetto’s establishment (August 1, 1942) was also a deadline to complete all the construction work. The Judenrat requested financial support from the JSS in Kraków.⁶ Accordingly, the JSS was able to provide Wierzbica with 500 złoty in July 1942.⁷

Strict orders were issued for the Jews not to leave the ghetto; however, archival sources show that Boruch Sarna was arrested in Wierzbica “for leaving the ghetto” on May 8, 1942. Either this date is mistaken (i.e., possibly August 5, 1942), or it is possible that restrictions on movement were in effect before the establishment of an enclosed ghetto. Sarna was sent to the Radom prison, from which he was “deported to a camp” on August 18, 1942. There is no information as to whether anyone guarded the Wierzbica ghetto. Another resident, Wolf

Majdman, was also arrested on August 28, 1942, for exiting the ghetto. Majdman was registered as “deceased” in the Radom prison on October 16, 1942.⁸

According to Hakman, in August 1942, elderly Jews in the ghetto were rounded up and deported to the Szydłowiec ghetto. Agricultural labor was arranged at a nearby estate for approximately 400 able-bodied Jews from the ghetto, including women. The job was very desirable among Wierzbica’s Jews, as they believed it would protect them from deportation. Moreover, they were fairly well fed on the farm. At the end of each workday, the Jewish laborers would return to the ghetto. It is not clear if they were escorted.⁹

Hakman believes that the ghetto was liquidated on November 22, 1942, when the Germans decided that the workforce on the farm was no longer needed. That same day, trucks filled with Ukrainian auxiliary forces came to the village to claim young Jews. Hakman, who volunteered, believes that “a couple of hundred” youngsters volunteered with her. She recalls that the first snow of the winter fell on that day. The trucks remained in the village for several hours and left after dark. It was only on the way that the volunteers learned that they were being taken to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna. There is no information as to the fate of those who remained in the ghetto on that day.¹⁰

Other sources give significantly different accounts of the community’s fate; for example, *Pinkas ha-kehillot* states that the remaining Jews of Wierzbica were evacuated in 1940, presumably to labor camps in the area. Historian Adam Rutkowski dates the liquidation of the ghetto in August or the beginning of September 1942 and gives the names of two locations to which Wierzbica Jews were deported (the Kozienice and Szydłowiec ghettos).

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 585; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955). Rutkowski refers to the community being resettled to the Kozienice ghetto (pp. 160, 179) and to the Szydłowiec ghetto (p. 101).

The following archival sources contain information on the Jewish community in Wierzbica: AŻIH (211/854-855 and 211/1107 [JSS]; and NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 1018).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1107 (Wierzbica), pp. 2–3.

2. Ibid., 211/854 (Radom), p. 5; AŻIH, NMO, Fot. Dok. Niem. nos. 60 and 63, Anordnung (decree) and Zustazordnung (amendment) of the Kreishauptmann, December 22 and 30, 1941, as cited in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), p. 122.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1107, pp. 8–9.

4. VHF, # 1018, testimony of Ester Hakman, 1995.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1107, pp. 7–8.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 211/855 (Radom), p. 49.

8. Kazimierz Jaroszek and Sebastian Piątkowski, *Martyrologia Żydów w więzieniu radomskim 1939–1944: Wykaz zamordowanych, zmarłych, deportowanych do obozów koncentracyjnych i obozów zagłady* (Radom: Archiwum Państwowe, 1997), pp. 67, 85.

9. VHF, # 1018.

10. Ibid.

WIŚLICA

Pre-1939: Wiślica, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wislica, Kreis Busko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wiślica, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Wiślica is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) northeast of Kraków. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were 1,437 Jews living in the town.

When the Germans attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, many Jews fled Wiślica to the east. Some escaped to the Soviet Union, where they spent the war years. However, most of these people soon returned home. The Polish army set parts of the town on fire before they retreated. German forces conquered Wiślica on September 8. After settling in, they burned down the synagogue. On the following day, all the Jews were assembled in the town square, from which they were taken to fields outside town. After being robbed they were brought back and put to work cleaning up the town. The Germans imposed a fine of 30,000 złoty on the Jews, holding 10 prominent members of the community as hostages. The community council was reorganized as a Judenrat. Some of the original council members were retained, joined by a few new ones. The chairman was Joseph Flaum; the vice-chair was David Ovzhensky. On December 1, all Jews over 10 were ordered to wear a blue Star of David on a white armband. An additional decree obligated all Jews over 18 to perform forced labor. During the first months they shoveled snow from the railroad tracks.¹

After the Generalgouvernement was set up at the end of October 1939, Wiślica was incorporated into Kreis Busko, within Distrikt Radom. In 1940, the Jews of Wiślica were ordered to pave a new road between Busko-Zdrój and Wiślica. They were also sent to perform agricultural work on estates confiscated from Polish landlords. Normal commerce ceased to exist. Output from manufacturing disappeared—textiles, leather, shoes, clothing, import-export, and retail outlets closed for lack of merchandise. Almost everyone, Jew and non-Jew, engaged in some form of illegal trade or smuggling.

The Germans permitted a few government shops—one for leather, another for textiles. Goods were sold for ration cards, available only to farmers who delivered their quota of agricultural produce. At a special warehouse, one could barter eggs for sugar. Jews would buy eggs from the farmers, trade them for sugar, and sell it for other goods or money. But after a time

the Germans put an end to this practice. Jews were also forbidden to go to the countryside, so farmers would bring their products to Jewish buyers. They, in turn, sold them to professional smugglers who came from Warsaw, Kielce, and Kraków to bring goods such as leather, clothing, or coffee to the large cities.²

The Germans sent police from Busko to search for merchandise hidden in Jewish homes. To evade these searches, Jews stored goods with Polish neighbors. In some cases the Poles simply kept the goods for themselves. In other instances, informants exposed the Polish partners. Once the Jews were deported, the caretakers “inherited” whatever was left in their care. On the weekly market day (traditionally Thursday, but later changed by the Germans to Saturday as a further hardship on religious Jews), Jews had little to offer, usually kitchen utensils or articles of clothing. Tailors and shoemakers invited customers into their houses to sell their goods. Throughout the occupation Jewish slaughterers continued to provide kosher meat, risking their lives to perform these tasks in barns rented from local farmers. An 8:00 P.M. curfew was imposed, and Jews were also forbidden to ride the trains. To reach Kraków to trade, Jews from Wiślica would go first to Opatowiec, then take the ferry that sailed between Nowy Korczyn and Kraków. This practice continued until the end of 1940.

At the end of 1940 and in early 1941, hundreds of Jewish refugees arrived in Wiślica, including many expelled from Radom, the district capital, and about 150 from Płock, which had been annexed to Germany. Other Jews came from Kraków, Warsaw, Łódź, and Sandomierz. The refugees arrived with only the clothes they stood up in. The Jews of Wiślica were scarcely prepared to deal with them. The Judenrat established a mutual-aid committee, which organized a soup kitchen for the refugees and needy locals. A small delegation was sent to Polish landlords to ask for assistance. They responded by contributing a great quantity of food, including potatoes, barley, and beans, as well as firewood for heating. The Judenrat housed the refugees from Płock in private homes. Refugees from Radom were housed in the large Bet Midrash, which was no longer in use. Bunk beds were built to accommodate them.³

In May 1941, an open ghetto (Jewish residential area) was set up in Wiślica.⁴ It consisted of 76 houses and 452 rooms and was controlled by the German authorities. All remaining Jewish property outside the ghetto was confiscated. In the summer of 1941, the German administration in Busko ordered the Wiślica Judenrat to establish a Jewish police force.⁵ The establishment of the ghetto had created unsanitary and overcrowded living conditions that increased the threat of disease. The collection of community taxes became more difficult as the numbers relying on public assistance increased. The impossible German demands for goods and money did not let up—they requested textiles, leather goods, tea, coffee, liquor, jewelry, and other items. Hunger became widespread, as access to the surrounding villages was now forbidden.⁶

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Germans confiscated all fur garments. There were daily roll calls for forced labor. The

workers received a daily ration of bread, baked at the Jewish bakery from flour provided by the Jewish community. An outbreak of typhus claimed many victims, and a community hospital was opened in response. The confiscation of Jewish-owned property was also completed, with local Polish “commissars” put in charge as the Jewish owners were dismissed. Shops for building materials, metal goods, clothing, shoemaking, tailoring, and groceries were taken over. Further restrictions were imposed. Jews were not allowed to swim in the Nida River. Men had to shave their beards. People grew increasingly depressed as all signs of normal life vanished. In the spring of 1942, Jews living in smaller nearby towns and villages were forced into Wiślica. By April 1942, the ghetto held 2,165 Jews, including 728 who had arrived from other places. Towards the end of the summer of 1942, the Germans ordered Polish workers to remove the gravestones from the old Jewish cemetery. After the final expulsion of the Jews the stones were used to pave a walkway to the train station.⁷

Tension gripped the town amid rumors of the deportations from large Jewish communities, such as Warsaw, Kielce, and Częstochowa, as well as nearby towns such as Miechów. As refugees brought word of the deportation from Działoszyce, apprehension that the same would happen in Wiślica hardened into certainty.⁸

The expulsion took place on October 3, 1942, organized by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Kielce. Early in the morning, the German forces, assisted by Polish (Blue) Police and Polish work units, surrounded the city. Jews were roused from their sleep, told to pack their belongings, and ordered to the market square, where they were held under arrest. About 2,200 appeared. The local farmers were ordered to bring their wagons to transport the Jews. The head of the Judenrat bribed the police commanders to look the other way if Jews tried to flee, and a number were able to escape. Some survived; others were caught and murdered. Then all the Jews were escorted to Pińczów. The Jews of three towns—Wiślica, Busko, and Pińczów—were then taken to Jędrzejów and from there by train to the Treblinka extermination camp to be murdered on arrival.⁹

In 1942–1944, the Przeniosło family, a Polish family of seven who had farmed on 8 hectares (20 acres) of land in the village of Cieszkowy, in Kielce province, risked their lives to hide 12 Jews who had escaped from Wiślica during the liquidation of the ghetto. One of the Jews died in July 1944, but the remaining people survived and later immigrated to the United States and Israel. In 1986, some of them—including Regina Działoszycki, who was 8 years old in 1942—replied to an announcement in *Folks-Sztyme*, a Yiddish weekly in Warsaw, providing information about the family who had rescued them.¹⁰ Among other Jewish escapees from Wiślica were members of the Gordonia training kibbutz who joined up with Polish Armia Ludowa partisans in the forests.

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of the town can be found in Itzhak Kazimierski, ed., *Sefer Vayslits: Dos Vayslitser yisker-bukh* (Tel Aviv: Association

of Former Residents of Wislica, 1971), which does not, however, specifically mention the ghetto; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 170–174. The open ghetto in Wiślica is mentioned briefly by Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 83, 91.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Wiślica under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2373); USHMMPA (# 96919); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-31/3964).

Samuel Fishman and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Kazimierski, *Sefer Vayslits*, pp. 23–24.
2. Ibid., pp. 24–25.
3. Ibid., pp. 25–26.
4. M. Grynberg, *Księga Sprawiedliwych* (Warsaw: PWN, 1993).
5. For a picture of a Jewish ghetto policeman in Wiślica, see USHMMPA, # 96919.
6. Kazimierski, *Sefer Vayslits*, p. 27.
7. Ibid., pp. 28–29.
8. Ibid., p. 213.
9. Ibid., pp. 29–30; AŻIH, 301/2373, testimony of J. Sternberg.
10. Grynberg, *Księga Sprawiedliwych*.

WŁOSZCZOWA

Pre-1939: Włoszczowa (Yiddish: Vlotscheve), town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939-1945: Włoszczowa, Kreis Jedrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Włoszczowa, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Włoszczowa is located 46 kilometers (29 miles) west of Kielce. By 1939, there were 2,700 Jews living there, constituting 42 percent of the town's residents.¹ Following the town's occupation by German troops, a Gendarmerie post with its own prison was established before the end of September 1939. At this time, a number of refugees—mainly from the badly damaged towns of Szczekociny and Przedbórz nearby—settled in Włoszczowa. Groups from Poznań and Łódź followed later. Eventually the total number of refugees rose to 1,455 (28 percent of the community).

A 7-man (soon extended to 12-man) Jewish Council (Judenrat) was set up in October 1939, chaired by a local notary named Aleksander Fargel (Fargiel). The Judenrat soon had to collect a “contribution” of 80,000 złoty.²

A self-help committee was established on January 10, 1940, and it soon opened a soup kitchen with support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). A second opened on January 21, 1940.

A ghetto for over 4,000 Jews—consisting of two separate sections—was established in Włoszczowa on July 10, 1940. A number of sources define the northern ghetto's borders, for example, as enclosed by Sienkiewicz, Śliska, and Targowica Streets (aka Krzywe Koło according to one Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute [AŻIH] testimony). The southern ghetto was located around Kiliński Street. Postwar (October 1945) Polish authorities named the following streets as included in one part of the ghetto: Żwirko, Mickiewicz, Górki, Długa, Wigury, Czarnecka, and Kozia; the second reportedly included Gęsia, Przedbórz, Stodolna, Nowa, and Niecała Streets.³ An unknown number of Jews from the vicinity were also brought into the ghetto; however, in May 1942, Jews were still living in Kurzelów, Dobranica, Secemin, Radków, Oleszno, Kluczano, Pilczyca, Krasocin, and other nearby settlements.⁴

In April 1942, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization established in Włoszczowa in July 1941 reported that an “open ghetto” existed in the town in response to a questionnaire, requesting information regarding its activities.⁵ There is, however, a source that reports a wooden fence surrounding both ghettos.⁶ Moreover, the above-mentioned AŻIH testimony states that the Jewish Police guarded the ghetto from the inside, while Ukrainian auxiliary forces guarded its exits. Notices threatened capital punishment for illegally crossing the ghetto's limits, and testimony mentions several Jews shot for this reason. Jews seeking to exit the ghetto had to obtain a special permit, as was also required of Poles trying to enter the ghetto. There were Poles reportedly living inside the ghetto's borders. There is no information regarding the forms of communication between the two ghettos or a possible street connecting the two.

A number of attempted escapes from the ghetto were reported, with those organized by individuals often failing. Some were organized with the help of bribed Germans. Each flight was followed by hefty contributions levied by the Gendarmerie, accompanied by threats to kill members of the Jewish community.⁷ Gendarmerie Leutnant Kryjer was appointed as the ghetto commander; and two other Gendarmes, Mantke (or Mantko) and Klajmann, were also given some authority over it.⁸ Many of the killings are attributed to an ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*) called Krwawy Julek Erdman, who was known to kill Jews for pleasure.⁹

The typhus epidemic that broke out in December 1939 had been eliminated by June 1940. The highest numbers of sick were registered in February (58) and then in April 1940 (56). The hospital had closed by October 1940, as there were then no cases of contagious disease. An ambulatory doctor's surgery opened nonetheless. Vaccinations of approximately 1,300 Jews took place in November 1940.¹⁰ Mortality among the ghetto inmates was high due to hunger and sickness. A local Pole, Stanisław Jaszewski, was charged with collecting the dead daily and burying them at the Jewish cemetery, most likely with the assistance of Jewish laborers. Typhus returned in February 1941 and was contained by May 1941.

The self-help committee statistics for June 1940 report 1,451 newcomers; however, another report (July 1940) indicates 3,000 to 4,000 refugees, “most of them illegal,” and stressed the need for urgent assistance.¹¹ With the ghetto’s establishment, as the Judenrat reported, local tradesmen and craftsmen “lost their sources of income.” Despite the introduction of charges for kitchen meals, the Włoszczowa kitchen had to be closed on September 1, 1940; Kurzelów’s was also closed soon afterwards.

That same summer, a number of Jewish laborers were sent to a camp in Cieszanów, near Lubaczów in Distrikt Lublin. All but the seven who died had returned before the year’s end.¹² There is also information on Jews laboring in Włoszczowa proper (at a sawmill), at lime quarries in Bukowa (Bukowa Góra), and on drainage works in the vicinity. The Jewish Police were responsible for the delivery of conscripted laborers. The Germans substituted members of the Jewish Police for any absentees.¹³

With time, conditions in the ghetto became harsher as the Germans continued the confiscation of Jewish possessions and demanded repeated contributions. Between 1941 and 1942, an estimated 100 Jews were murdered, either in their dwellings or at the local gallows (the so-called Górajek), on the outskirts of town. Most of the victims’ names, dates of birth, and occupations are known.¹⁴

The Włoszczowa branch of the JSS, which launched its activities in July 1941, soon reopened the soup kitchen, which served 1,200 meals daily under Rajchman’s management. Special attention was paid to children, 100 of whom were served breakfast daily.

As of February 1942, all able-bodied men were conscripted for labor. There were 4,279 Jews registered as living in the ghetto, including 1,654 refugees and deportees.

In the summer of 1942, two shipments of Jews were sent to the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna; the first transport consisted of 150 laborers.¹⁵ In June 1942, on the orders of the local Arbeitsamt, the registration of women aged 15 to 55 was conducted. Local craftsmen, especially shoemakers, solicited the registration of workshops. The August 14, 1942, issue of *Gazeta Żydowska* contains correspondence from Włoszczowa that reads: “local shoemakers specializing in the production of army and work boots”; this advertisement stressed that the Włoszczowa cobblers were the only specialists of their kind in the entire region. Permission to establish such workshops, however, was most likely delayed and not issued before the ghetto was liquidated.¹⁶

The Germans liquidated the Włoszczowa ghetto in September 1942, most likely on September 18. Shortly beforehand, approximately 200 Jews from Secemin were brought in. First, the ghetto was surrounded by the Gendarmerie. Divided into groups, Gendarmes chased Jews out of their dwellings, plundering their contents, and then formed the Jews into rows 4 abreast. Many were shot in the course of the Aktion, including a woman and the newborn baby she had just delivered. A column of Włoszczowa’s Jews was marched via Kiliński and

Wiśniowa Streets to the level crossing. An awaiting train took them all to the Treblinka extermination camp. Wagons followed the march, picking up the dead.

The Germans left a number of able-bodied and wealthier Jews in the ghetto to clean it out and work in a quarry. Following yet another extortion effort by the Germans, the richest Jews—an estimated 80 to 90 people—were shot in their dwellings. About 30 Jews were left in the remnant ghetto, which was liquidated on December 9 or 10, 1942. Its inhabitants were transferred to the Radomsko ghetto.¹⁷

In 1946, according to a list prepared by the Central Committee of Polish Jews, there were 75 Jewish survivors residing in Włoszczowa.¹⁸

SOURCES The Włoszczowa ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja, 1979), p. 566; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 136, 172–173; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 81; and Edyta Gawron, *Włotsbeve: Żydzi we Włoszczowie w latach 1867–1942* (Włoszczowa: Włoszczowskie Tow. Krzewienia Kultury, 2000).

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/725 [AJDC]; 211/1114 [JSS]; 301/6360 and 301/7046 [Relacje]); and USHMM (RG-15.073M [Jewish Councils 1936–1942], reel 1; RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 51; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0235 [List of Jews registered in Włoszczowa]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.073M (Jewish Councils 1936–1942), reel 1 (Włoszczowa), p. 5.

2. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 2, 1942; USHMM, RG-15.073M, reel 1, pp. 4–7; and Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 566.

3. AŻIH, 301/7046, testimony of Cz. Jelonek and M. Migacz, 1986, dates the ghetto’s establishment in the autumn of 1940. Also see USHMM, RG-15.019M (Włoszczowa), file 223; RG-15.073M, reel 1, pp. 16–17. Gawron, *Włotsbeve*, pp. 122, 185, gives the following configuration of the ghettos: Przedbórz, Śliska, Gęsia, Mleczarska, and Stodolna Streets; the second ghetto location is reported as being closer to the market square and Górki Street.

4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 25, 1942.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1114, p. 12.

6. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 136.

7. AŻIH, 301/7046; *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 6, 1942.

8. USHMM (RG-15.019M), file 223, dates the ghetto’s establishment as being in July 1941.

9. AŻIH, 301/7046; and Gawron, *Włotsbeve*, p. 185.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1114, pp. 12, 17; and RG-15.073M, reel 1, p. 21.

11. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1114, pp. 2–3, 12; and AŻIH, 301/7046.

12. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/725 (Włoszczowa), pp. 3–4, 12; and RG-15.073M, reel 1, pp. 16–18.

13. Ibid., RG-15.019M, file 223; AŻIH, 301/7046; and Gawron, *Vlotsheve*, p. 185.

14. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), pp. 296–298; and AŻIH, 301/7046.

15. AŻIH, 301/6360, testimony of Josek Chaim Werthaim, n.d.; Gawron, *Vlotsheve*, p. 185; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1114, p. 12.

16. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 14, 1942.

17. AŻIH, 301/7046. According to USHMM, RG-15.019M, files 223 and 224 (Włoszczowa), the main liquidation Aktion took place in August 1942.

18. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0235, List of Jews registered in Włoszczowa in 1946 by the Central Committee of Polish Jews.

WODZISŁAW

Pre-1939: Wodzisław, village, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wodzisław, Kreis Jędrzejów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wodzisław, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Wodzisław is located 16 kilometers (10 miles) southwest of Jędrzejów. Sędziszów, Nagłowice, Nawarzyce, and Mstyczów belonged to the Wodzisław kehillah. At the outbreak of World War II, 2,400 Jews lived in Wodzisław.

A Judenrat consisting of 12 persons was set up in October 1939, with Izrael Mordka Norych as its chairman. Izrael Lewkowicz, Enzel Horowicz, and Chaim Unger were among its members. The Judenrat was charged with providing Jews for labor. Those who wanted to avoid forced labor conscription paid the poor to work for them.¹

The town had a small Polish (Blue) Police force, consisting at first of three and then two policemen, named Szczukocki and Machowski. The latter participated in the shooting of local Jews; after the war, he was sentenced to death by a Polish court in Kielce and executed.²

The German authorities established a Jewish quarter in Wodzisław in June 1940. It remained an open ghetto at least until the end of June 1942 and probably remained open until its partial liquidation in September 1942. The ghetto was located in the quarter mainly inhabited by Jews before the war and consisted of 200 dwellings (600 rooms). Most of the buildings in the ghetto were small huts made of wood and mud. A 13-member unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), was also set up.

Jews comprised the overwhelming majority of the village's population, which more or less rendered the entire village a ghetto, with the exception of a few streets occupied by indigenous Polish residents. By November 1940, the ghetto's residents—approximately 3,500 Jews (including 1,000 refugees)—made up 85 percent of the town's total population.³

In 1940, those Jews living in the vicinity of Sędziszów (11 kilometers [7 miles] from Wodzisław) were forced to relocate to either the Wodzisław or Jędrzejów ghettos.⁴ By August, 650 Jewish families inhabited the Wodzisław ghetto. The self-help committee, which was established at that time, was able to distribute a little cash, some clothing, flour, and lard it had received from welfare organizations.

By November 1940, living conditions had deteriorated as a result of a fire that broke out in September or October, which left more than 30 families homeless. Although most of them somehow squeezed into other Jewish households, 5 families continued to live among the debris, while another 5 camped in a nearby field. German soldiers, of whom several hundred were quartered in Wodzisław at the time of the fire, helped to extinguish it. The report of the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization reads: the soldiers “were treating the Jews well, they used them for labor, and fed them.” The nature of the labor Jews performed at this time is not known.⁵

On January 15 and 16, 1941, the Germans deported 300 Jews from Jędrzejów—mostly the poor and refugees from elsewhere—to Wodzisław. The Judenrat housed 20 of the families with local Jews, while the remainder were quartered en masse in the Bet Midrash. To resolve the problem of overcrowding and to prevent the spread of disease, Jędrzejów's Kreishauptmann, Dr. Fritz von Balluseck, ordered the removal of 198 people, distributing them among neighboring villages. In Wodzisław, up to 10 Jews were packed into each room.

The situation of the ghetto's inhabitants, especially those refugees who had settled in Wodzisław at the beginning of the war, had deteriorated significantly by March 1941, following the cessation of bread ration distributions by the German authorities. The reason for this action, which forced the Jews to purchase bread at exorbitant prices, was the definition of Wodzisław as a village, not a town; only towns were entitled to bread rations, while villages were to live off their own agricultural surplus. However, in May 1941, the Judenrat reported to the JSS in Kraków that “there are no businesses or houses under commissary administration.”⁶ Zofia Kuźniak confirms that until then the Jews lived more or less in peace, with schools and shops still open; Jewish workshops continued to operate even after other Jewish businesses were shut down.

There is little information about the nature of the labor performed by Jews in Wodzisław. Some Wodzisław volunteers and conscripts worked in 1941 for various private companies at the train station in Sędziszów. The number of opportunities for voluntary work was limited, but women were accepted nonetheless.⁷

By June 1941, there were 3,315 Jews in the ghetto, including 1,831 refugees. A soup kitchen opened on June 15, 1941, serving meals to 500 Jews daily, out of a total of 1,100 Jews in need. At this time, a number of cases of typhus resulted in an epidemic. As there was no Jewish doctor or hospital in Wodzisław, the sick were sent to the Jewish hospital in Jędrzejów. When the Kreishauptmann ordered compulsory vaccina-

tions for Jews, Jędrzejów's doctor, Hirsch Beer, vaccinated the Jews of Wodzisław in August 1941.⁸

An official branch of the JSS was established in Wodzisław on September 1, 1941. At that time the JSS was taking care of 700 Jews, including 110 children allotted 0.30 złoty daily for meals. The JSS-run kitchen was closed on March 1, 1942, due to lack of funds.⁹

In mid-June 1942, the SS shot approximately 50 Jews at the local cemetery. According to Kuźniak, a number of such shootings were conducted in the town in 1941, most often at night. The victims were predominantly elderly men from well-off families. In such cases the bodies were left lying in the streets and only buried the next day, as the residents had to observe the curfew during the night. Later, the shootings on the streets of the town ceased, as the Germans would summon a number of males to the market square, from where they were taken to the Jewish cemetery to be shot.¹⁰

Starting on June 11, 1942, 100 Jewish men and women were assigned to employment on nearby estates, where they also slept overnight. Despite having been assigned to the job by the Jędrzejów Arbeitsamt (labor office), 24 of the unmarried men were selected and sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp on June 23, 1942. At the end of June 1942, 3,837 Jews were reported to be living in the Wodzisław ghetto—that is, an average of 7 people per room.

In the last month of the ghetto's existence, the JSS tried to organize local workshops for the manufacture of straw boots. They were to be established under the supervision of the workshop management in Jędrzejów, but the Kreishauptmann, who insisted on German supervision, kept delaying its organization. In the end, permission for the creation of the straw-boot workshops was not granted.

The Germans liquidated the Wodzisław ghetto on or around September 20, 1942. The Jews were gathered on the market square and were marched to Sędziszów, escorted by Polish Bahnschutz (Railway Police) and Jewish Police. A large number of Jews who could not keep up were killed along the way. The column reached Sędziszów in the course of that ghetto's liquidation. That same day, the Szczekociny ghetto was also liquidated; its Jewish population was also transferred to Sędziszów. Following a selection, the old and sick were shot in the same meadow where the deportees were forced to camp out overnight. That morning, all the Jews were loaded onto trains destined for the Treblinka extermination camp.¹¹

In the course of the liquidation of the Wodzisław ghetto and the hunt for Jews in hiding that took place over the following weeks, reportedly 318 people were shot. Executions were conducted either at the Jewish cemetery or at the current playing field. Most victims were buried in Wodzisław, some in Świątniki.¹²

According to Kuźniak, the Jews in Wodzisław were alerted to the upcoming date of the ghetto liquidation. In reaction, almost all the younger people fled the town (over 1,000, according to historian Adam Rutkowski). Only the elderly and small children remained in the ghetto. For example, of the 6- to 8-person Jewish family with whom Kuźniak lived,

only Estera Fiszman with her two small children remained. An elderly man named Klajn, who during the deportation hid with two infants his family had left with him in the attic of his house, set himself on fire with petrol to commit suicide.¹³

Following the liquidation Aktion, the German authorities established a remnant ghetto in Wodzisław. At the beginning of November 1942, 90 Jews lived there, but this number reportedly grew to 300 before its liquidation that same month. On November 20, the remaining Jews were resettled to the Sandomierz ghetto.¹⁴

SOURCES The Wodzisław ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1456; and Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955): 129, 146 (table 6).

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/726, 211/488-89, 211/494, 211/1115-17, and 301/3549); USHMM (RG-50.488 # 0149 [Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 51 [JSS]).

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NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 25, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1116 (Wodzisław), p. 6, 211/1117 (Wodzisław), p. 12, and reel 26, 211/489 (Jędrzejów), p. 25.

2. USHMM, RG-50.488 # 0149 (Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project), interview with Zofia Kuźniak, 2002.

3. *Ibid.*; and Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1115 (Wodzisław), p. 12.

4. AŻIH, 301/3549, testimony of Mojżesz Najman, 1948.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1115, p. 12.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

7. USHMM, RG-50.488 # 0149; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1116, pp. 2, 6; and AŻIH, 301/3549.

8. AŻIH, 301/3549; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1115, p. 63, 211/1116, p. 12, and 211/1117, p. 7; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/726, p. 5; and *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 28, 1941.

9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 51, 211/1116, p. 25, and 211/1117, p. 10; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 25, 1942. Also see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/488 (Jędrzejów), p. 13, and 211/494 (Jędrzejów), p. 26.

10. USHMM, RG-50.488 # 0149.

11. AŻIH, 301/3549; and USHMM, RG-50.488 # 0149.

12. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo kieleckie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1980), p. 306.

13. USHMM, RG-50.488 # 0149; and Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," p. 129.

14. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów: Województwo kieleckie*, p. 306; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/489, pp. 55–56.

WOLANÓW

Pre-1939: Wolanów, village, Kielce województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Wolanow, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom,
Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wolanów, województwo
mazowieckie, Poland

Wolanów is located 13 kilometers (8 miles) southwest of Radom. On the outbreak of World War II, on September 1, 1939, there were probably around 500 Jews residing in Wolanów.¹ Archival documentation regarding their fate during the German occupation is very scant. This is due partly to the fact that from 1940 the village was included within a large German military training ground, set up by the occupying forces in the area around Radom. It encompassed a complex of training areas for antiaircraft artillery, which were linked to two airfields constructed in their vicinity. As the Wehrmacht enforced strict security around the training grounds, only fragmentary information regarding the Jewish community could be transmitted across its borders. It is known, however, that the community was soon subjected to the anti-Jewish legislation enforced in the Generalgouvernement. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established to represent the local Jewish community. But its activities were very modest and were limited mostly to transmitting the orders of the occupiers to the Jewish residents. In the spring of 1940, Wolanów was one of the few localities in Distrikt Radom in which the Judenrat did not carry out much in the way of charitable work.²

In March 1941, the number of Jews increased to more than 600 people, following the resettlement of 26 families from the nearby town of Przytyk, which was completely evacuated for the construction of one of the airfields.³ Other Jews, such as the family of Jerachmiel Pikier, arrived in Wolanów from Distrikt Warschau to avoid being concentrated in the Warsaw ghetto. A large number of men were forced to dig peat and perform various tasks at the military training grounds, such as the construction of barracks and new roads. Pikier, for example, was employed in the summer of 1942 on construction work in the nearby village of Strzałków. It is likely that a large group of Jews was imprisoned in the labor camp situated near Wolanów in the village of Garno from 1940. Prisoners of the camp worked in airfield construction.⁴

According to a witness testimony held by the International Tracing Service (ITS), a ghetto was established in Wolanów in July 1941. Wolanów is also mentioned as one of the places where Jews were to be concentrated in Kreishauptmann Dr. Egen's order of December 22, 1941, on the establishment of ghettos in Kreis Radom-Land, which thereby confirmed Wolanów's status as a *Judenbezirk* or Jewish ghetto. It is likely that following this order in early 1942, more Jews from the surrounding villages were required to move there.⁵ After this date, Jews caught outside the ghetto faced the death penalty.

As houses in the village were scattered, the strict segregation of the Polish and Jewish population was probably not conducted, but rather the entire village was recognized as a ghetto. There

were probably also overcrowded living conditions among the Jews in Wolanów, due to the arrival of the Jews from Przytyk and other places. Each month the food and sanitary conditions worsened. Although the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) transferred some funds to assist with the feeding of children during the course of 1942, it was only a drop in the ocean.⁶

The ghetto was liquidated in the last days of August 1942, when all of its residents were transferred to Szydłowiec. From there, on September 23, together with others, the Jews of Wolanów were deported to the extermination camp in Treblinka.⁷ The prisoners of the labor camp in Garno faced a similar tragic fate when this camp was liquidated in August 1943.⁸ During the war, material evidence of the Jewish presence in Wolanów was destroyed, including the tombstones from the Jewish cemetery, which the Germans used to pave roads in the area.

SOURCES Published sources regarding the Wolanów ghetto include Sebastian Piątkowski, "Pomoc społeczna i działalność charytatywna w gettach dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942)," in Marek Przeniosło, ed., *Dobroczynność i pomoc społeczna na ziemiach polskich w XIX, XX i na początku XXI wieku* (Kielce, 2008), pp. 172–177; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), p. 122; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 569.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (211/430 [JSS]; NMO, nos. 60 and 63; and ITS.

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 trans. Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej dystryktu radomskiego podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej," *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 160, however, states—based on a witness account—that there were 800 Jews living in Wolanów at the outbreak of the war. This number is probably too high.

2. Piątkowski, "Pomoc społeczna," pp. 172–177.

3. AŻIH, 211/430; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków, 2004), p. 141; Adam Rutkowski, "The War and the Destruction of the Jewish Population in the Radom Region" (trans. Jerrold Landau), in *Przytyk Memorial Book* (translation of David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Przytyk* [Tel Aviv: Przytyk Societies in Israel, France, and the USA, 1973]), p. 257.

4. In Polish publications the camp in the village of Garno is often referred to as being located in Wolanów. This is incorrect. See, for example, Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 569; and Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 152. Also see "Jerachmiel (Rachmil) Pikier, about his family during and after World War II in Warka, Wolanów, and Stara-chowice," available at www.sztetl.org.pl. Pikier was subsequently transferred to the labor camp after the evacuation of Wolanów's Jews in August 1942.

5. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen*, p. 122, citing AŻIH, NMO, nos. 60 and 63, from late December 1942.

6. AŻIH, 211/430.

7. Sebastian Piątkowski, “Żydzi w Szydłowcu w latach wojny i okupacji (1939–1945),” in Jacek Wijaczka, ed., *Żydzi szydłowieccy. Materiały sesji popularnonaukowej 22 lutego 1997 roku* (Szydłowiec, 1997), p. 128.

8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 569.

WOLBÓRZ

Pre-1939: Wolbórz, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wolborz, Kreis Petrikau, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wolbórz, Łódź województwo, Poland

Wolbórz is located about 39 kilometers (24 miles) southeast of Łódź. In 1939, there were 254 Jews living in Wolbórz.

A significant part of the village was razed in the course of the September Campaign; the Jewish community estimated that 75 percent of its houses were destroyed.¹ There were some German forces encamped in the village; the Jews of Wolbórz were forced to clean their quarters and perform other tasks at their behest. This labor was unpaid.

H. Młynarski was the first Judenrat chairman. Młynarski's deputy, the dentist Icchok Rosenblat, later replaced him. Rosenblat was most likely succeeded by the tailor Abram Kirszbaum. Kirszbaum was shot on Modrzewski Street by the Tomaszów Mazowiecki Gestapo and German Gendarmerie on July 23, 1942. A Jewish police force was also established in the village; Rosenblat served in this force. The police commander was shot by SS men shortly before the liquidation of the Wolbórz ghetto.

By the end of 1939, numerous refugee and deportee families from Łódź and Tuszyn had settled in the village.

In 1940, 19 local youths were sent to a labor camp in Cieszanów in Distrikt Lublin. Meanwhile in Wolbórz, approximately 30 unpaid laborers were regulating the Wolbórka River, deepening it to improve the functioning of a local mill. Work was suspended briefly in January 1941 for the remainder of the winter. At that time, on the order of the Kreis doctor, the community was forced to open a public bath. There were reportedly 427 Jews living in the village at this time.²

By May 1941, a local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) had been established, with pre-war community leader Jozek Szajnfarber as its chairman and Judenrat chairman Rosenblat serving as his deputy; another member of the pre-war leadership, the tradesman Moszek Baum, was also on the committee. The JSS committee's services were limited to the distribution of very small quantities of potatoes and sugar.³

By mid-1941, the number of locals was almost equal to the number of newcomers. In July of that year, the local JSS committee reported 182 refugees living in the village. August 1941 statistics show that there were a total of 121 children and youths under 18.

In September 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out, which remained uncontained until November 1941. The JSS managed to open a soup kitchen on November 9, 1941, which fed 40 people who were still quarantined. By December 1941, the kitchen was feeding 63 people daily. As of February 1942, the

40 poorest children in the village were fed breakfast four times a week comprising 10 grams (0.4 ounce) of bread with marmalade and chicory coffee.⁴

In May 1942, there were 424 Jews in Wolbórz, including 188 refugees. In a report dated May 5, 1942, the local JSS stated that there was no ghetto in Wolbórz. However, it noted: “Caution: over 80 percent of the Jews are living in Jewish houses [owned or occupied by Jews]. This month some families were resettled to Jewish houses. On average, up to seven persons share a room.”⁵

This resettlement most likely indicates the ghetto's establishment. Two survivors and brothers of the Judenrat chairman, Herman and Samuel Rosenblat, testified that the ghetto was open. Samuel described it as follows: “The only plus was that the ghetto was not enclosed with barbed wire, it was like a few streets designated for a ghetto, and we somehow could survive by bringing in some food.” Neither of the brothers refers to any punishment being imposed for leaving the ghetto or whether guards were posted around the perimeter. Herman stated, however, “We were not allowed to leave the immediate main square of the town.” As the ghetto's mailman, he was the only Jew permitted to go to the local post office to pick up the community's mail. The ghetto was overcrowded, with four to five families sharing a house.⁶

The ghetto was liquidated at the beginning of October 1942. Its residents were transferred to the Piotrków Trybunalski ghetto, which was liquidated in turn on October 15–21, 1942. Many of its residents, including most of the Jews from Wolbórz, were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES References to the Wolbórz ghetto can be found in Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), p. 185; and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 102, 142 (table 4), 169–170.

Archival sources include USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/732; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/798, 211/1127–1130) and VHF (# 00781 and 10740).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1128 (Wolbórz), pp. 3–5; and 211/1130 (Wolbórz), p. 19.

2. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo piotrkowskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1983), p. 147; VHF, # 10740, testimony of Herman Rosenblat, 1996; # 00781, testimony of Samuel Rosenblat, 1995; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/732 (Wolbórz), p. 2; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/798 (Piotrków Trybunalski), pp. 4–5; 211/1128, pp. 3–5, 17–19; and 211/1130, p. 7.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1127 (Wolbórz), p. 2; 211/798, pp. 4–5.

4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/732, p. 2; 211/1128, p. 29; 211/1129 (Wolbórz), p. 19; 211/1130, pp. 14–15, 19.

5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1130 (Wolbórz), p. 19.

6. VHF, # 00781; # 10740.

WYŚMIERZYCE

Pre-1939: Wyśmierzyce, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wysmierzyce, Kreis Radom-Land, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wyśmierzyce, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Wyśmierzyce is located 45 kilometers (28 miles) northwest of Radom, on the Pilica River. On the outbreak of World War II, approximately 150 Jews were residing in the town.¹

Soon after the start of the German occupation in September 1939, the Jews of Wyśmierzyce became subject to the anti-Jewish legislation enforced throughout the Generalgouvernement. A Judenrat was established to represent the local Jewish community. According to available sources, its activities were very modest, largely limited to relaying the orders of the occupiers to the community. In the spring of 1940, Wyśmierzyce was one of the few localities in Distrikt Radom where the Judenrat apparently was not engaged in running welfare activities.²

In 1940–1941, the number of Jews in Wyśmierzyce rose significantly. The Germans sent about 40 Jewish families from Przytyk to Wyśmierzyce when the Jews of Przytyk were resettled in March 1941 to make way for the construction of an airfield.³ In addition, numerous refugees from nearby localities in Distrikt Warschau (primarily Mogielnica and Przybyszewo) settled in the town. Their influx was due to the conviction among many Jews that Wyśmierzyce was a relatively “safe” place, as the German police visited the town only rarely. Local Jews were still able to sustain themselves by peddling, running retail stores and workshops, or selling their labor to local Poles in exchange for food.⁴ Available sources imply that by the end of 1941 the number of Jews in Wyśmierzyce had reached 500. At that time, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) existed in Wyśmierzyce, most likely administered by Symcha Tenenbaum, Henoch Grynfarb, and Motek Bryner.⁵

A ghetto was established in Wyśmierzyce during the last days of May 1942. It included the following streets (present names): Zdrojowa, Wojska Polskiego, and Piotr Skarga, as well as the eastern side of the Market Square (*Rynek*), encompassing an area of approximately 2 hectares (5 acres). At that time there were 900 Jews in the ghetto, presumably including additional Jews brought in from the surrounding villages. Some of the Jews were forced to find shelter in cowsheds and barns. Sanitary conditions in the ghetto were simply disastrous, resulting in an outbreak of typhus.⁶ It is not known whether at the time of the ghetto’s establishment a Jewish police force was also organized. On June 15, the Jewish quarter was completely sealed: not a single Jew was permitted to leave the ghetto—not even temporarily. Poles were forbidden to enter the ghetto. A few days later the Germans took numerous able-bodied men from the ghetto to one of the labor camps in Distrikt Radom. As a result of this roundup, the number of people unable to sustain themselves rose to 700.⁷ Conditions in the ghetto continued to deteriorate until around August 20, when all of the ghetto’s residents were deported to the Białobrzegi ghetto.

From there, they were driven subsequently to the train station in Dobieszyn, from which they were sent to the extermination camp in Treblinka.⁸

Just before the transfer of the Jews from Wyśmierzyce to the Białobrzegi ghetto, Dr. Heling turned to the secretary of the municipality, Hieronim Sochaczewski, asking for help. A few days later, Sochaczewski provided Dr. Heling with Aryan papers for himself, his wife, and his daughter, with roughly the right ages for the family, but bearing the names of people who were deceased. Sochaczewski then hid the Helings for several days, before assisting them in their escape across the Pilica River to another town, where they survived until the arrival of the Red Army in September 1944. In 1986, Sochaczewski was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

SOURCES The main published source regarding conditions in the Wyśmierzyce ghetto is Sebastian Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna i działalność charytatywna w gettach dystryktu radomskiego (1939–1942),” in Marek Przeniosło, ed., *Dobroczynność i pomoc społeczna na ziemiach polskich w XIX, XX i na początku XXI wieku* (Kielce, 2008), pp. 172–177. The ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 578.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APR; AŻIH (211/430, 1138 [JSS]); IPN; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej dystryktu radomskiego podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos 15–16 (1955): 160.
2. See Piątkowski, “Pomoc społeczna,” pp. 172–177.
3. Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków, 2004), p. 141; Adam Rutkowski, “The War and the Destruction of the Jewish Population in the Radom Region” (trans. Jerrold Landau), in *Przytyk Memorial Book* (translation of *Sefer Przytyk*, ed. David Shtokfish [Tel Aviv: Przytyk Societies in Israel, France, and the USA, 1973]), p. 257.
4. AŻIH, 211/430.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.; Tadeusz Rostkowski, “Społeczeństwo Wyśmierzyce w latach 1939–1945,” in *650 lat Wyśmierzyce* (Wyśmierzyce, 1988), p. 110.
7. AŻIH, 211/430.
8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 578.

ŻARKI

Pre-1939: Żarki, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1940–1944: Żarki, Kreis Radomsko, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Żarki, województwo śląskie, Poland

Żarki is located on the Warta River, 26 kilometers (16 miles) southeast of Częstochowa. In 1939, 2,656 Jews lived in Żarki.

On the outbreak of World War II, many buildings in Żarki were destroyed by German bombardments. More than 150 people, including about 100 Jews, were killed. Many inhabitants tried to flee, but most were forced to return. Żarki was occupied on September 4. That day, about 1,000 Jews were ordered to gather on the central square where they were kept for hours, and some were subsequently shot. In the first weeks of occupation, a number of Jews were arrested as hostages, and one of the Jewish study centers was burned down.

Under German occupation, a known antisemite, Kovalik, became mayor of the town. Jewish houses had to be marked with the word “Jude” (Jew), Jews were not allowed to trade with non-Jews, and Jewish men were drafted for forced labor, especially to clean the streets of rubble.¹

By the end of April 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) had been established in Żarki. The chairman was Yisrael Bornstein (who also was in charge of the Jewish Police), the secretary was I. Wolhendler,² and the chairman of the labor office was Moshe Rothstein. In April, the Judenrat reported on the situation of the Jews in Żarki. Of the 3,500 Jews there, most were craftsmen such as shoemakers or bootmakers. Many Jewish families had lost their homes, and there were only limited funds to help the homeless or hungry. A soup kitchen provided 300 meals per day. Jews performed forced labor, cleaning and repairing streets and squares, and Jews who owned horses had to work for local farmers. A Jewish physician, Dr. Margulies, took care of the sick and elderly.³ To ease the burden on the community, wealthier Jews were taxed, and the money was used as a relief fund, to pay “contributions” or to bribe German officials.

In May 1940, Żarki became part of Kreis Radomsko, in Distrikt Radom within the Generalgouvernement. The new Kreishauptmann imposed a “fine” of 40,000 złoty on the Jewish community, which stretched its financial reserves to the limit.⁴ On June 26, 1940, the Jewish Council reported to the



A group of Jewish men and youth from Żarki march to a forced labor site carrying shovels, June 20, 1940.
USHMM WS #16501, COURTESY OF LEAH HAMMERSTEIN SILVERSTEIN

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) that due to lack of funds the soup kitchen had to be closed, and there was almost no money left to support the refugees. Almost all Jewish businesses had been liquidated, and unemployment was rising. Starvation increasingly became a problem. To help out, the AJDC sent food and clothing in August, including 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of rice, 192 kilos (423 pounds) of flour, and 200 cans of condensed milk.⁵

In the summer of 1940, about 200 Jews from Żarki were drafted for forced labor: about 50 of them on irrigation projects for the Water Regulation Company in Częstochowa.⁶ In October 1940, the labor office in Częstochowa sent 73 Jews to a forced labor camp in Przyrów and planned to send more. Some 50 Jews also worked for the chemical plant in Brieg; 50 more worked in town, cleaning rubble; and an unknown number worked in regulating the Leśniówka River. Some Jews received a regular salary and others did not, relying instead on support from the Judenrat, raised from Jews who paid for substitutes.⁷

The dire financial situation of the Żarki Jewish community was exacerbated by the constant influx of refugees. About 250 refugees arrived from Płock after being deported from there at the end of February 1941. The Jewish community had to provide them with food, housing, and clothing. The Judenrat and the local chapter of the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ) were also in charge of administering medical aid for forced laborers from Wodzisław kept in Żarki and for forced laborers from Żarki in the camp in Przyrów.⁸ Facing all these expenses, the Judenrat repeatedly turned to the AJDC for financial help to reopen the soup kitchen and to keep the outpatient hospital running.⁹

In the spring of 1941, a group of young Jews, probably all members of the Ha-Shomer Ha-Za’ir, established a farm on formerly Jewish-owned fields near Żarki. The 14-hectare (35-acre) farm was meant to provide unpaid vocational training in agriculture for about 25 adolescents; the instructor was a Jewish farmer. The Jewish Council requested financial support for the project, mainly to buy tools and livestock.¹⁰ The farm, run by H. Bradys and M. Margulies, provided supplementary food for the Jews of Żarki, producing a wide variety of vegetables and fruits. The farm had seven geese and two ponds with fish; fruit was harvested from 162 trees and 350 bushes. According to survivors’ memoirs, even representatives of the German authorities who visited the farm were impressed by the Jews’ obvious agricultural capabilities, which defied the Germans’ antisemitic stereotypes. The farm continued to operate into 1942.¹¹

Information on the ghetto in Żarki is relatively sparse. Survivor accounts date the establishment of an open ghetto (Jewish residential area) on a few streets to the arrival of the Jews from Płock, which also led to overcrowding.¹² According to another account, following an outbreak of typhus in June 1941, local antisemites blamed the Jews for the disease and demanded the government isolate them. In response, the Kreishauptmann ordered that the “ghetto” in Żarki be enclosed

by a fence and sealed off. However, with the aid of bribes, the Jewish Council managed to get this edict reversed. Nevertheless, by the fall of 1941, Jews were forbidden to leave their places of residence and were shot if caught outside the ghetto without permission. This shut down almost all Jewish trade, especially smuggling across the border with the Reich. Now only a few specialists received official passes to go to workplaces outside the ghetto. Hunger subsequently drove more Jews to ignore the prohibition, going to nearby villages in search of food. But many were caught and shot. On each occasion the Judenrat was informed and instructed to go and collect the body.¹³

At the end of 1941, there was a renewed typhus epidemic, resulting in a number of deaths. The small hospital the Jewish community had opened was unable to do much, as it lacked drugs and medical personnel. The German authorities' response was to order the Jewish community to improve sanitary conditions by erecting a public bathhouse.

In the late summer of 1942, the Żarki Jews were scared by rumors about the liquidation of ghettos in the area and the deportation of Jews to extermination camps. In their despair, they looked for alternatives like volunteering for forced labor camps, collecting money to bribe the German authorities, or erecting places to hide in town or outside in the forests around Żarki. In late September, news reached the community that Polish farmers with horses and wagons had been instructed to arrive in town on October 6, 1942. Based on reports from other communities, the Jews knew what this meant: the horse-drawn carriages would take them to a train station, and from there they would be sent to camps. Panic spread. Some Jews tried to flee to other towns and ghettos, but for many there was no escape. On October 6, about 800 Jews were assembled at the market square, while German SS and Police, Ukrainian auxiliaries, and Polish (Blue) Police searched the town for Jews in hiding; 23 were found and shot on the spot.¹⁴

Probably due to the specific situation in Żarki—the ghetto was unfenced—about 1,600 Jews were able to flee. Most of them fled to Pilica, where the expulsions had been completed. From the 800 Jews at the market square, about 30 were selected for labor. The others were driven to Żłoty Potok, the train station close to Żarki, and from there they were taken in freight cars to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹⁵

The 30 Jews held back were used to collect and sort Jewish property. Jews who had tried to escape the expulsion were caught and sent to ghettos in Pilica, Częstochowa, and Piotrków Trybunalski. The main collection ghetto for the area was in Radomsko, and many Żarki Jews were taken there. From all of these ghettos, the remaining Jews from Żarki were sent mainly to extermination camps in early 1943.¹⁶

SOURCES Relevant published sources concerning the fate of the Jewish community in Żarki during the Holocaust include the following: Y. Lador, ed., *Kehilat Zarki; ayarah be-hayeha u-ve-kbilyonah* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Zarki in Israel, 1959); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999),

pp. 216–221; Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach, 2007), pp. 172–175; and Krzysztof Urbański, *Gminy żydowskie małe w województwie kieleckim w okresie międzywojennym* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach, 2006), pp. 189–196. The Żarki ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 597, no. 5812.

Relevant documentation on Żarki under German occupation can be found in AAN (202/III/7); AŻIH (210/752); BA-L (B 162/6221); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH—AJDC], 210/752); VHF (e.g., # 9642, 28289, and 31493); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Lador, *Kehilat Zarki*, pp. 165, 231.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH—AJDC), 210/752, financial report of the Ältestenrat, 1940.
3. Ibid., report of Ältestenrat, April 1940.
4. Lador, *Kehilat Zarki*, p. 166.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/752, various correspondence dated June 26 (Rechenschaftsbericht), July, and August 9, 1940.
6. Ibid., report for August and September 1940.
7. Ibid., report, October 1940.
8. Ibid., report of local TOŻ chapter for 1940.
9. Ibid., Ältestenrat to AJDC, January 29, 1941, and TOŻ chapter to AJDC in Kraków, February 5, 1941.
10. Lador, *Kehilat Zarki*, p. 169; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/752, correspondence of May 16 and June 12, 1941.
11. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/752; and Lador, *Kehilat Zarki*, p. 170.
12. VHF, # 28289, testimony of Joseph Dauman; # 9642, testimony of Eli Zborowski (uses the term “residential area”).
13. Lador, *Kehilat Zarki*, pp. 240–243.
14. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 219.
15. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), pp. 269, 302; BA-L, B 162/6221, pp. 1612 ff.
16. Młynarczyk, *Żudenmord in Zentralpolen*, pp. 276–277; BA-L, B 162/6221, p. 1534; AAN, 202/III/7, vol. 2, p. 11.

ŻARNÓW

Pre-1939: Żarnów, village, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Żarnow, Kreis Tomaszów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Żarnów, Łódź województwo, Poland

Żarnów is located 22 kilometers (14 miles) southwest of Opoczno. There were 919 Jews living in the village in 1921; by 1937 their number had risen to 1,129.

Established by the German authorities, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) included Abram Wajnberg (chairman), a shoemaker and former president of the Jewish community in Żarnów; Nuchym Lipling (deputy); and K. Nuemiller (office manager).

By January 1941, 1,494 refugees and deportees had settled in the village. A self-help committee was established on February 2, 1941, taking over the provision of social assistance by the Judenrat, including the operation of the soup kitchen, which was managed by a man named Dobraszkłanka. The committee was chaired by the dentist Rachmil Klajnert and included Aron Turko (deputy), Jakub Zacharjasz (treasurer), Rubin Kuszer, and Chaim Husytowski. The three members of the committee's oversight commission were Rabbi Alter Gotszalk and the Judenrat leaders Wajnberg and Lipling.¹

The number of refugees rose to 1,643 following the arrival of 266 Jews from Płock on March 17, 1941. In April, a refugee from Płock with the first name of Felicja described her situation in Żarnów: "Very many people live like I do: for breakfast, black bread and coffee with saccharin, [and for] dinner 10 groszy [meal at the soup kitchen], for supper just like breakfast. . . . Sanitary conditions are calamitous, vermin is everywhere. The housing question is a headache only for those who have no money."

In May 1941, approximately 35 Jews were sent to a labor camp in Dęblin, where the Germans were expanding an airfield.²

In July 1941, out of an estimated 2,500 Jews residing in Żarnów, 1,500 were newcomers from Mława, Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Płock, and other localities. As diseases were already spreading, the head doctor for the Kreis ordered Żarnów's Jews to establish an epidemic hospital by the end of July. Doctor Jan Singer, responsible for sanitation, stated in October 1941, "Typhus is spreading amongst deportees living in utter indigence." Soon after, the order was given to outfit the hospital with a total of 20 beds. The soup kitchen was closed to make room for the hospital but was reopened on November 11, 1941, after the Germans closed the hospital. The sick were then sent to a hospital in Opoczno. Out of 200 people who contracted typhus, 30 died by the end of December 1941.³

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was organized in the village in November 1941, staffed by Hersz Bromberg as chairman, Rachmil Klajnert, and Jakub Zacharjasz.⁴

By the end of January 1942, the Jews living in Żarnów had been ghettoized. On January 27, the JSS wrote to its Kraków headquarters: "As you know, the Jews are banned from leaving town. Accordingly . . . it is presently impossible to manage all affairs of the soup kitchen. . . . [A]ll efforts to buy produce for the soup kitchen, or straw and shoes for the poor, encountered enormous obstacles . . . even more so since none of the JSS members has any special permission [to leave the ghetto]." In February there were 2,200 Jews in the ghetto. In April 1942, still no one had permission to leave the town.⁵

This restriction, however, was most likely poorly enforced until shortly before the ghetto's liquidation in October 1942. Two sisters, Helen and Halina Zimm, whose families found refuge in Żarnów in 1940, do not describe it as a ghetto. Helen even testified: "luckily it was not a ghetto."⁶ *Pinkas ha-kehillot* states that it was officially an unfenced area that was designated as Jewish; however, a number of Jews continued to live in other sections of the village. This lasted until September 1942, about one month before the liquidation.

The date the Jewish Police was organized is unknown; however, in February 1942, one of its tasks was to collect taxes—"often employing force"—imposed by the Judenrat. The monthly tax at the time ranged from 700 to 900 złoty. The kitchen continued its services (e.g., in April 1942 for 350 people), and some recipients were charged 10 groszy per meal.

On the orders of the Arbeitsamt (labor office), 50 of Żarnów's poorer Jews and refugees were daily performing public works in Opoczno in the spring of 1942. Jewish laborers reportedly also worked in agriculture, on road construction, and in workshops organized by the Judenrat.⁷

In May 1942, the German authorities arrested Judenrat head Wajnberg and several other community leaders. After an 11-day questioning they were shot in a forest near Opoczno. Hillel Zachariash (Zacharjasz) became the new Judenrat chairman. Among the victims was most likely Rachmil Klajnert, whom the JSS acknowledges at the time as being "deceased." As of June 1942, Chaim Husytowski was the JSS chairman. In the summer of 1942, a number of Jews from the ghetto were sent to the Janowska labor camp on the outskirts of Lwów.⁸

The last information about the ghetto comes from the JSS report for September 1942 (dated October 2, 1942). In a section referring to changes happening in the ghetto within the reporting period, the JSS noted: "Resettlement of Jews living until now in non-Jewish houses to Jewish-owned houses." The document reports 2,025 Jews in the Żarnów ghetto.⁹ Helen Zimm testified that at the end of September the community learned about the planned resettlement to labor camps.¹⁰

The ghetto was liquidated in the second half of October 1942. Prior to this, more Jews from surrounding villages were brought in (e.g., 300 Jews from Marcinków-Machory on October 5, 1942, and possibly 300 Jews from the Skórkowice ghetto) as well as a few families from Siucice (where most of the Jewish population had already been sent to the Skórkowice ghetto in January 1942).¹¹ According to Florian Mayerski, his family was marched to the Żarnów ghetto just one day before its Jews were deported to the Opoczno ghetto. The next morning at dawn, the Germans forcefully gathered Żarnów's Jews in the market. Many elderly and disabled Jews were shot either on their way there or in their apartments. In the course of a selection, the Germans asked those with professional backgrounds to identify themselves. Approximately 50 people, including the chairman of the Judenrat, were held back, while the remainder were taken to Opoczno on trucks. The Opoczno ghetto was liquidated on October 27, 1942, when its residents were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Mayerski, who was a member of the cleanup Kommando, estimated that they buried about 30 corpses at the Jewish cemetery in Żarnów. The Kommando lived on the grounds of the ghetto. Some Jews escaped; others were most likely transferred to the Ujazd ghetto in December 1942 or January 1943.¹²

SOURCES The following publications make reference to the fate of the Jewish community of Żarnów during the Holocaust: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 132, 185; Adam Rutkowski, "Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności

żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 155 (table 10), 177–178; Krzysztof Urbański, *Almanach gmin żydowskich województwa kieleckiego w latach 1918–1939* (Kielce: Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach: FPHU “XYZ,” 2007), p. 177; and Danuta Dąbrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Łódź and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 104–105.

Relevant archival sources include AŻIH (210/754, 211/969, 211/1039, 211/1173–1175, Ring I/573); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079 [Ring I]); and VHF (# 19079, 19208, and 47850).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/754 (Żarnów), pp. 3–5; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1173 (Żarnów), pp. 3–4; 211/1174 (Żarnów), p. 2; and 211/1175 (Żarnów), pp. 9, 25.
2. Ibid., RG-15.079, Ring I/537, pp. 1–4; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/754, pp. 9–10; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1173, pp. 12, 14, 25.
3. Ibid., pp. 8, 29; 211/1174, pp. 1, 24, 26, 34, 38–39; and 211/1175, p. 1.
4. Ibid., 211/1174, p. 29.
5. Ibid., 211/1175, pp. 9–10, 12, 21.
6. VHF, # 19079, testimony of Helen Zimm, 1996; # 19208, testimony of Halina Zimm, 1996.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1175, pp. 12, 30; VHF, # 19079.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1039 (Tomaszów Mazowiecki), pp. 62–63; and 211/1175, pp. 46, 53.
9. Ibid., 211/1175, pp. 61–64.
10. VHF, # 19079.
11. Ibid., # 47850, testimony of Florian Mayerski, 1998; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/969 (Skórkowice), pp. 31–32.
12. VHF, # 47850.

ZAWICHOST

Pre-1939: Zawichost, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Opatów, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

The town of Zawichost is located on the left bank of the Vistula River, 17 kilometers (11 miles) northeast of Sandomierz.

When the Germans captured Zawichost on September 9, 1939, they found about 1,500 Jews in the town. The large-scale plunder of Jewish houses started immediately, and all Jewish stores were forced to close.

In early 1940, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the town, nominating merchant Chaim Josef Kirszenbaum as chairman and Arnold Węgrzyn as his deputy. The Judenrat's main tasks were to organize forced labor and collect the “contributions” imposed by the Germans. As a first contribution, the Germans demanded 50,000 złoty, threatening to kill the entire community if the demand was not met. The successive contributions soon impoverished the Jews.

One day, Kirszenbaum tried to explain to the Gendarmes, who came frequently from Sandomierz, that the Jews had run out of money. They took him out of his house and beat him. Despite such episodes, the members of the Judenrat generally had a good relationship with the Gendarmes. Jewish merchants even traded with Wehrmacht soldiers returning from France to obtain items they could resell for a profit.¹

At the start, the Germans simply rounded up whomever they could catch for forced labor; later it was obligatory for all men aged between 16 and 60. The better-off Jews could avoid service by paying money to the Judenrat in return for a falsified document stating that they had performed such labor. Jews were forced to drain nearby fields and repair the levees on the banks of the Vistula River.

With the assistance of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) based in Kraków, the Judenrat sought to supply laborers with shoes and clothes. In August 1940, about 200 young and healthy Jews were sent to newly established labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, including one at Bełżec. There, they worked to fortify the banks of the Bug River (the border with the Soviet Union) and also improved highways as a part of the so-called Otto Program.²

In September 1939, approximately 200 Jews arrived in Zawichost, having fled from settlements to the west. In addition, about 130 Jews from Łódź, Kalisz, and Tarnobrzeg were resettled to Zawichost in November 1939. In December 1940, on German instructions, the Judenrat in Radom forced about 2,000 Jews to relocate to smaller towns. Approximately 100 were transferred to Zawichost without luggage or money. The Judenrat in Zawichost tried in vain to obtain money from Radom's Judenrat to assist these deportees. The Judenrat in Radom, which intentionally enlisted its own poor for resettlement, insisted that the Zawichost community treat these Jews like the other refugees and provide for them themselves.

The refugees and expellees received some assistance from the AJDC in Kraków; however, they claimed that due to the Judenrat's corruption, only a small fraction of the aid reached the intended recipients. Whenever Zawichost's indigent Jews spoke up for themselves, however, they were told “to eat stones” and “leave the Judenrat office.” In June 1940, desperate deportees described the situation to the AJDC, requesting that a special envoy be sent. The envoy inspected local conditions in December 1940. In March 1941, the Judenrat estimated there were 300 deportees in Zawichost; by April this number had risen to 400.³

To cope with the growing number of deportees, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in Kraków. The Kreis committee, with its headquarters in Opatów, was established on December 16, 1940. The Zawichost branch was founded in June 1941. The chairman of the Judenrat, Kirszenbaum, and his deputy Węgrzyn, proposed that they should also be in charge of the local JSS. The Kraków headquarters approved their appointment. Fajwel Szulman was the third member of the committee. After five months, in November 1941, the committee established a soup kitchen for the deportees and local poor that distributed 200 meals per day.

After their invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the German military left the town. Authority was exercised by German Gendarmes, the SS, and collaborating Polish policemen. A 6:00 p.m. curfew was imposed on the Jews. At night, the Gendarmes enforced the blackout with raids. Whenever they found an open shutter, they arrested the inhabitants of the house and held them at the Gendarmerie station for the night. When the Germans demanded further contributions, they would take members of the Judenrat hostage and demand the goods be delivered within one or two hours.

In the summer of 1941, the Germans ordered the establishment of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). At first, it consisted of seven men charged with maintaining order in the Jewish neighborhood. They also collected fines demanded by the Judenrat from those who avoided forced labor or who refused to house deportees.

In November 1941, on German orders, the Judenrat collected all fur items from the town's Jews. A ghetto had not yet been established, but now Zawichost's Jews were not permitted to leave the town limits or ride in wagons. The German post office also started refusing to process Jewish shipments. A special department, affiliated with the regular post, was set up to manage the Jewish post.

In 1941, more men were sent to the labor camps in Distrikt Lublin. One of the prisoners from Zawichost escaped from the Bełżec labor camp after only six weeks. Physically broken, he weighed only 32 kilos (70.5 pounds). According to one testimony, pressured by the families of other youths sent there, Judenrat members went to Bełżec and successfully secured the return of the Jews from Zawichost. On their return in early 1942, the Judenrat enlisted the same men for work in the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) ammunition labor camp in Skarżysko-Kamienna. Jewish and Polish (Blue) Police conducted the roundup.⁴ A second group of Jews was sent to Skarżysko in the summer of 1942.

Overcrowding, combined with poor diet and hygiene, led to outbreaks of typhus, dysentery, and tuberculosis. Sanitation Commission records show that 25 Jews were treated for typhus in 1940 and 18 in 1941, resulting in the death of three patients. These numbers, however, do not reflect reality. According to health regulations, all cases of typhus had to be isolated immediately at the epidemic hospital in Sandomierz. Jews infected with typhus did not want to go to the hospital, asking to be left at home. Many of them did not receive any medical treatment. In the spring of 1942, the JSS in Zawichost requested 2,000 vaccinations for typhus and dysentery (but such a large amount could only be obtained on the black market).

Medical care in Zawichost was dispensed by Dr. Hugo Weiss, who treated Jews free of charge. In May 1942, a free dental clinic was also set up, run by Dr. Abraham Miller.

The JSS records show that 10 children were born in 1941 and 27 Jews died. In February 1942, 80 craftsmen were still running their own workshops—most of them as shoemakers and tailors. At this time there were 2,035 Jews living in Zawichost.

From January 20, 1942, the JSS fed breakfast to poor and orphaned children aged between 2 and 10. Initially, it served bread and sweetened chicory coffee to over 50 children a day.

In February 1942, the JSS reported that 829 kilograms (1,828 pounds) of potatoes had spoiled due to frost damage. The soup kitchen was unable to continue serving meals without potatoes. To illustrate the loss: in that month the kitchen issued almost 5,800 dinners using 2,040 kilograms (4,497 pounds) of potatoes. The next most common ingredients were sour cabbage (260 kilograms [573 pounds]) and beets (155 kilograms [342 pounds]). The remaining few products amounted to less than 100 kilograms (220 pounds). In February 1942, 600 poor Jews applied for social help—but only 495 received it.

In the same month, an agriculture club associated with the JSS was established to sow all empty plots and squares in the Jewish quarter with vegetables and flowers. The official aim was to decorate the town; but clearly this was to supplement their diet. The club asked Kraków for 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of beet, carrot, and onion seeds. It also requested some garlic, rhubarb, chives, and 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of various flower seeds. In March, with Kraków's approval, the JSS began registering laborers for agricultural work. This reflected an effort to reconnoiter nearby estates to obtain employment opportunities for Zawichost's Jews. There was also a plan to provide interest-free loans. However, these plans were never implemented.

In May 1942, Kreishauptmann Ritter in Opatów ordered the concentration of all Jews in the Kreis into only five towns (including Zawichost) and 12 settlements by the end of the month. All of these places were recognized as ghettos starting June 1, 1942. The order was in preparation for the total expulsion of Jews from the region.

The Jews who lived in the other parts of Zawichost were forced to resettle into the ghetto. It consisted of four small streets: Głęboka, Ostrowiec, Bóźnicza, and Berek Joleslewicz. The Judenrat supervised the transfer of the newcomers.⁵ A Jew with a Paraguayan passport was also forced into the ghetto with his family despite his objections. The penalty for leaving the ghetto was death. Right after the establishment of the ghetto, its Jewish population numbered 2,145, of which 692 were deportees (another source states that there were 3,000 inhabitants).⁶

The second stage of concentrating the Jews in Kreis Opatów began in August 1942. Jews from Vienna, Annopol, Modliborzyce, Zaklików, Janów Lubelski, and other settlements were now crammed into the ghetto. As a result, the number of the ghetto's inhabitants more than doubled, rising to 5,000.⁷

The Jews in Zawichost were aware of other towns in the region being cleared of their Jewish populations. Most believed that if they worked for the Germans, they would be spared from the deportation. Those who were not working sought employment. In anticipation of the forthcoming deportation, a considerable number of Jews hid in underground bunkers within the ghetto, with Polish farmers, or in the surrounding forests.

The Germans liquidated the Zawichost ghetto on October 29, 1942. According to a secondhand account, SS troops and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the town at 4:00 A.M. Klaxons were sounded, and the town's Jews were ordered to gather at the market square, leaving their doors and windows opened. The dilatory, old, and sick were shot in their houses. Accompanied by beatings and shootings, the Germans and their collaborators drove approximately 5,000 Jews about 10 kilometers (6 miles) to the nearest train station in Dwikozy. About 40 Jews were killed during the march. The rest were loaded on railcars and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁸

About 80 Jewish policemen and young men remained in Zawichost to clean up and bury the dead. The deserted ghetto was stripped of its most valuable objects, which were initially stored in the Zawichost synagogue and then later sent to Germany. During the looting, several people were discovered hiding, all of whom were murdered. Two days after the ghetto's liquidation, the members of the cleanup Kommando were attached to a transport of Jews deported from Sandomierz, Klimontów, and Koprzywnica.⁹

It is estimated that about 200 Jews were killed in Zawichost during the course of the ghetto's liquidation. Their bodies were buried at the Jewish cemetery. A few months later a special detachment arrived, dug out the corpses, and burned them.¹⁰

SOURCES Much information on the life and destruction of Zawichost's Jews can be found in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 190–192. Additional information for this article comes mainly from two publications: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004); and Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 16–17 (1955).

Documentation on the fate of the Jewish community of Zawichost during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/1153–1154 [JSS]; 210/744 [AJDC]; and 301/2016 [Relacje]); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; and RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]); VHF (# 6825 and 1843); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2016, testimony of Zofia Zysman, 1946.
2. Ibid.; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 52.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 52; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/744.
4. AŻIH, 301/2016.
5. Ibid.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 52; RG-15.019M.
7. AŻIH, 301/2016.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. See IPN, SOWr 271, p. 621 and several secondary sources. According to USHMM, RG-15.019M, however, only 20 Jews were killed in the town.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

ZWOLEŃ

Pre-1939: Zwoleń, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zwolen, Kreis Radom-Land, Distrikt Radom, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Zwoleń, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The town of Zwoleń is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) east-southeast of Radom. In 1921, there were 3,787 Jews living there (51.2 percent of the total population).

By 1939 Zwoleń had 4,500 Jewish residents. A large part of the town was destroyed in the course of the September Campaign, forcing many Jewish families to move into makeshift huts.¹

The German authorities immediately instituted a regime of forced labor and extortion, including demands for monetary contributions. Jewish hostages numbering 200 to 300 were taken to Radom and Kielce; all of them were released and allowed to return home after one month. The Jews in Zwoleń were at first randomly rounded up for work; later, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) was charged with delivering the demanded quota of laborers. Work tasks consisted of cleaning snow off roads and attending to the needs of the German army and the Gendarmerie post.

Nuchim Wolman chaired the Judenrat; its secretary was Huberman. By September 1940, W. Kirszenberg had replaced Wolman. At the end of 1939, the Germans razed the local synagogue; the Jewish cemetery was leveled in 1942. In June 1940, an estimated 3,000 Jews were living in Zwoleń.²

In June 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out. Two hospital attendants, Jakób Breslauer and Kofman Ropoport, treated the sick in a Jewish hospital that had opened by August 1941 and was outfitted with 20 beds. By May 1942, when the epidemic was contained and the hospital closed, a total of 389 Jews had been treated for the disease. Ropoport, serving also as the chief of the sanitation committee in Zwoleń, reported that many Jews were suffering from skin diseases, mostly from scabies and sores.



The Sharfa family at forced labor in Zwoleń clearing away rubble, September 23, 1940.

USHMM WS #67994, COURTESY OF YIVO

In August 1941, there were 1,034 Jewish minors living in Zwoleń. In this group there were 439 children aged 7 to 14 years, and 77 of them were under 3 years old. There was no organized help for them.³

According to survivor Lejwa Fuks, the first roundup of males for transfer to labor camps took place in August 1941. One night, the entire Judenrat was arrested, only to be released the next morning by the Gendarmerie. As a result, 36 men were sent to the Pustków labor camp. Married men were soon released, while others escaped; the 2 laborers who remained in the camp were later released due to poor health.

In October 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established to take over from the Judenrat the organization of welfare. Following its launch, the local soup kitchen served over 600 meals to poor Jews daily and 250 breakfasts to children.

Mordka Blajchman (Bichman), the pre-war chairman of the Jewish community, was appointed as the JSS chairman; Lewi Izrael and Josek Kirszenbaum were also included on the committee. During the first six months of the kitchen's existence, 328 impoverished families received 116,376 meals. For over 85,000 meals, the JSS charged 30 groszy; the remainder of the meals were distributed free of charge.

According to Lejwa Fuks, at some point in 1941, Zwoleń's Jews were forbidden to walk the main street and the market square. Fuks dates the organization of the Jewish Police under the command of Mendel Weintraub to the same year.⁴

On January 2, 1942, Zwoleń's Jews reported to the JSS in Kraków that based on the order of the Kreishauptmann in Radom issued on December 22, 1942, a ghetto had already been established, and Jews from the vicinity were being transferred there. The Zwoleń ghetto was unfenced, but its residents were forbidden to leave the limits of the town. This ban prevented Jewish traders and peddlers, as well as those offering day-labor services, from making a living. The ghetto encompassed approximately 2 square kilometers (0.8 square mile); it was centrally located in a quarter populated by Jews before the war. The local Gendarmerie post was in charge of ghetto affairs.

Apart from those Jews who already lived within the ghetto limits, 50 Jewish families from Zwoleń's peripheries (known as Praga and Szosa Puławska) and also Jews from surrounding communities were transferred into the ghetto. The latter included Klwatka in the administrative gmina of Kuczki (39 people), Lucin (15), Podgóra (24), Janów in gmina Terów (47), Sobale (7), Ulianów (13), and 1 family from each of the following settlements: Helenówka, Grabów, Sucha, Strykowice, Bartodzieje, and Zielonka. Among the new ghetto inhabitants were also 115 Jews (24 families) who were transferred from the town of Przytyk, which had been depopulated of Jews as early as March 1941.

The JSS inquired about the possibilities of organizing a *bachshara* (youth training) and growing vegetables on the 2 hectares (5 acres) of land within the ghetto perimeter (of which 0.6 hectare [1.5 acres] consisted of adjacent garden plots). The 5 acres, however, were taken away from its Jewish owner and given to "a Christian deportee."

The local JSS estimated that at the time of the ghetto's creation in January 1942, there were 400 to 500 Jews from the city of Warsaw and other places in Distrikt Warschau living in Zwoleń illegally. With time their situation grew more serious, as Jews unable to present their *Kennkarte* (identity card) in March 1942 were "subject to the most severe retribution." Such was the case for many refugees from Łódź and Łuck, who were unable to obtain IDs due to severed postal connections or the destruction of archives in their native towns.⁵

In March 1942, the JSS estimated that there were 150 Jewish workshops in Zwoleń, of which only very few received significant production orders from the Germans. Most of them were for cobblers and tailors. Many ghetto residents were laboring in drainage and regulation of the Zwoleńka River.

In April 1942, 4,500 Jews inhabited the still-open ghetto. The largest groups of newcomers were from Łódź, Warsaw, and the gminas of Kuczki, Terów, and Zwoleń. There were 239 houses in the ghetto, consisting of 676 inhabited rooms; on average, 7 people shared a room.

Between January and June 1942, the German authorities reduced the area of the ghetto on two occasions. Following the second reduction in June, the JSS reported that "hundreds of families are under a naked sky, soaked through for four days. There is no hope of finding accommodation for them, because the streets in the ghetto are mostly not built up." The JSS planned to build barracks for the homeless at an estimated cost of 30,000 złoty.⁶

According to Fuks, 200 men were sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labor camp in July 1942. On August 1, 1942, another 130 men and 10 women were sent to Skarżysko, 35 men were dispatched to Dęblin, and 40 went to Kurów. Another survivor, Perec Szapiro, stated that 200 men were sent to Dęblin in August 1942 to build a railroad for the Schultz (Szulc) Company and another 100 to the Stawy village, where a labor camp was set up on the grounds of an ammunition magazine.⁷

In the summer of 1942, Zwoleń became one of the centers for the concentration of Jews in Kreis Radom-Land, before their deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. On August 3, 1942, 1,200 Jews from the Janowiec nad Wisłą ghetto arrived. On August 20, 1942, 488 Jews from the liquidated Pionki ghetto were likewise transferred. Furthermore, on September 18, 1942, Jews from the ghettos of Jedlnia Kościelna and Garbatka-Letnisko were concentrated there.⁸

The Zwoleń ghetto was liquidated either on September 29, 1942, or sometime in October 1942. According to survivor Isaac Engel, the deportation from Zwoleń was announced several days in advance. A siren signaled that the Jews had to gather in the marketplace. From there, in batches of 500 people each, they were escorted by the Ukrainian auxiliary forces to a barbed-wire enclosure that had been set up at the Garbatka train station. All were sent to Treblinka.

An estimated 200 Jews were murdered in the course of the liquidation and were buried at the Jewish cemetery. Afterwards (probably in 1943 or 1944), a German detachment destroyed the bodies using "unknown chemicals." A small cleanup Kommando of approximately 90 people, including the chief of the

Jewish Police, was left in Zwoleń to sort out Jewish belongings and was subsequently sent to Skarżysko-Kamienna.⁹

Estimates of the number of Jews gathered in the Zwoleń ghetto prior to its liquidation vary, depending on the source. The addition of the numbers given above—taken from primary archival sources—gives a maximum number of 6,500 Jews. A court inquiry about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos conducted in Zwoleń in 1945 states that the ghetto had approximately 6,000 residents.¹⁰

Secondary sources, namely, the historian of Distrikt Radom, Adam Rutkowski, and others, estimate that 10,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka from Zwoleń. Rutkowski's numbers, however, do not add up, as in addition to the communities mentioned above as transferred to Zwoleń, Rutkowski states that 5,000 Jews from Gniewoszów, 2,000 Jews from Oblassy, 400 from Policzna, and 6,500 from Sarnów were also sent to Zwoleń. But in the case of Oblas (located 1 to 2 kilometers [0.6 to 1.2 miles] south of Przytyk), it does not appear that any Jews were living there in the summer of 1942, as all Jews were removed from there in the spring of 1941—as they were from Przytyk. The figure for Sarnów is also implausible, as it was just a tiny settlement about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) south of Gniewoszów.

SOURCES Information regarding the Zwoleń ghetto can be found in the following sources: Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, 2004), pp. 169–172; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, nos. 15–16 (1955): 101,

156–160, 179–180; and Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), p. 36.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/1163 [JSS]; 210/750 [AJDC]; 301/8, 301/2474 [Relacje]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1163 (Zwoleń), pp. 1, 52–53; and 211/1164 (Zwoleń), p. 45.
2. AŻIH, 301/2474, testimony of Lejwa Fuks, 1947; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/750, pp. 1, 6; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1163, p. 23.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1163, pp. 32, 34; and 211/1164, pp. 37, 39, 45, 52–54.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 8, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1163, pp. 48, 52; AŻIH, 301/2474.
5. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 47, p. 101; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1164, pp. 1, 8–11, 17–18, 25–26, 36, 45.
6. *Ibid.*, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 47, p. 101; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1164, pp. 30, 36, 45, 49.
7. AŻIH, 301/8, testimony of Perec Szapiro, 1944; 301/2474.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1164, pp. 61, 67.
9. AŻIH, 301/2474; according to Fuks, the Jews from the Zwoleń ghetto were sent to Dęblin and then to Treblinka. Also see USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 47, p. 101; Isaac Engel, 1989, available at www.holocaustcenter.org.
10. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), file 47, p. 101.

WARSAW REGION



Jews are led through the streets on their way to the railroad station during a deportation Aktion from the Siedlce ghetto, August 22-24, 1942. This is one of a series of clandestine photographs taken by a member of the Polish Home Army (AK) underground.

USHMM WS #18787, COURTESY OF IPN

WARSAW REGION (DISTRIKT WARSCHAU)

Pre-1939: parts of the Warsaw, Lublin, and Łódź województwa, Poland; 1941–1945: Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: parts of the Łódź, Lublin, and Mazowieckie województwa, Poland

The German authorities established more than 60 ghettos in Distrikt Warschau. After the first ghettos were established in the Kreise to the west of Warsaw in the late spring and summer of 1940, a large wave of ghettoization accompanied the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto in October and November. The ghettos established to the west and south of Warsaw remained only short-lived, as more than 50,000 Jews from these Kreise were then concentrated in the Warsaw ghetto by April 1941. Further ghettos were established during 1941 in the Kreise to the east of Warsaw. Then in the spring of 1942, there was a further wave of resettlement to the Warsaw ghetto. After the start of deportations to the Treblinka extermination camp in July 1942, most of the remaining ghettos were liqui-

dated in just a few months up to October. The Warsaw ghetto was the last to be liquidated in April 1943, in the face of bitter organized resistance by armed Jews, which lasted for several weeks into May.

The German authorities created Distrikt Warschau on October 26, 1939, as one of the four initial Distrikte of the Generalgouvernement, all of which were composed of parts of occupied Poland. In Distrikt Warschau, the German authorities initially created 10 Kreise (counties): Garwolin, Grojec, Lowicz, Minsk Mazowiecki, Ostrow Mazowiecka, Siedlce, Skierniewice, Sochaczew, Sokolow, and Warschau-Land, each governed by a Kreishauptmann. A Stadthauptmann governed the city of Warsaw.

The Distrikt's territory, which consisted of 16,860 square kilometers (6,510 square miles), was populated by more than 3 million people. According to a German estimate from July 1940, there were 540,000 Jews residing in the Distrikt (18 percent of the total population). This figure probably included tens of thousands of refugees and deportees, mainly from the Polish territories incorporated into Germany, who reached the Distrikt from late 1939, especially from Reichsgau Wartheland.

The chief German civil authority in the Distrikt was Gouverneur Dr. Ludwig Fischer. The SS and Police Leader (SSPF) was the senior police official in the Distrikt, subordinated to the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger. The position of SSPF in Distrikt Warschau was held initially by Paul Moder; he was succeeded by Arpad Wigand in August 1941; then Dr. Ferdinand von Sammern-Frankenegg took over in an acting capacity in July 1942, to be succeeded by Jürgen Stroop from late April until September 1943. The SSPF oversaw the forces of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo), comprising the Gestapo, Kripo, and SD, and also those of the Ordnungspolizei (Orpo), composed of Schutzpolizei in the cities and Gendarmerie posts in the rural areas. The relevant local civil administrators, especially the Kreishauptmänner, were generally in charge of ghetto affairs. Surveillance and order were in the hands of the German Sipo and Orpo forces, with Polish and Jewish police forces performing auxiliary duties under the Germans. Jewish policemen maintained order in the ghettos and guarded their internal borders, whereas Orpo forces and Polish (Blue) Police patrolled the external boundaries.

Assuming authority from the military on October 26, 1939, the German civil administration introduced a series of antisemitic laws, which deprived the Jews of their economic, cultural, and social rights, as well as imposing forced labor. The Germans ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils (Judenräte), holding the members responsible for the implementation



A mid-1930s portrait of SS-Gruppenführer Paul Moder, the first SS- und Polizeiführer of the Warsaw District.

USHMM/PHOTOGRAPHED FROM ERNST KIENAST (ED.), DER DEUTSCHE REICHSTAG 1936: III. WAHLPERIODE NACH DEM 30. JANUAR 1933; MIT ZUSTIMMUNG DES HERRN REICHSTAGSPRÄSIDENTEN (BERLIN: R. V. DECKER'S VERLAG, G. SCHENCK, 1936), P. 411



An unidentified SS-Obersturmführer interrogates two Jewish resistance fighters during the suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, April 19–May 16, 1943. The original German caption reads, “Jewish traitors.” Pictured in the background are the SS- und Polizeiführer for the Warsaw district, SS-Brigadeführer Jürgen Stroop and, holding an automatic weapon at right, police captain Erich Steidtmann. USHMM WS #26549, COURTESY OF NARA

of the authorities’ orders, including the selection of Jews for forced labor, the collection of taxes and “contributions,” the enforcement of sanitary regulations, and the organization of welfare and medical services. From late 1939, Jews were obliged to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David.

The first ghettos in the Distrikt were established in Kreis Lowicz by May 1940. According to the personal report of the Kreishauptmann, Dr. Schwender, to the Generalgouverneur, Hans Frank, a ghetto was established in Łowicz due to the large influx of Jews from the Polish territories incorporated into the Reich and the resulting high incidence of typhus—some 200 cases in Łowicz—as well as the accompanying threat to security.¹ Around this time, five ghettos were established in Kreis Lowicz, the other four being in Łyszkowice, Kiernozia, Bolimów, and Głowno.²

On July 1, 1940, in response to SS orders giving the Jews of Mińsk Mazowiecki only 14 days to create a ghetto, the Jewish community petitioned the authorities to annul or defer the order. The Jews stressed the ruinous economic effects the order would wreak on the town’s Jewish craftsmen, laborers, and shopkeepers and the inevitable threat to hygiene throughout the town. The Jews, supported by some non-Jewish residents, requested a deferral of several months so that the necessary sanitary infrastructure could be prepared in the ghetto area.³

It appears that Kreishauptmann Dr. Bittrich in Mińsk Mazowiecki put on hold creation of the ghetto for several months, but in October, Waldemar Schön, the head of the Resettlement Department for the Distrikt, visited Mińsk Mazowiecki to choose the location of the ghetto, which was then established on November 15, 1940, the same day that resettlement into the Warsaw ghetto was completed.⁴

Already in November 1939, the Germans made a first attempt to establish a ghetto in Warsaw, which, however, soon was abandoned. Then in January 1940, Schön began detailed planning for the Warsaw ghetto. In the summer of 1940, an

exclusion zone (*Sperrgebiet*) for the Jews was established, to which no additional Jews were permitted to move.⁵ On October 2, 1940, Gouverneur Fischer issued an official decree on the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto by the end of the month. As the resettlement could not be completed on time, the deadline for completing the resettlement was later extended to November 15.⁶ The borders of the ghetto were changed several times subsequently.

A considerable wave of ghetto formation accompanied the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto. In Kreis Warschau-Land, the Kreishauptmann established a number of ghettos. A small ghetto was created in Łomianki for 300 local Jews to move into by September 15, but despite bribes, it was liquidated again in November. Sixty people departed for the Włochy ghetto established in Fort Solipse, and 25 went to the Legionowo ghetto, also established on November 15, 1940. Most others fled independently to the Warsaw ghetto. The Jews left everything behind—resulting in terrible need and poverty.⁷ A larger ghetto was established in Otwock, where resettlement was completed by November 30. All the Jews of the Kreis living west of the Vistula were then concentrated in just four ghettos: Piaseczno, Włochy, Jeziorna, and Pruszków. From there they were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto in December and January 1941, as were the Jews of the Karczew ghetto, just east of the Vistula. Several open ghettos were also established in Kreis Garwolin in the fall of 1940.

By the end of 1940, six open ghettos had been established in Kreis Grojec, in Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, and Warka, as well as the Kreis center, Grójec. Reports from the Jewish aid committees in December mention the establishment of the ghettos in Tarczyn and Błędów.⁸ According to survivor Jerry Lista, the relocation to the ghetto in Góra Kalwaria was announced in the papers and on loudspeakers, and the Jews were given two to three days to move into the designated area. The Jews could take with them only the most necessary items.⁹ Then in January 1941, the Grojec Kreishauptmann, Zimmermann, ordered that all the Jews of the Kreis be concentrated in the six ghettos and that any Jew caught outside of a ghetto after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.¹⁰ This is the first example of such a shooting order, predating the similar order issued for the entire Generalgouvernement by nine months. Fear of the spread of typhus was given as a reason for these harsh restrictions, but they also served to concentrate the Jews of the Kreis in preparation for their deportation to the Warsaw ghetto shortly afterwards. In Błędów the Jews paid a renewed hefty “contribution” of 100,000 złoty in the hope that their expulsion would be deferred. But then on February 11, 1941, the Błędów Jews were marched or taken on carts to the railway station and put on trains to the Warsaw ghetto.¹¹

For Kreis Sochaczew, the Germans prepared a detailed timetable for the transfers to the Warsaw ghetto. The Jews of the Żyrardów ghetto, as well as those from Wiskitki and Mszczonów (where probably no ghettos were established), were to be transferred on February 1–9, 1941; then on February 10–14, the Jews from the Grodzisk Mazowiecki ghetto; on Febru-

ary 15–16, from the Sochaczew ghetto; and from the ghetto in Błonie on February 17, 18, and 19, 1941. The Żyrardów Jews received only 48 hours' notice and were permitted only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of belongings on the train.¹²

The transfers from Kreise Lowicz and Skierniewice were spread over a longer period, permitting some Jews to organize the transportation of their belongings into the Warsaw ghetto. A few Jews even managed to arrange an orderly transfer to other locations in the Generalgouvernement, where ghettos had not yet been established. On March 4, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Skierniewice reported that most of the Jews from the Skierniewice and Jeżów ghettos had moved “voluntarily” to Warsaw. In Skierniewice, only some 180 Jews remained; the Jews' removal had created a marked shortage of labor.¹³ On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, most Jews from Jeżów were put into improvised hostels for refugees, where they encountered difficulties with hygiene and medical care and experienced numerous deaths from hunger.¹⁴ Following these transfers, in April 1941, the Kreise of Sochaczew, Grojec, and Lowicz (in which Skierniewice was now incorporated) were declared to be free of Jews other than in a few labor camps.

Most of these initial ghettos in Distrikt Warschau were open ghettos, especially those that remained short-lived. For example, the ghetto in Mogielnica was not enclosed by a fence, a wall, or any barbed wire. It consisted of two or three streets near the synagogue and the Bet Midrash.¹⁵ The Włochy ghetto was established in a nineteenth-century fortress (Fort Solipse) and in Pustelnik in the Henryków and Osinki brickyard, in houses for former factory workers and barracks, completely isolated from the Polish population. The Pustelnik ghetto initially remained “open” (people left to work outside), but early in 1941, the ghetto was declared closed, and Jews could leave only with a special permit. According to the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch, this left the Jews “on the edge of destruction.” The borders of a number of ghettos were marked by signs that read: “Jewish Area: Entrance Forbidden for Poles and Germans” (*Jüdische Gegend: Polen und Deutschen Eintritt verboten*).¹⁶ Among the relatively few ghettos enclosed by a fence were those in Radzymin, Siedlce, and Wołomin.

Initially, Jews were punished with heavy fines and/or imprisonment for leaving the ghettos without special permission. As mentioned, from early in 1941, more severe penalties were introduced in some Kreise, as they were being cleared of Jews. By November 1941, as elsewhere in the Generalgouvernement, the death penalty was applied throughout the Distrikt, and many Jews were shot when caught smuggling or in hiding on the Aryan side. For example, in Sarnaki the open ghetto was sealed on January 1, 1942, to prevent the spread of disease. Initially Jews did not take the posted death penalty threat seriously and continued to sneak out to barter items. But in February, a Jewish woman and her one-year-old child caught in a nearby village were arrested and shot.¹⁷

With the exception of the Warsaw ghetto, which at its peak probably held some 460,000 Jews, most of the ghettos established throughout the Distrikt were relatively small, hold-

ing from only a few hundred up to around 4,000 people. A few larger ghettos were established, for example, in Siedlce (13,000), Otwock (12,000), Węgrów (9,000), Falenica (6,000), Sokołów Podlaski (6,000), and Mińsk Mazowiecki (5,000–6,000). Generally these ghettos were among the last to be liquidated.

The administration of welfare was transferred from the Jewish Councils to the JSS to help newcomers and the local poor. Its branches opened soup kitchens, distributed food and clothing, and sought to provide for children and the elderly. The level of assistance, due to insufficient funds, was never able to meet the needs. Consequently, there was frequent friction between the JSS branches and the Jewish Councils. JSS officials were replaced as unsuitable, and some Jewish Councils were accused of corruption, favoritism, or excessive subservience to German demands.

Poverty, hunger, overcrowding, and disease were common to all of the ghettos, but access to food from outside was somewhat easier in the smaller rural ghettos or even some medium-sized ghettos in Kreis Warschau-Land. Kosher butchers from the ghettos of Miłosna, Okuniew, and Rembertów were the main source of meat for the Warsaw ghetto, supplying up to 2,000 kilograms (4,410 pounds) per month with the help of Polish smugglers.¹⁸ Whereas in the Warsaw ghetto more than 60,000 Jews (about 15 percent) died of starvation, death rates in the smaller ghettos generally were not on this scale. In Sarnaki, in the winter of 1941–1942, reportedly 100 Jews died out of 1,180 (almost 9 percent). Ration cards were issued to Jews, for example, in Żelechów, at the end of 1940, for small portions of bread, sugar, flour, meat, and jam, as well as in Warsaw.¹⁹ These meager rations were insufficient to survive and supplementary food had to be obtained wherever possible.

After the initial wave of deportations from the Warthegau at the end of 1939 and in early 1940, Distrikt Warschau was not a major destination for German resettlements. In the summer of 1940, a number of Jews were sent to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, but many of these Jews returned after a few months. In the late spring or summer of 1941, several hundred Jews from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki (Regierungsbezirk Zichenau) were driven into the Distrikt. In the spring of 1942, four transports, each of around 1,000 Jews, arrived from Berlin, Theresienstadt, Hannover, and other places in the Reich to the Warsaw ghetto, where there were also a number of Jews who had converted to Christianity. Also deported to Distrikt Warschau were Roma and Sinti from Cologne and its environs; they were put in the Siedlce ghetto in the summer of 1942, along with local Roma.²⁰ Finally between February and early May 1943, more than 20,000 Jewish workers were deported from the Warsaw ghetto to the Trawniki, Poniatowa, and other labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.²¹

The process of concentrating most of the remaining Jews in ghettos in the eastern Kreise of Distrikt Warschau began in early 1941 and was completed in 1942. In Kreis Sokolow, the planned establishment of six, initially open, ghettos was announced in January 1941, but implementation lagged behind. It was not until November 1941 that many of the Jews from the surrounding villages were concentrated in these six ghettos.

Similar concentrations of Jews were carried out in Kreise Garwolin, Siedlce, and Minsk Mazowiecki, which also signaled a final wave of ghetto establishment in places such as Latowicz.²²

In the spring of 1942, a further wave of deportations to the Warsaw ghetto and ghetto consolidations commenced. In March Jews arrived in Warsaw from the nearby ghettos of Pustelnik, Okuniew, Miłosna, and Wawer. These expulsions occurred with considerable brutality, and a number of Jews were killed. In May 1942, the expulsion of the Tłuszcz Jews saw about 70 Jews shot during the roundup and 300 shot on the road to Radzymin, where they were loaded onto trains headed to Warsaw.²³ In May the Jews of the Sarnaki ghetto were sent to the ghettos in Łosice and Mordy.

The organization of the deportations in Distrikt Warschau was in the hands of SSPF Dr. Ferdinand von Sammern-Frankenegg, assisted by a special deportation unit organized by Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) Warschau. Among the officers who played a leading role was SS-Untersturmführer Karl Brandt. These local forces had to work closely with Sonderkommando Höfle (led by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Höfle), which was assigned from Distrikt Lublin by SSPF Odilo Globocnik. The ghetto liquidations were implemented with the support of a number of Trawniki-trained auxiliaries (mostly from Ukraine or the Baltic states) and German Order Police units (battalions and stationary units of the Schutzpolizei and Gendarmerie). In some places units of the Polish (Blue) Police, ethnic German Sonderdienst, and Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) also assisted them.

The deportations were conducted more or less Kreis by Kreis. Deportations from the Warsaw ghetto commenced on July 22, 1942, and continued until September 21. In Warsaw there was a brief respite on August 19–21, while Jews from the ghettos in Otwock, Falenica, and Mińsk Mazowiecki were deported. In total, more than 250,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka, about 10,000 were sent to other camps for work via the so-called Dulag (*Durchgangslager*), and several thousand Jews were murdered in the city.

Due to the large forces assembled to clear the Warsaw ghetto, the liquidation of most other ghettos followed swiftly over just a few weeks in September and October. Jews from the ghettos of Kałuszyn, Dobrze, Mrozy, and others in Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki were deported from mid-September. The Jews from Kreis Sokolow were all deported between September 21 and 25. In late September and early October, the Jews from the ghettos of Parysów, Łaskarzew, Stoczek Łukowski, and Żelechów in Kreis Garwolin were deported via Sobolew before finally the Jews of Sobolew were dispatched in early October. Then in the first days of October, the ghettos of Radzymin, Wołomin, and Legionowo in Kreis Warschau-Land were liquidated together.

Especially in those ghettos close to Treblinka, news of the mass murders arrived from train escapees and Jews working at the camp. Many Jews tried to evade deportation by hiding in prepared bunkers. Due to the large numbers of escapees during the course of the deportations, the German authorities announced that Poles faced the death sentence for even the smallest assistance provided to Jews. As punishment for aiding Jewish escapees, it was often that entire families were gunned down and their households razed. News of such punitive actions terrified the Polish population, causing some to turn out Jews they had been helping.

Almost all the transports went to Treblinka. In a number of ghettos, a few Jews were retained to sort Jewish belongings or perform other labor tasks, in so-called small ghettos. On October 28, 1942, HSSPF Krüger ordered the recognition of six remnant ghettos within Distrikt Warschau in Warsaw, Kałuszyn, Sobolew, Kosów Lacki, Rembertów, and Siedlce.²⁴ Their main purpose was to lure out of hiding those who had evaded the deportations. Most of these remnant ghettos, apart from Warsaw, were liquidated between November 1942 and February 1943. The remnant ghetto or labor camp in Rembertów, which contained Jews from Warsaw brought to Rembertów after the liquidation of the original ghetto there, was liquidated at the end of June 1943.

After the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising, a number of Jews continued to live in a few labor camps, including that



Laden with rounded-up Jews from Sobolew, this truck overturned shortly after the photo was taken, facilitating the Jews' escape, n.d.
USHMM WS #18822, COURTESY OF IPN



The family of Icek Fajerschejn is deported from Stoczek, while an unidentified auxiliary looks on in the foreground, May 5, 1942.
USHMM WS #29277, COURTESY OF MORRIS ROSEN

in Karczew, which existed until the fall of 1943. Estimates of the number of Jews who escaped onto the Aryan side and went into hiding or passed as non-Jews vary, but probably exceeded 30,000. Jews on the Aryan side had to live in constant fear of denunciation or extortion by so-called *szmalcownicy* (blackmailers).

SOURCES Secondary works including coverage of the history of the Jews in the Distrikt Warschau ghettos include T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 83–125; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, trans. Emma Harris (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?: Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979); Gunnar S. Paulsson, *Secret City: The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940–1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007); and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989).

Published collections of documents include T. Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961); T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957); Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1988); Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986); and Ruta Sakowska et al., eds., *Archiwum Ringelbluma: Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, 3 vols. (Warsaw: PWN, 2000).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APO; APSi; APW (e.g., Der Obmann des Judenrates in Warschau; Amt des Gouverneurs des Distriktes Warschau—Der Kommissar für den Jüdischen Wohnbezirk in Warschau); AŻIH (e.g., sygn. 200; 210; 211; 301; 302; Ring); BA-BL; BA-L; BLH; CAHJP; IPN; MA; NARA; USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1998.A.0241 [Trial of Ludwig Fischer]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-02; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]; RG-15.077M [CENTOS]; RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; RG-50); VHF; WL; YIVO; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, eds., *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1975), pp. 286–287,

entry for October 10, 1940. See also the report of Schön, the head of the resettlement section in the office of the Governor of the Warsaw Distrikt, January 20, 1941, published in: Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, pp. 108–109.

2. See Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 109, citing the report of the Łowicz Kreishauptmann, dated July 20, 1940. Some sources date the establishment of the Kiernozia ghetto in March 1940—see Gedaliah Shaiak, ed., *Lovitsb—a shtet in Mazovye un umgegent, seyfer zikorn* (Melbourne and Sydney, Australia: Łowiczer Landsmanshaften, 1966), p. 364.

3. AŻIH, 211/702, pp. 1–4, Petition of the Jewish population of Mińsk Mazowiecki, unsigned, July 1, 1940.

4. Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 96; AŻIH, 211/702, p. 12, ghetto questionnaire, April 1, 1942.

5. USHMM, RG-15.073M, report on the activity of the Warsaw Jewish Council, from October 7, 1939, to December 31, 1940, p. 12.

6. *Warschauer Zeitung*, November 3–4, 1940. For an overview of events leading up to the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto, see Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, pp. 52–76.

7. AŻIH, Ring I/847 [874.], “Geyrush Łomianki bay Varshe,” February 12, 1941.

8. *Ibid.*, 210/680 (AJDC, Tarczyn); 210/266 (AJDC, Błędów), p. 35.

9. VHF, # 10410, testimony of Jerry Lista, 1995.

10. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/881.

11. VHF, # 2132, testimony of Ben Zion Guttman.

12. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/352, Kreishauptmann Sochaczew-Blonie, order concerning the clearing of the Kreis of Jews, January 31, 1941.

13. See *Ibid.*, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, pp. 88, 89, Kreishauptmann Skierniewice, monthly report, March 4, 1941.

14. AŻIH, Ring I/116.

15. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, sygn. 61, p. 95; VHF, # 1365, testimony of Ben Stern; # 17574, testimony of Aisic Hirsch.

16. AŻIH, 301/4805, testimony of Władysława Kruszczeńska (Kruszczewska), 1948; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/846, pp. 3, 5–6, 15–18, 23–25; 211/1083, p. 18.

17. Dov Shuval, *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Sarnaki* (Haifa: Ir-gun yots’e Sarnaki be-Yisrael, 1968), pp. 147–169.

18. Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Rembertow, Okuniew, Milosna* (Tel Aviv: Rembertow, Okuniew and Milosna Societies in Israel, the USA, France, Mexico City, Canada, Chile, and Brazil, 1974), pp. 431–432.

19. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1176, p. 60.

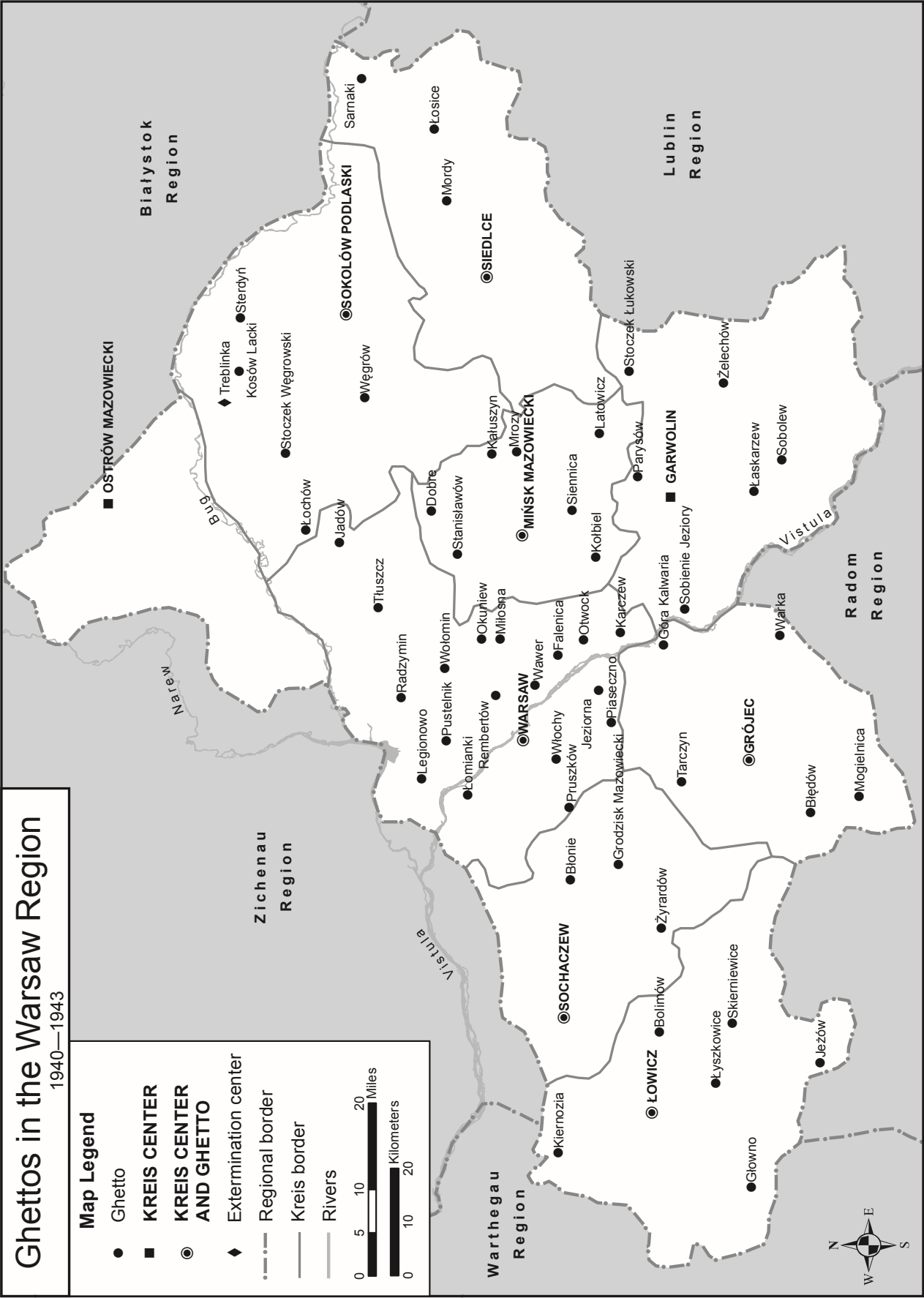
20. APSi, 1290, Zarządzenia, # A67/42 (May 23, 1942).

21. Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, pp. 181, 207, 318–319. Most of these Jews were murdered during Aktion Erntefest in November 1943.

22. Berenstein, Eisenbach, and Rutkowski, *Eksterminacja Żydów*, pp. 108–109, 278–279; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/634, pp. 40–42.

23. Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 205–208.

24. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger, October 28, 1942, in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, pp. 342–344.



BŁĘDÓW

Pre-1939: Błędów, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bledow, Kreis Grojec, Distrikt Warschau, General-gouvernement; post-1998: Błędów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Błędów is located 14 kilometers (9 miles) southwest of Grójec. Just before September 1, 1939, there were 957 Jews living in Błędów.¹

The Germans entered Błędów on September 8, 1939. Soon after their arrival, the German police began stealing property from Jewish homes and shops. The Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. On one occasion in the fall of 1939, the Germans rounded up the Jews and abused and beat them, causing the death of at least one person. The Germans also started to kidnap Jews for forced labor, requiring them to conduct humiliating work such as sweeping the streets or cleaning the houses of ethnic Germans.

In November or December 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Błędów, chaired by Yaakov Arbuz. Soon the Jews were obliged to pay an 80,000 złoty fine, which was collected mainly from the more affluent members of the community. Local ethnic Germans were among the most active in abusing the Jews and seizing their property.

As of June 1940, 1,030 Jews were living in Błędów, including refugees from Łódź, Aleksandrów Łódzki, Zgierz, and other towns that had been incorporated into Reichsgau Wartheland. During 1940, the Jewish Aid Committee for Poor Jews in Błędów provided some financial aid and other support to the refugees and some local Jews; at least 47 different families received benefits, as reported to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) based in Warsaw.²

At the end of 1940 an open ghetto was established in Błędów, around the same time that the ghetto was also established in the Kreis center, Grójec.³ A report of the Jewish Aid Committee, dated December 3, 1940, noted that it had been unable to supply the requested information due to the recent resettlement of the Jews into the “Jewish quarter” (*dzielnica żydowska*), which was still continuing for a few days longer.⁴ The ghetto was unfenced, but initially any Jews caught outside it were severely beaten and could be punished further with a fine or a term of imprisonment.

On January 21, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Grójec, Landrat Werner Zimmermann, issued the following order: “All Jews living outside of the towns of Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec are to transfer immediately to the closest of these towns, all of which were to be considered as ghettos. The heads of the respective settlements were made personally responsible for ensuring that by January 27, 1941, no Jews still were residing on their territory.” The order also stipulated that any Jew caught outside these ghettos after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.⁵

In January 1941, the Jews of Błędów had to pay a further fine of 100,000 złoty. The Germans spread a rumor that if the Jews paid the fine, their expulsion to the Warsaw ghetto would

be deferred. Therefore, the Judenrat delivered the money, but then, according to survivor Ben Zion Guttman, on February 11, 1941, the Jews of Błędów were expelled to Warsaw anyway. The Jews were ordered to assemble on the market square and then had to walk 5 kilometers (3 miles) to the railway station, where they were put on trains to the Warsaw ghetto. The elderly and infirm were transported to the station on horse-driven carts.⁶ Along the way some Jews managed to escape, but many of those who sought shelter in the area were betrayed to the Germans or even murdered by local Poles.

After the war, the Jewish community in Błędów was not reconstituted.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews in Błędów during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 150–151; T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 109; Roman Mogilanski, *The Ghetto Anthology: A Comprehensive Chronicle of the Extermination of Jewry in Nazi Death Camps and Ghettos in Poland* (Los Angeles: American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps, 1985), p. 101. Additional information can be found in the yizkor book, *Sefer yizkor Mogielnica-Bledow* (Tel Aviv, 1972).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/266 [AJDC]; Ring I/881); USHMM (Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.079 [Ring I]); VHF (# 2132); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk,” table 3.
2. AŻIH, 210/266.
3. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 151, however, dates the ghetto’s establishment at the end of May 1940. Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 59, dates it in late 1940.
4. AŻIH, 210/266, p. 35.
5. Ibid., Ring I/881.
6. VHF, # 2132, testimony of Ben Zion Guttman; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 109, and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 213, both date the ghetto’s liquidation in February 1941. After Janaury 1941, there is no further correspondence between the Jewish Aid Committee for Poor Jews in Błędów and the AJDC; see AŻIH, 210/266.

BŁONIE

Pre-1939: Błonie (Yiddish: Bloyna), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Blonie, Kreis Sochaczew, Distrikt Warschau,

Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Błonie, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Błonie is located about 27 kilometers (17 miles) west-southwest of Warsaw. In 1939, about 2,800 Jews lived there.

After the German army occupied the town and the surrounding area, murders of the civilian population took place. Among the 750 people murdered in Błonie in September and October 1939, the majority were Jews.¹ On September 19 alone, 50 civilian prisoners were shot in Błonie.² A transit camp (Dulag) was created in the town for Polish prisoners of war (POWs). This camp was established in mid-September 1939 on the grounds of a former match factory.³

After the German army occupied the town, it started to seize Jews for forced labor, mainly for cleaning work.⁴ On the streets, German soldiers beat the Jews. Older, traditionally dressed Jews were kicked and humiliated. The beards of Jewish men were cut off. Jewish children were no longer permitted to go to school.⁵

In the fall of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Błonie. Avigdor Rosenberg stood at its head. Other members included Abram Gewer, Izrael Wajselfisz, and Lajb Rozenberg. Its tasks included the payment of forced “contributions” to the German authorities and participation in the selection of forced laborers. One survivor accuses members of the Judenrat, especially Wajselfisz, of cooperating with the Gendarmes in despoiling Jewish property for his own personal gain.⁶

With support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), an aid committee was established in Błonie in March 1940 to assist those in need. It was headed by Izrael Wajcberg and included Izrael Wajselfisz and Abram Gewer of the Judenrat among its seven members. The committee provided aid to about 1,000 people under its care. It also operated a public kitchen, which prepared warm meals for 700 needy Jews, as well as organizing assistance for children.⁷

From the end of 1939, a large number of refugees and deportees arrived in Błonie in several waves. In May 1940, 617 Jews from Hów (Kreis Sochaczew), Łódź, Aleksandrów Łódzki, and other places arrived. Then in June, they were followed by another 926 expellees. Not all of these new arrivals remained in Błonie. Since these deportees were only permitted to bring with them a very limited amount of luggage, most arrived in a destitute condition, increasing the welfare burden on the Jewish Council.

On November 13, 1940, a placard posted by Kreishauptmann Karl Adolf Pott announced the imminent resettlement of the Jews from Błonie to Warsaw, while the Jews were forbidden, as of December, to leave an area in the center of town, which was to become a Jewish quarter or ghetto (*Jüdisches Wohngebiet*).⁸ Myer Glick recalls the announcement of the transfer to Warsaw and that a member of his family traveled to the Warsaw ghetto, which was still open, in preparation for the move, but could only find a single room there. However, before the move to Warsaw, Glick and his family were evicted from their apartment in Błonie, with the participation of the

Germans, and had to move in with his uncle in three overcrowded rooms.⁹ This transfer within Błonie may reflect the establishment of a ghetto there in December 1940, which, according to one source, contained about 2,100 people.¹⁰

Since the ghetto in Błonie existed for only about two months, very little information is available concerning conditions there. One surviving document indicates that on January 28, 1941, the AJDC reported that 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of sugar had been donated to the child-care facility in Błonie, thanks to a charitable gift from Switzerland. A representative of the Aid Committee for Refugees and the Poor in Błonie could collect the sugar from the CENTOS (Central Organization for Orphan Care) food depot in Warsaw.¹¹ It is doubtful that this sugar was ever transported to Błonie.

At the start of 1941, the German authorities began deporting all the Jews from the western Kreise of Distrikt Warschau—Sochaczew, Grojec, Skierniewice, Lowicz, and parts of Kreis Warschau-Land—into the Warsaw ghetto. In total during this Aktion, from January to April 1941, some 72,000 Jews were relocated.¹² The deportation of the Jews was intended to free space for 62,000 Poles deported from Reichsgau Wartheland.¹³

As of January 31, 1941, Jews were no longer permitted to leave the Błonie ghetto. Their transfer to Warsaw was scheduled for February 17–19, 1941. The Jews were to be deloused beforehand, and each Jew was permitted to take only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of luggage, as well as sufficient food for two days. Live animals could not be transported and were to be surrendered to the mayor. Property left behind was to be confiscated, and people plundering this property were to be strictly punished.¹⁴ The Błonie Jews went by road to the Warsaw ghetto, on foot or in horse-drawn wagons, which enabled some to take a little extra luggage. Myer Glick remembers taking turns with his brother to sit atop the pile of luggage on the cart.¹⁵

At this time, the Warsaw ghetto already was overcrowded, and hunger predominated. The lot of the expellees was particularly harsh, as many had already experienced prior deportation from the Warthegau into Distrikt Warschau. On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, they were first put into quarantine for a period.¹⁶ From there, they were then in large part concentrated in public buildings within the ghetto, such as synagogues and schools, under conditions of poor sanitation and provisioning, which gave rise to sickness and hunger among them, resulting in a number of deaths.

The Jews driven from the Błonie to the Warsaw ghetto shared the fate of the remainder of Warsaw’s Jews. The majority were rounded up during the great liquidation Aktion, which began on July 22, 1942, and were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were murdered.

After the liquidation of the Błonie ghetto, the Germans destroyed the Jewish cemetery, leaving only several grave-stones in place. After the expulsion in February 1941, a few Jews who defied the resettlement order remained in Kreis Sochaczew, including in Błonie. Executions in Błonie attest to their presence. In May 1943, a Gendarme shot three Jews on the property of Aleksander Różycki, at 1 Szkolna Street.¹⁷

In February 1943, a Gendarme shot four Jews (two men, a woman, and a child).¹⁸ In June 1943, a Błonie woman, a member of the Polish underground, was arrested on the charge that she had sheltered Jews. A search conducted in her home revealed nothing. The search and arrest occurred most likely as the result of a denunciation.¹⁹ In the summer of 1944, Gendarmes shot three Jews who had been residents of Powązki village (in the former Radzików gmina) on Powstańców Street in Błonie. The bodies were buried at the site of the execution.²⁰ From 1942 to 1944, in Błonie there were numerous other executions in which people perished but for which there is no information about their specific ethnicity. Some of them may have been Jews.²¹

A large group of Jewish partisans, under the leadership of Miller, operated in the Błonie area.²² The group was composed of ghetto escapees who succeeded in securing arms and formed a partisan unit. The unit maintained good relations with a local unit of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa), whose leader forewarned the Jewish group of threats to their security. In 1944, the group was subordinated to a Soviet partisan unit.²³

The number of Błonie Jews who survived the war and occupation is unknown. However, after the war Jews from Błonie and Leszno established a fraternal organization.²⁴ In Błonie and the surrounding area some Jews survived in hiding; among them was Dr. Chirs, who received assistance from a Polish family.²⁵

SOURCES References to the fate of the Jews of Błonie during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo stołeczne warszawskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1988); Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 109; and T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 85, 115–116.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/267 [AJDC]; 211/234 [JSS]; 301/4444; 302/150, 153; Ring I/352 [Ringelblum Archive]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.0124 [JSS]); VHF (# 27027, 29135, and 51287); and YVA (O-3/6909, 7754; M-49/E/5748).

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NOTES

1. Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 127.
2. Jochen Böhlér, *Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg: Die Wehrmacht in Polen 1939* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), p. 224. AŻIH, 301/4444, p. 1, testimony of Rejla Sapot, mentions 40 Jews killed at the time of the Germans’ arrival.
3. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 109.

4. YVA, O-3/6909, p. 4.
5. Ibid., O-3/7754, p. 6; VHF, # 27027, testimony of Myer Glick.
6. AŻIH, 301/4444, p. 2.
7. Ibid., 210/267, p. 26, AJDC letter to Błonie, March 29, 1940; Engelking, “Życie codzienne,” p. 210.
8. Centrum Kultury w Grodzisku Mazowieckim, Resettlement announcement for Grodzisk, Żyrardów, Sochaczew, and Błonie, November 13, 1940.
9. VHF, # 27027. Glick, however, does not specifically mention the existence of a ghetto in Błonie.
10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 109, report the existence of a ghetto in Błonie, but the only source given is to an unspecified reference in the ITS archives. A labor camp also existed in Błonie, but little information is available about this camp.
11. AŻIH, 210/267, p. 58, AJDC an Hilfskomitee für Flüchtlinge und arme Juden in Błonie, January 28, 1941.
12. *Raporty Ludwiga Fischera gubernatora dystryktu warszawskiego 1939–1944* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1987), p. 259.
13. Ibid., pp. 259, 277.
14. See AŻIH, Ring 1/352, Anordnung betreffend Freimachung des Kreises Sochaczew-Błonie von Juden, January 31, 1941; 301/4444, dates the transfer on February 17.
15. YVA, O-3/6909, p. 6; O-3/7754, p. 8; VHF, # 27027.
16. *Raporty Ludwiga Fischera*, p. 259 (Report, Warsaw Dystrykt Chief, February 10, 1941 [for January 1941]).
17. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów . . . : Województwo stołeczne warszawskie*, p. 23.
18. Ibid.
19. *Raporty Ludwiga Fischera*, p. 489.
20. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów . . . : Województwo stołeczne warszawskie*, p. 24.
21. Ibid., pp. 22–24.
22. YVA, O-3/2078, testimony of Tuvia Miller.
23. Engelking, “Życie codzienne,” p. 492.
24. Alina Skibińska, “Powroty ocalałych,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 546, 585.
25. YVA, M-49/E/5748, pp. 1–2.

BOLIMÓW

Pre-1939: Bolimów (Yiddish: Bolimov), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Bolimow, Kreis Lowicz, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Bolimów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Bolimów is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) west-southwest of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, in 1939, there were 235 Jews living in Bolimów.

In the fall of 1939, about 120 Jews from Łowicz were transferred by the Germans to Bolimów, where they were accommodated in the Bet Midrash. Among them was the family of David Flaum, who recalls that each family had its own corner.¹

Soon after the start of the occupation, the Jews of the town were subjected to forced labor. For example, in March 1940, the Forestry Office requested the use of 40 Jewish laborers from the mayor of Bolimów. The Jews were to receive two thirds of the normal wage if they performed the required work

effectively. An account in the yizkor book confirms that a number of Jews worked in the forests around the town.²

The Bolimów ghetto was established in May or June of 1940 on the orders of the Łowicz Kreishauptmann, Regierungsrat Dr. Schwender. By this time a Jewish Council (Judenrat) had already been established in the town.³ The non-Jewish local inhabitants took over many former Jewish homes, and the Jews were concentrated in an area around Synagogue Alley (Shul Gas). David Flaum confirms that the refugee accommodation was located within the ghetto. The ghetto was surrounded by a wooden fence with barbed wire. There was also a Jewish police force, consisting of 25 men, including 5 refugees.⁴

Due to the hard work and inadequate food, many Jews suffered from hunger and exhaustion. This drove some Jews to risk leaving the ghetto to buy food from local farmers at extortionate prices.⁵

In December 1940, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Łowicz reported that there were 460 Jews then living in Bolimów, of which 110 were receiving welfare support.⁶

In early January 1941, the head of the Jewish Council (*Obmann des Jüdengebietes*) in the Bolimów ghetto wrote to the Central Committee of the JSS in Kraków, reporting that the three members of the JSS branch in Bolimów had been dismissed, as they were too old and unsuited for their positions. He requested that three replacements be confirmed, as they were much better suited and had the confidence of the local Jewish population.⁷

In March 1941, the Jews of Bolimów were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto, as part of a large-scale plan to clear all the Jews from the Kreise of Distrikt Warschau to the west of the city. Due to a lack of transportation, many of the Jews had to travel on foot, leaving most of their possessions behind.⁸ It is likely that a small group of Jews remained in the empty ghetto in Bolimów for a short period after the transfer, to sort out remaining Jewish property.⁹

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, most of the Jews from Bolimów were put into improvised hostels designated for refugees. A report in the Ringelblum Archive from March 1941 noted the terrible conditions in one of these shelters based in a school building. Refugees from Bolimów were among 460 people being cared for in the facility. The report mentions difficulties encountered with hygiene and medical care and numerous deaths from hunger.¹⁰ A large number of the refugees from Bolimów died of starvation and contagious diseases in the course of their one-and-a-half-year stay in the Warsaw ghetto. Many of those who survived until the summer of 1942 were among those deported to the Treblinka extermination camp during the large-scale Aktion at that time.

Some Jews evaded deportation to Warsaw and attempted to survive in hiding in the area around Bolimów. However, they risked being betrayed by local Polish inhabitants who received a reward from the Germans for every Jew they denounced. In one instance, 21 Jews were uncovered hiding in a bunker in the forest, following a tip-off from a Polish peasant. The Jews were shot and buried on the spot. Only after the war

were their bodies exhumed and reburied in a mass grave in the Jewish cemetery in Bolimów.¹¹

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on the Łowicz yizkor book, Gedaliah Shaiak, ed., *Lovitsb—a shtetl in Mazovye un umgegent, seyfer zikorn* (Melbourne and Sydney, Australia: Łowicz Landsmanshaften, 1966), which contains some information regarding the fate of the Jews in Bolimów under the Nazi occupation. The ghetto in Bolimów is mentioned also in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 66; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 113; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/273; 211/250, 674; Ring I/116); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-14.052; RG-15.079 [Ring]); VHF (# 6081); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 6081, testimony of David Flaum (born 1922), 1995; Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, pp. 368, 371.
2. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154, 210/273, p. 5; Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 371.
3. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 113, dates it in May 1940; Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212, state June 11, 1940; Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 370, gives the spring of 1940. See also Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 109, which cites the report of the Kreishauptmann Łowicz, July 20, 1940.
4. VHF, # 6081; Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 371.
5. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 371.
6. USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/674, pp. 37–38.
7. Ibid., pp. 43–44.
8. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 371.
9. See USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, p. 57, Kreishauptmann Łowicz, situation report, March 13, 1941.
10. AŻIH, Ring I/116 [469.]
11. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 368.

DOBRE

Pre-1939: Dobre, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Dobre is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) northeast of Mińsk Mazowiecki and 48 kilometers (30 miles) east of Warsaw. In 1921, 373 Jews were living in the village, making up 34 percent of the total population of 1,097. The Jewish population of Dobre was mainly Hasidic.¹

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The Germans occupied Dobre in early September 1939, immediately after which Jews were required to wear a yellow badge on their clothing and compelled to perform hard labor. Some Jewish families fled to the Soviet Union.² Conflicting information exists on when and even whether a ghetto was created in Dobre. According to one source, a ghetto was created in November 1940 and contained roughly 1,200 people.³ According to another (the testimony of Sonia Powonzek, a native of the village), Dobre did not have a ghetto; from June 1942, Jews were merely prohibited from leaving the village.⁴ According to yet another source, Dobre did indeed have a ghetto, which housed over 500 people, including Jews from Kałuszyn, Wyszaków, Mrozów, Mińsk Mazowiecki, and Pabianice.⁵ The testimony of Stanisław Słomkowski (aka Dawid Słoń) lends credence to the notion that Dobre functioned, at the very least, as a collection point for Jews from nearby towns, since he was deported there with his wife from Drobie in late 1941 or early 1942.⁶ At the same time, it appears that some Jews from Dobre were deported to the ghetto in Kałuszyn.⁷ Lejbka Fryd, for her part, was born in Dobre but hid in Drobie during the war.⁸

A four-member Judenrat was created in Dobre in 1941. J. Furmann served as its chairman and Sendrowicz as its secretary.⁹ In Powonzek's account, Jusek Nejman, the owner of a fashion accessories shop, is named as chairman of the Judenrat.¹⁰ The Judenrat supplied Germans with Jewish laborers to dig trenches, lay pavement, and perform other types of forced labor. Relations between the Judenrat and local Jews were generally hostile. A three-member Jewish police force, including one Chil Mejnener, from a Hasidic household, operated in Dobre, as did an aid committee. The aid committee cared for 200 to 250 individuals, including some 100 refugees.¹¹

Powonzek's testimony relates that living conditions in Dobre were extremely cramped, as the Germans took the best apartments for themselves. A Gestapo detachment consisting of six SS men was present in the village. Powonzek reports that life in Dobre otherwise continued more or less as normal under German occupation. There was neither hunger nor disease; religious life continued essentially uninterrupted under a man named Brotman, who served as both *shochet* and rabbi; Jewish children continued to go to a school, which was headed by Jan Zych; and the Germans did not undertake any special discriminatory measures towards Dobre's Jews. Jews maintained relations with local Poles, but the attitude of the latter towards the former was rather negative, with the Poles often betraying the hiding places of Jews to the German authorities.¹²

The ghetto in Dobre was liquidated on September 15, 1942. The details of the liquidation and deportation process as found in extant sources differ. One reports that the Jews of Dobre were compelled to travel by foot or by horse-driven cart to the closest railway station, in Mińsk Mazowiecki, where they were herded into railcars;¹³ another reports that they were taken to nearby Stanisławów, where some were massacred on the spot, while others managed to escape.¹⁴ The sources, however, agree that the final destination for Dobre's Jews was the Treblinka extermination camp, a fate that only a

small number were able to escape, including two who were saved by Polish farmers.

SOURCES Articles on the Jewish community of Dobre can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 178–179; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 316.

The book by Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007) contains information on Dobre, pp. 64–66, 168–169, 215, 347.

Further information on Dobre can also be found in Tatiana Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 159–160.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Dobre under German occupation can be found in the following archival collections: AŻIH (210/28, 30 [AJDC]; 211/59, 359 [JSS]; 301/2989, 5820 [Relacje]; and BA-L (B 162/6835).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4380, testimony of Sonia Powonzek.
2. Ibid.
3. BA-L, B 162/6835, pp. 149–150.
4. AŻIH, 301/4380.
5. Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 159–160.
6. AŻIH, 301/3338, testimony of Stanisław Słomkowski.
7. BA-L, B 162/6835, pp. 146–147.
8. AŻIH, 301/3501, testimony of Lejbka Fryd.
9. Ibid., 211/59.
10. Ibid., 301/4380.
11. Ibid., 210/28, Wykaz miejscowości Komitetów Pomocy, sprawozdanie z działalności V–XII 1940 r.
12. Ibid., 301/4380.
13. BA-L, B 162/6835, pp. 149–150.
14. AŻIH, 301/4380.

FALENICA

Pre-1939: Falenica, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: part of the city of Warsaw, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Falenica is located about 16 kilometers (10 miles) southeast of the center of the city of Warsaw. In September 1939, the Jewish population was about 5,300.

On September 19, 1939, many houses and stores on the Jewish streets Handlowa and Długa burned down as a result of the fighting. At the start of the German occupation, only Wehrmacht troops were stationed in Falenica; later on some SS troops arrived to replace units sent to France. The SS

commandant organized a group of ethnic Germans (*Volks-deutsche*) from Falenica, who posed a real threat, as they knew the Jewish inhabitants.¹ In December 1939, the German authorities imposed a “contribution” of 80,000 złoty on Falenica (affecting both the Polish and Jewish communities).²

A number of Jews forcibly evacuated from the territories annexed to the Third Reich arrived in Falenica over the following months. In January 1940, a group of 140 Jews arrived, but it is not clear where they came from. The population increased from 5,106 in 1940 to 6,500 in August 1941.³

It is not possible to establish the precise date on which the Judenrat in Falenica was established, but it was about the same time as in Otwock (December 1939). Some correspondence between the Judenrat and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) has been preserved, starting in January 1940. The first head of the Judenrat was H. Cukerman, an assimilated Jew. After a few weeks the members of the Judenrat were arrested and shot, following a denunciation made by the ethnic German Buchholz. Then the German authorities appointed Elias Finkel as head of the Judenrat—Finkel had already been a member of the Judenrat and served on the committee for social assistance. Finkel was a wealthy Jew from Warsaw and owned a farm in Miedzeszyn. The secretaries now were Mieczysław Chodźko from Łódź and H. Szancer. In 1940, other members of the Judenrat included David Goldberg, Pinkus Rozenberg, and Majer Rajner.⁴ Subsequently Szancer became the head of the Judenrat in 1942, although there is no information on precisely when he was appointed.⁵

In Falenica the commandant of the Jewish Police and the majority of the policemen were originally from Łódź. The Jewish Police also included some Jews who had been expelled from Germany in the fall of 1938 and who had settled in Falenica.⁶ The commandant of the Jewish Police was named Sziker (or Szejker). The size of the police force varied, but it was usually somewhere between 15 and 20 men. In the spring of 1942, Zimnawoda, a man who had arrived from Łódź, was appointed as commandant of the police and Sziker became his deputy. Under the new commandant, the Jewish Police showed its cruelty in rounding up people for work, as the Germans promised to spare the families of ghetto policemen if they delivered the required quota.⁷

On October 31, 1940, the Germans established a ghetto in Falenica. In terms of organizational structure, the Medem sanatorium for children in Miedzeszyn was also subordinated to the ghetto in Falenica. About 200 Jewish children resided there. Jews from Dobrze, Kałuszyn, Wyszaków, and Miedzeszyn lived in the Falenica ghetto. The Jews from Wiązowna were also compelled to move into the Falenica ghetto. The Germans did not establish a ghetto there because of the small number of Jewish inhabitants. In total, some 6,500 Jews passed through the ghetto. Approximately 1,500 died from hunger and disease.

The area of the ghetto was confined by Lawinowa, Mszańska, Chryzantemy, Hiacyntowa, and Bartoszycka Streets and also segments of Bystrzycka, Walcownicza, and Patriotów

Streets on one side of the railway, excluding the power station. In Miedzeszyn the ghetto was located on the left side of the railway on the grounds of the Medem sanatorium. The ghetto was secured by a 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) barbed-wire fence, although it was only fenced on the side of the road and along the railway lines; the road through the forest to Radość remained open.⁸ The Polish (Blue) Police guarded the ghetto rather ineffectively on the outside. However, the Jewish Police also guarded the gates on the inside. Germans serving in a unit of 36 SS men stationed in Falenica only showed up sporadically. When they appeared, however, they would shoot anybody who attracted their attention.

The establishment of the ghetto did little to disturb the ongoing Polish-Jewish trade. To facilitate communications, the Jews took down the wire in some places, and it was never repaired. The Polish policemen tolerated this trade. Expelled Polish house owners went to examine their properties inside the ghetto. Some people even took a shortcut to the railway station in Miedzeszyn through the ghetto.⁹ Wheat was smuggled into the ghetto regularly, and a significant part of the bread made was sent to the Warsaw ghetto.

In March of 1940, due to the increasing number of people infected with typhus, the Judenrat was forced to establish a quarantine house.¹⁰ On January 10, 1941, the Falenica ghetto was sealed off so that Jews could no longer enter or leave. During the existence of the Falenica ghetto, Jews from a number of towns, such as Dobrze, Kałuszyn, Wyszaków, and Mrozy, were brought into the ghetto. Sporadically, also, some Jews from Warsaw and Łódź arrived.

In May 1941, more than half of the 6,500 residents were receiving social welfare. In 1941, the Judenrat opened a hospital for the contagiously sick on the orders of the Kreishauptmann, Dr. Hermann Rupprecht.¹¹ In January and February 1942, the death rate in the ghetto was double that recorded in December. In January alone, some 2 percent of the total ghetto population died. The main cause of death was extreme exhaustion caused by hunger and frost.¹²

In the summer of 1940, Jews from the ghetto were sent to work unloading coal from trains, serving the German military forces, cleaning the streets, and doing laundry. Jewish girls were forced to clean rooms using their own underwear as rags. Forced labor tasks also included work in the surrounding forests, digging up tree roots.¹³ Jews from Falenica were sent to work in Józefów near Lublin and also at the Karczew labor camp.

At the end of 1941, the Germans established a labor camp in Falenica for work at the sawmill and construction work at Podkowa Street on water and drainage works. Some 400 people worked at this camp.

When the Germans started to build the Treblinka extermination camp and also a labor camp in Wilanów (April–May 1942), for the first time the Jewish Police organized roundups for work. Some 50 people were sent to Treblinka and 70 to Wilanów. Some Jewish policemen were sent to keep an eye on the workers in Wilanów. Their commandant was a popular German Jew, Herman Kirschrot.¹⁴

At the end of May 1942, the head of the Arbeitsamt (labor office) in Otwock, Dietz; and Hartlof (the administrator of the confiscated Najwer sawmill in Falenica) arrived in the ghetto and selected about 80 to 100 men to work in the sawmill and at building huts for the military. They were promised that they would be spared if they performed their work well. The sawmill was outside the ghetto, and every day the Jewish Police escorted the Jewish workers to the site. In August, Hartlof told the workers that the ghetto would be liquidated, and he issued them work certificates (*Arbeitscheine*) to protect them. On August 17, 1942, Jews from the small remnant ghettos or labor camps in Miłosna, Zakręt, and Wiązowna were brought to Falenica. That same day the Gendarmes from Rembertów demanded 100,000 złoty, which they received, to leave the ghetto. At the beginning of July the Polish (Blue) Police who guarded the outside of the ghetto were replaced by Ukrainian and Lithuanian guard units.

The liquidation of the Falenica ghetto took place on August 20, 1942. The Aktion was expected, as only one day earlier the Otwock ghetto had been liquidated. Shortly before the ghetto liquidation in Falenica, the Jews from Radość were brought on foot to Falenica.¹⁵ Prior to the Aktion there were some 5,000 people in the ghetto. About 200 people were killed during the liquidation operation.

At 4:00 A.M., the Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the ghetto, and at dawn some SS troops joined them. The Ukrainian and Lithuanian guards killed everyone who was not able to walk or refused to leave their house. There were some cases of resistance and also of suicide. On the same day, the Jews from Rembertów were rounded up and chased on foot to Falenica. They arrived there around 2:00 P.M. Many of them were shot on the way. Between Miedzeszyn and Falenica, 200 people were killed and subsequently buried in two mass graves. All the people were gathered between the synagogue and the railways. Around 150 children from the Medem sanatorium joined the transport with their teacher.¹⁶ After loading up, the train traveled on to Otwock to pick up the rest of the Jews who had been hiding following the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto on the previous day.¹⁷ Thirty-five people were selected to work in Treblinka. The Germans ordered the owner of the sawmill, Najwer, to choose 100 men to remain working for him. On May 7, 1943, the commandant of the German Gendarmerie in Rembertów, Lüppschau, with the Gendarmes from Rembertów and Otwock murdered all the men by throwing grenades among them and then shooting the remainder. They were buried in a mass grave behind the sawmill.¹⁸ In the ghetto about 24 Jewish policemen remained behind to guard and sort out the Jewish property that was to be sent back to Germany.

Thirty Jews from Falenica survived the war.¹⁹ No information is available concerning any postwar trials of the persons involved in the liquidation of the ghetto.

SOURCES The main published work is *Sefer Falenits*, edited by David Sztokfisz (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Falenits be-Yisrael, 1967), and *Khurbn Otwock-Falenits-Karczew* (Bamberg: Far-

valtung fun Otvotsker, Falenitser un Kartshever Landslayt in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948). Some information regarding the Falenica ghetto can also be found in the memoir written by Calel Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996). The main secondary work is Jadwiga Dobrzyńska's *Falenica moja miłość po raz drugi* (Warsaw, 1996).

In the Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute (AŻIH) in Warsaw, there are preserved some rudimentary materials, including the correspondence between the Judenrat in Falenica and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (210/14, AJDC) and also the Presidium of the Jewish Social Self-Help (211/383-384, JSS) in Kraków. There are also a few testimonies by survivors recorded after the war (e.g., 301/2207). One of the most important sources for the liquidation of the ghetto is the testimony of Sara Najwer (302/4496). The lack of other archival sources is due to the destruction of the building of the Falenica Jewish community in July 1943. In an operation organized by the underground Home Army, the building was set on fire to destroy any documents that could be used against the inhabitants of Falenica.

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NOTES

1. Baruch Goldstein, "In the Ghetto and on the Aryan Side," in Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 249.
2. Ludwik Landau, *The Chronicle of the Years of War and Occupation*, vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1962), p. 146.
3. Tatiana Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 83-125.
4. AŻIH, JSS, 211/383, p. 4; AJDC, 210/14, p. 35.
5. Ibid., JSS, 211/383, p. 18.
6. Mieczysław Chodźko, "The Tragic Life of the Falenica Ghetto," in Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 207.
7. Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 253.
8. AŻIH, 301/5719, testimony of Danuta Dąbrowska, p. 1.
9. Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 251; Dobrzyńska, *Falenica moja miłość po raz drugi*, pp. 116-117.
10. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/14, p. 10.
11. Ibid., JSS, 211/383, pp. 35, 52.
12. Ibid., JSS, 211/384, pp. 18, 25.
13. Ibid., 301/2207, testimony of Srulek Lang, p. 18.
14. Ibid., 301/4496, testimony of Sara Najwer, p. 1.
15. Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 256.
16. Ryszard Zabłotniak, "Sanatorium Dziecka im. Włodzimierza Medema w Miedzeszynie," *Archiwum Historii i Filozofii Medycyny* 55:3-4 (1922): 322; Sztokfisz, *Sefer Falenits*, p. 212.
17. Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?* pp. 64-65; Dobrzyńska, *Falenica moja miłość po raz drugi*, pp. 121-122.
18. AŻIH, 301/4496, p. 10.
19. Ibid., p. 5.

GŁÓWNO

Pre-1939: Główno, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939-1945: Główno, Kreis Lowicz, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Główno, Łódź województwo, Poland

Głowno is located 29 kilometers (18 miles) northeast of Łódź. The 1921 census registered 1,430 Jews in residence. According to the community's estimates, there were 2,000 Jews in Głowno on the outbreak of World War II.¹

With the establishment of the Generalgouvernement in October 1939, Głowno became a town within Distrikt Warschau, which lay directly on the border with the Warthegau, that had been created out of Polish territory annexed to the Third Reich. By the end of 1939, the Jewish population of Głowno had more than doubled, due to the arrival of many deportees and refugees; for example, on December 29, 1939, approximately 1,600 Jews from Stryków were deported to Głowno. Documentation from the files of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) shows that the majority of the deportees were from Aleksandrów Łódzki, Łódź, Zgierz, and Stryków. Many of the newcomers soon were deported further to the east, for example, to Izbica Lubelska.²

Several times the German authorities ordered the expulsion of Głowno's Jews within 24 hours but then failed to proceed with the actual deportation; for instance, the December 6, 1939, deportation first was postponed until January 15, 1940, and then again until April. The local Jews of Głowno clashed with the newcomers, blaming them for increases in food prices and congestion. To avoid deportation, many newcomers moved to summer cottages in Głowno's suburbs of Nowy Otwock, Zakopane, and Warchałów. In January 1940, there were 2,700 newcomers in Głowno.

An Aid Committee for Poor Jews was organized in Głowno in December 1939, chaired by Juda Flamholz. The committee opened a soup kitchen that served at its peak 1,500 meals daily.

A 12-man Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in February 1940, which was chaired by Abram Rosenberg. Other members included Leon Borensztajn (deputy), Fiszel Baum, Chaim Bursztyn, Josef Klecki, Maurycy Baumerder, and Juda Flamholz. With the exception of Borensztajn, a German Jew, it consisted solely of merchants. The anonymous author of "The Głowno Timetable," preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, noted: "The Judenrat was greatly hated by the Jewish population." The Judenrat was tasked with the provision of laborers and hygiene. It immediately tried to dissolve the Aid Committee but succeeded only in October 1940, when it took over the management of the soup kitchen. By April 1940, the conflict had reached the point where both parties requested that it be resolved by a representative of the AJDC from Kraków.³

The period preceding the ghetto's establishment is described in the "Głowno Timetable":

"The military leaves Głowno [in February 1940] and the Gendarmerie arrives. The conduct of the authorities towards the Jews becomes progressively worse. Jewish shops are shut down, searches are carried out, and . . . there is a good deal of looting. Instead of the odd two dozen Jewish workers demanded up till now, the labor authorities ask for 400 to work permanently, seven days a week. Volks-

deutscher [ethnic German] Roger is in charge of labor."⁴

On April 5, 1940, an order was issued for all refugees to start leaving the town on April 8, at a rate of approximately 400 persons daily. The author of the "Głowno Timetable" noted: "The Judenrat decides that the first to leave will be the beneficiaries of the Aid Committee. None of the local Judenrat people or members of the Aid Committee are prepared to take any measures to intervene." To the great relief of the newcomers, this order was suddenly canceled.⁵

On April 18, 1940, sudden rumors spread that all deportees will be able to go to their hometowns the next day. That same day, an order for 2,000 Jews to report to the market square in the morning was issued. As most newcomers sought to avoid deportation, only several hundred of them reported to the square. The Jewish Police (created only shortly before) forced many to go to the collection point. The Germans took two Jewish policemen and one Judenrat member as hostages. A woman, who refers to herself as Nacia in her Ringelblum Archive memoir, wrote:

Furious Głownians, like raving madmen, were running from house to house. . . . [S]uddenly, through a side window of the attic, I can see that Głownians are running into a backyard next door. At the forefront, councillor [Judenrat member] Flamholz [running] with a knife. Terrible screams reverberate; chinks of broken glass can be heard. The Głowno Jews are dragging people to the market square! ". . . should we suffer because of you? People might be shot because of you. You have to go!"—that is what the Jews of Głowno are shouting.⁶

In the end, the Germans drove the 2,000 refugees to Stryków in carts. In the morning, the exhausted crowd was suddenly sent back to Głowno. At least 1 person was shot on the way back. The Germans imprisoned approximately half of those deported in a former factory building near Głowno, where they were guarded by ethnic Germans and eventually released, with only the poorest remaining there. After a while the Germans dispersed these last people as well.⁷

The ghetto in Głowno was established officially on May 12, 1940, on the orders of the Kreishauptmann in Łowicz. Despite an attempted bribe of 15,000 złoty, the Judenrat failed to prevent its establishment. The main initiator of the ghetto was an ethnic German brick factory owner by the name of Wolbert. Local Poles objected to the plan to establish the ghetto in the predominantly Polish neighborhoods of Swoboda and Cichorajka. Instead, a resort area called Nowy Otwock, beyond the southeastern border of the town, was chosen as the ghetto's location. It consisted of the following four streets: Kościuszko, Cegielniana, Spacerowa, and Mościcki. Most of the buildings in the ghetto were summer houses.⁸ In July 1940, there were 5,602 Jews in the ghetto.

A wire fence surrounded the ghetto. A Jewish police force consisting of 40 to 45 members kept order within the ghetto. The Jewish Police was divided into three sections, one of which included responsibility for sanitation. Its commanders included the Judenrat chairman and his son, B. Rozencajg. "The [Jewish] police treated the population brutally. Extortion was a common and established practice," noted the author of the "Głowno Timetable." The Polish police guarded the single gate of the ghetto, but only during daytime. It did not interfere in internal ghetto affairs. The security of the ghetto was ultimately in the hands of the German Gendarmerie and its commander, Schwarz. Although Schwarz was unpredictable, there were no cases of ghetto residents being murdered.

An ethnic German, Lansky, was appointed as the ghetto commissar and "hygienist." He and his two assistants terrorized the Jews for five months, punishing them for excursions beyond the ghetto limits and its filthy conditions. Nacia names a man called "Ryt" as the commissar. As of May 1940, a German from Stryków named Sztyller was Głowno's mayor (Bürgermeister). Along with other local ethnic Germans, he initiated the demolition of Jewish houses in Głowno. In October 1940, M. Nikolaj of Łowicz replaced Sztyller.⁹

Living conditions in the ghetto were somewhat less harsh than in many others. On Rosh Hashanah in 1940, the authorities opened the synagogue for Jews to pray. For 0.50 złoty a week Jews could buy copies of the underground press. There were also soccer matches against Polish teams in the ghetto. On such occasions, the Landrat issued special permission for the Polish players to enter the ghetto. The Judenrat was in charge of issuing permits for ghetto residents to exit the ghetto, for which they had to pay. The regulations, however, were laxly enforced; the Jewish Police rarely checked the passes, as their relationship with the Germans was based on bribes.

The Jews continued to work in trade and crafts, and some even smuggled food to Warsaw. A number of Jews labored in workshops for tailoring and carpentry in Głowno. Survivor Halina Złotnik, a child at the time, remembers sneaking easily through the fence to visit farmers. Alternatively, farmers would bring their produce to the ghetto. Kosher butchers would bring cattle for slaughter through the ghetto gate or cut a hole in the fence to get them in. There was a constant war between the butchers and the Jewish Police, whom the butchers refused to bribe. The butchers also fought among themselves, denouncing each other to the Gendarmerie.¹⁰

The only Jewish doctor, Szmirgeld, managed a hospital housed in one of the ghetto's wooden cottages. Eventually, the Judenrat hired a Polish physician, Dr. Mierzejewski. Treatment conditions improved after Mierzejewski moved the hospital to a stone house, vaccinated the population against typhus, and ordered special food for the sick. Mierzejewski also improved sanitation in the ghetto: in the fall of 1940, all public toilets were closed, as they were overflowing, and German inspectors kept fining the ghetto residents for the consequent filth. The Jewish Police started to arrest those

who did not keep themselves and their surroundings clean. The Judenrat hired an increasing number of cleaners to improve sanitation.

The first roundup for labor camps in Distrikt Lublin took place on August 14, 1940. These became so frequent that Jewish youths fled to the villages to hide. Few of the laborers returned to Głowno, as conditions in the camps were horrific.

The ghetto was suddenly closed after a fire razed several Jewish houses on Łowicz Street on September 27, 1940. On Schwarz's order, the ghetto gate was nailed shut. The Jews were accused of arson, and 20 people were arrested and sent to the Łowicz prison. All exit permits were temporarily canceled. The Głowno Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto on pain of death. One of the Gendarmes, Karl Braun, shot a woman for leaving its boundaries on September 29. After the fire, the Germans began to watch the ghetto more closely. The largest house in the ghetto was excluded from it, to straighten its borders and make the ghetto rectangular. Trees that obscured the view of the ghetto's fences were cut down. The arrestees were released from the prison at the beginning of December 1940 because there was no proof that the Jews had anything to do with the fire.¹¹ At that time, reportedly 5,300 Jews were living in the ghetto.¹²

On February 8, 1941, the Germans ordered the Judenrat to collect all 600 exit passes. Four Judenrat members were held hostage briefly, while the Jewish Police searched nearby villages to find any Jews still outside the ghetto after the order was issued. The Jewish population realized that resettlement to the Warsaw ghetto, which had already been imposed on several nearby communities, could not now be avoided. The author of the "Timetable" wrote: "In the end, conflict erupts in the Judenrat, it splits into two camps which contend with one another, slinging mutual recriminations. A committee is formed to help the poorer element leave. . . . The committee extorted money from the poorest and did nothing for them."¹³

The deportation to Warsaw was announced on February 28, 1941, for the following day, March 1. A number of Jews remained in the ghetto until March 18, 1941. During that time the ghetto size was shrinking, and Jews were expelled repeatedly from one house to another. A small number of craftsmen were transferred to the Łowicz ghetto and, from there, on to Warsaw; others were picked up off the streets of the Głowno ghetto and then transferred.

SOURCES The following publications refer to the Głowno ghetto: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 179; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 208–209; and Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 1, Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 81–84, 164. Published sources include Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S." ("Oneg Shabbath")* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 120–123.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/340 [AJDC]; 211/674 [JSS]; 302/93 [Memoirs]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-02.208M [Memoirs]); and VHF (e.g., # 9631, 42996, 48980).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 3, 1941.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/340 (Głowno), pp. 3–19.
3. Ibid., pp. 1–2, 13–20, 35–37; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/674 (Łowicz), p. 40; RG-15.079M, Ring I/438 [743].
4. Translation of Ring I/804, “The Głowno Timetable,” in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 120–123.
5. Ibid.
6. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/438 [743].
7. Ibid.; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/340, p. 24; VHF, # 9631, testimony of Sara Boden, 1995.
8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/340, pp. 3–19; *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 3, 1941; translation of Ring I/804, “The Głowno Timetable,” in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 120–123.
9. USHMM, RG-02.208M (Memoirs), 302/93, memoir of Halina Złotnik; translation of Ring I/804, “The Głowno Timetable,” in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 120–123; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/438 [743].
10. USHMM, RG-02.208M (Memoirs), 302/93, memoir of Halina Złotnik; VHF, # 48980, testimony of Emil Hecht, 1998.
11. Translation of Ring I/804, “The Głowno Timetable,” in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 120–123.
12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/674, p. 33.
13. Translation of Ring I/804, “The Głowno Timetable,” in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 120–123.

GÓRA KALWARIA

Pre-1939: Góra Kalwaria (Yiddish: Ger), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Góra Kalwaria, Kreis Grojec, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Góra Kalwaria, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Góra Kalwaria is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, the population of Góra Kalwaria was 7,000, including around 3,300 Jews. However, since the Ger rabbi, Abraham Mordecai Alter, resided in this shtetl, the number of Jews generally swelled to double this number between Rosh Hashanah and the Shavuot holiday each year. The town was a major center of prayer and study for the Ger Hasidim.

With the outbreak of war on September 1, 1939, the economy was ruined. The Ger rabbi left six days after war was declared, and the following day, a large proportion of the Jews fled hurriedly without their belongings. Some went to Warsaw, others across the Vistula. Góra Kalwaria was not severely damaged by the German bombardment.

On September 8, the Germans marched into Góra Kalwaria. On their arrival German soldiers plundered Jewish property, and soon they arrested the Jewish and Christian young men who remained. The Jewish prisoners were deported to forced labor camps in Germany and not released for a couple of months. After about one week, those Jews who had returned to the town found their homes standing but emptied by looters. The German authorities confiscated goods from Jewish businesses.¹

The Germans required that between 200 and 400 Jews report for forced labor each day. One Jew, Yankl Czarnaczapka, a tailor by trade, was instructed to organize these labor details for the Germans. He claimed to be protecting the Jews from random seizures off the streets, but it soon became clear that “he protected and looked out only for his own interests.”² German regulations soon forbade the Jews from carrying out most forms of business. Instead, a new business, smuggling food and life-sustaining needs from Warsaw, developed.

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established on the orders of the first Kreishauptmann, Regierungsrat Dr. Klein, on January 15, 1940 (he was replaced in March 1940). It consisted of six former members of the kehillah and six new members, including its head, Mr. M.K. Skrzypek. The Judenrat took over the organization of forced laborers. Forced labor tasks included agricultural work and road construction.

In January 1940, the Jews were assembled at the magistrate’s office and were issued with numbers. The Jews then had to sew the numbers onto their armbands which they had to carry with them at all times or face punishment. The numbers were used by the Judenrat to assist in assigning people for forced labor. Excluding the sick, all Jews were required to work two or three days per week. Work on certain details was paid, while the others remained unpaid, causing considerable resentment that threatened to undermine the Judenrat’s system of labor assignments, as Jews sought to get transferred to those jobs that were paid.

The Judenrat also was responsible for collecting funds needed to cover its expenses of some 5,000 złoty per month. Collecting this money became increasingly difficult over time, and the Judenrat employed the Jewish Police, led by Czarnaczapka, to impose sanctions on those unwilling to pay.

To assist the many needy Jews in Góra Kalwaria, contact was established with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw. By March 1940, with support received from the AJDC, a soup kitchen had been opened, organized under the supervision of the Judenrat. It provided up to 1,200 meals daily at a price of 10 groszy each. Those without means received the food for free. At Passover, monetary aid and matzot were supplied to needy Jews with the aid of some 15,000 złoty from the AJDC. The kitchen continued operations until June, when the AJDC ceased providing support.³

In the summer of 1940, to meet a quota of 170 people assigned by the Jewish Council for the Kreis based in Grójec, the Jewish Police and the Gendarmes rounded up 40 Jewish youths and sent them away to work at labor camps in Kreis Hrubieszow, Distrikt Lublin. Conditions in the camps were

appalling, and a number of youths died from illness or were shot by the guards. The remainder returned home by the winter of 1940–1941, severely weakened by the ordeal.⁴

Due to concerns about the spread of typhus among both Christians and Jews, the local health authorities instructed the Jews to build a bathhouse and an isolation ward. A wall was constructed in the Bet Midrash to isolate the contagious. This work went on for a number of weeks and had to be paid for by additional taxes on the Jews. Ultimately not all of the required construction projects were completed, as they were interrupted by the expulsion of the Jews from the town.⁵

At the end of 1940, the Jews of Góra Kalwaria were confined to certain streets, including Czorny-Dwor Street, establishing an open ghetto. According to survivor Jerry Lista, the relocation was announced in the papers and on loudspeakers, and the Jews were given two to three days to move into the designated area. The Jews could take with them only the most necessary items.⁶ The Polish inhabitants had been removed from this area.⁷ Apartments were hard to come by, and the living quarters were very cramped, with about 10 people sharing one room. Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto, and Christians were not allowed to enter. Smuggling stopped almost completely. Hygienic conditions were poor, and disease spread among the ghetto inhabitants.

In early January 1941, the Jewish Council reported that about 300 Jews had recently been resettled to Góra Kalwaria from nearby communities. In addition, there were about 100 Jewish refugees, mostly from towns in the Warthegau, living with the indigenous Jews in the Góra Kalwaria ghetto.⁸

On January 21, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Grójec, Landrat Werner Zimmermann, issued the following order: “All Jews living outside of the towns of Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec are to transfer immediately to the closest of these towns, all of which were to be considered as ghettos. The heads of the respective settlements were made personally responsible for ensuring that by January 27, 1941, no Jews still were residing on their territory.” The order also stipulated that any Jew caught outside these ghettos after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.⁹

As rumors spread of the transfer of the Jews to the Warsaw ghetto, Jews began to sell off their last possessions for whatever they could get. To prevent this, in early February 1941 the Kreishauptmann forbade Jews from selling their furniture to non-Jews and declared invalid all such sales after February 1, 1941. The police were instructed to prevent all attempts to transport furniture out of the ghettos of the Kreis.¹⁰

On February 25 and 26, 1941, the Jews of Góra Kalwaria were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto. As there was some warning, a few hundred managed to escape in time to other towns. Starting at 6:00 A.M., the Jews were assembled at a meeting point next to the magistrate’s office under armed guard. Each family could not take with them more than 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of luggage. They were escorted out of Góra Kalwaria to the railway station as the local Polish inhabitants watched them leave. From here they were trans-

ported in overcrowded carriages by rail to the Warsaw ghetto, being forced to change trains in Piaseczno on the way. On arrival they were required to shower and then placed the next day in quarters prepared for refugees, which included a synagogue and a disused hospital. In total some 3,000 Jews were transferred from Góra Kalwaria to the Warsaw ghetto.¹¹

The Judenrat remained in the town for another eight days to try to retrieve some property items that had been requisitioned by the German Gendarmes. They also attempted to transport remaining food supplies to the Warsaw ghetto but were only partially successful, salvaging 50 out of 400 cubic meters (65.4 out of 523.2 cubic yards) of potatoes, as the Polish Red Cross obstructed them.

Horrendous conditions of poverty and hunger faced the Jews of Góra Kalwaria in the Warsaw ghetto. Whatever they brought with them was stolen. Hundreds died in the first months and many more daily after that. Most of the remainder were deported to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp in the summer of 1942.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews in Góra Kalwaria during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Gregorio Saposznikow, ed., *“Meguilat Guer”* (Buenos Aires: Residentes de Guer en Argentina, 1975); Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 188–197. The Góra Kalwaria ghetto is mentioned also in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 188; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 213; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 211–212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/349 [AJDC]; Ring I/809, 881, 1175); BA-L (Ord. Vers. XXI); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (e.g., # 10410, 29091); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŻIH, Ring I/809, cited here from the translation in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, p. 191; Saposznikow, *“Meguilat Guer,”* p. 330.
2. AŻIH, Ring I/809, cited from Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, p. 191.
3. Ibid., pp. 192–193; AŻIH, 210/349.
4. AŻIH, Ring I/809; Saposznikow, *“Meguilat Guer,”* pp. 332–333.
5. AŻIH, Ring I/809; 210/349.
6. VHF, # 10410, testimony of Jerry Lista (born 1927), 1995; Saposznikow, *“Meguilat Guer,”* p. 333.
7. VHF, # 29091, testimony of Henryk Prajs (born 1916). This witness, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto in July 1940.
8. AŻIH, 210/349.
9. AŻIH, Ring I/881.

10. BA-L, Ordn. Vers. XXI, p. 364, Kreishauptmann Grojec an alle Bürgermeister und Gemeindevorsteher des Kreises Grojec, February 4, 1941.

11. AŻIH, Ring I/809; Saposznikow, “*Meguilat Guer*,” pp. 334–335.

GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Pre-1939: Grodzisk Mazowiecki (Yiddish: Grodzbisk), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Sochaczew, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Grodzisk Mazowiecki is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) southwest of Warsaw. Before World War II, there were around 3,600 Jews living in Grodzisk, among a total population of about 17,500.

On the evening of September 8, 1939, Wehrmacht units occupied the town. The Germans first granted recognition to the Jewish group that had formed in early September to function as a social welfare committee and gave it the name “Jewish Council of Elders” (*Ältestenrat der Juden*). At first, the members were appointed by the Polish mayor, Edward Radgowski, drawing on a list provided by the former chairman of the Jewish community, Jakubowicz. Jakubowicz also headed the council, which had eight other members.¹

Antisemitic measures instituted by the authorities, originating with Kreishauptmann Karl Adolf Pott, who resided in Sochaczew, first affected the Jews’ food supply or, more specifically, that of the retailers. For instance, on November 8, 1939, by order of the Kreishauptmann, the first shops were closed, and other storefronts were painted with the word *Jude* (Jew) in red lettering.²

Soon the Jewish Council (Judenrat) was fully occupied with providing for the first refugees and deportees, who arrived in the town almost completely destitute. They included at least 1,103 persons who arrived on January 14, 1940, from the surrounding rural communities and from Łódź as well; in August 1940, an additional 543 refugees came to Grodzisk Mazowiecki, and in January 1941, there were more arrivals—around 1,200 persons, including some from Kraków. On the other hand, on October 10, 1940, around 100 inhabitants were deported to Łódź, amid great furor. Among the deportees were the chairman of the Jewish Council, Jakubowicz, and two other members of the council.³ Nonetheless, by 1941 the total number of Jews in Grodzisk had risen to approximately 6,000.⁴

The Jewish Council, under the new leadership of Bernard Kampelmacher and Samuel Lewkowicz,⁵ now had only six members, who tried rather vigorously to alleviate the Jews’ suffering. First and foremost, funds were essential for this purpose, and consequently a tax of 1 to 5 złoty per month, depending on financial capacity, was levied. In addition, a fee of 0.30 złoty for food ration cards was instituted. The council used the revenue primarily for support of the poor,⁶ a task it undertook jointly with the social welfare

committee. Its members, Maks Hutt, Samuel Lewkowicz, Fiszal Płachta, Abram Wolanowski, and Bernard Kampelmacher, however, could not count on assistance from the Kraków-based organization Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS); such help continued to be denied them, despite numerous requests. No such assistance was provided in Grodzisk, unlike the Kreis capital Sochaczew, which had a JSS representative office, although the Jewish population there numbered only 3,000.⁷ Contacts with Jewish organizations existed primarily in the form of branch offices of the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ) and the Central Organization for Orphan Care (CENTOS).⁸ Nonetheless, the social welfare committee—which used its own funds to maintain disinfection equipment, an isolation ward, an outpatient clinic with two Jewish doctors, an orphanage for 40 children, and a school with seven grades, nine teachers, and 500 pupils—was largely forced to support itself. Not even the local public kitchen, which provided around 1,000 meals daily for the poorest members of the community, most of whom were refugees, could count on assistance from Kraków.⁹

Even so, the Jewish Council was able to place about 100 children in the care of the TOZ in Warsaw. Even the religious life of the Orthodox Mizrachim was fostered; the community maintained a rabbi and a house of study—admittedly, the latter housed the office of the Jewish Council.¹⁰

In Grodzisk, too, the German occupiers used the Jews as a labor force. The first work gangs had been in operation since 1939, cleaning streets and doing construction work;¹¹ 10 to 20 Jews were always at the permanent disposal of the town commandant’s office, the regimental command, the Heeresunterkunftsverwaltung (Army Billeting Administration), and the officers’ mess. Especially hard physical labor had to be performed by those who were deployed, for example, in the auto parts factory owned by the Kobylarski brothers. To forestall the arbitrary recruiting for labor that most German agencies carried out in the initial phase of the occupation, the Jewish Council soon set up a labor battalion, in which otherwise unemployed Jews could and had to participate. The Germans instructed the council where to send these workers; their payment was also handled by the council—if it had sufficient money for this purpose.¹²

The procurement of skilled workers and other qualified personnel was the responsibility of the Arbeitsamt (labor office) in Sochaczew, which made official requests for such workers and also took care of their weekly payment or, rather, arranged for the respective employers to pay their wages. Despite these measures, unemployment among the Jews of Grodzisk was high, and would-be workers frequently came to the council and asked to be placed in a job. A notable exception to this rule was the task of road construction near the town in the summer of 1940, which was pushed ahead under the harshest conditions. In view of the German pressure, the Judenrat could spare almost no one from the rigors of this work; a subsequent report described it as a “judgment from above.”¹³

After around 150 Jews who had been arbitrarily arrested were sent to labor camps in Distrikt Lublin in three transports in October 1940, a delegation of the Jewish Council succeeded, while visiting the site, in arranging for at least the workers who had fallen ill to be returned to Grodzisk.¹⁴ This accomplishment, probably the greatest success of the council under Bernard Kampelmacher, was soon followed by the shock of the ghettoization: on November 13, 1940, a placard posted by the Kreishauptmann announced the imminent resettlement from Grodzisk to Warsaw, while the Jews were forbidden, as of December, to leave an area in the center of town, the Jewish quarter or ghetto (*Jüdisches Wohngebiet*) that was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.¹⁵

The resettlement to Warsaw, which took place between February 12 and 20, 1940, was handled with great brutality, though no mass killing occurred; after being deloused, the Jews were allowed to take with them 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of baggage and a two-day supply of food. The deportation process is described in detail in both Jewish¹⁶ and Polish¹⁷ sources. Because Lissberg, the head of the German Kripo outpost,¹⁸ had forbidden Jews to leave the town and ordered patrols to shoot any Jew found outside of the town, only a few Jews succeeded in escaping. Only a few craftsmen remained in Grodzisk itself until summer 1941, when they too were sent to Warsaw.¹⁹

Almost all the Jews of Grodzisk—initially organized in a kind of hometown association in the Warsaw ghetto, under the leadership of Kampelmacher²⁰—shared the fate of the other inmates of the Warsaw ghetto and were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp; Kampelmacher died earlier, of typhus, in 1942. As early as the end of February 1941, a member of the Polish underground movement remarked that Grodzisk was empty without the Jews—but that the economy was profiting from their disappearance. Nonetheless, 125 survivors returned for some length of time immediately after the war.²¹

SOURCES The most significant information on Grodzisk, based on research mainly in the ŻIH archives, is found in the following publication: Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); the book also takes into account the older study by Tatiana Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk Żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 83–125. Information about the fate of the town during the war, with occasional mention of the Jews, is found in the diary of the resistance fighter Stanisław Rembek, *Dziennik okupacyjny* (Warsaw: Agawa, 2000). Little light is shed, however, by Józef Kazimierski, ed., *Dzieje Grodziska Mazowieckiego* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Geologiczne, 1989), which almost entirely ignores the Jews of Grodzisk.

Documents regarding the fate of the Jews of Grodzisk are preserved most notably in AŻIH in Warsaw (e.g., Ring I/8, 9, 15, 21, 320, 352, 806; 210/28 [AJDC]; 211/431 [JSS]). Copies are also available in other archives: USHMM and YVA. Yad Vashem has several accounts by survivors from Grodzisk (YVA, O-3). Local German policy is reflected in the compre-

hensive records of the Kreishauptmannschaft Sochaczew (APW, Fond 492).

Stephan Lehnstaedt

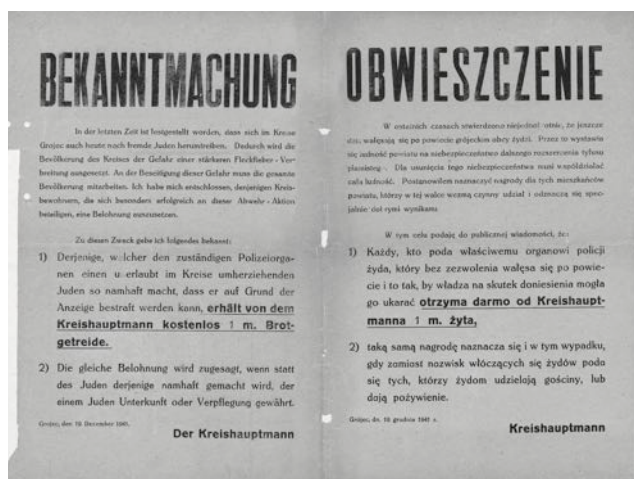
NOTES

1. AŻIH, Ring I/8, report by Bernard Kampelmacher.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See Berenstein, “Deportacje,” pp. 115–116.
5. On Lewkowicz, see the biographical sketch written by Kampelmacher, in AŻIH, Ring I/21, undated [summer 1941].
6. AŻIH, Ring I/8, report by Bernard Kampelmacher.
7. Ibid., 211/431, letters from Kraków JSS to Social Welfare Committee in Grodzisk, November 29, 1940, and December 7, 1940. In its letters, the JSS also pointed out that a representative office could be established only by the Kreishauptmannschaft.
8. Ibid., 210/28, AJDC index of places for Distrikt Warschau, May–December 1940.
9. Ibid., 211/431, telegram from Kampelmacher to Kraków JSS, February 1, 1941.
10. Ibid., Ring I/8, report by Bernard Kampelmacher.
11. See Rembek, *Dziennik*, pp. 16–17, diary entry for February 20, 1940.
12. AŻIH, Ring I/8, report by Bernard Kampelmacher.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid. See also Rembek, *Dziennik*, pp. 123–124, diary entry for October 30, 1940.
15. Centrum Kultury w Grodzisku Mazowieckim, Resettlement announcement for Grodzisk, Żyrardów, Sochaczew, and Błonie, November 13, 1940.
16. AŻIH, Ring I/9, report by Bernard Kampelmacher on the resettlement of the Jews, undated [1942]. See also Ring I/806 and Ring I/352, Anordnung betreffend Freimachung des Kreises Sochaczew-Blonie von Juden, January 31, 1941.
17. See Rembek, *Dziennik*, pp. 163–170, diary entries for February 7–14, 1941.
18. See Jacek Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhard’ w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 39–74, here p. 42.
19. See Berenstein, “Deportacje,” pp. 115–116.
20. AŻIH, Ring I/320, announcement of the Grodzisk Hometown Association in the Warsaw Ghetto, March 2, 1941.
21. See Alina Skibińska, “Powroty ocalałych,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 505–599, here pp. 586 and 591. In Grodzisk, there was also a regional Jewish committee, with which 77 survivors were registered.

GRÓJEC

Pre-1939: Grójec (Yiddish: Gritze), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Grojec, Kreis center, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Grójec, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Grójec is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) south of Warsaw. On June 23, 1939, Grójec had 9,752 residents, including 5,190 Jews.



Announcement in German and Polish issued by the Kreishauptmann of the Grójec district, Werner Zimmermann, offering a reward for turning in Jews, December 19, 1941. The original text reads: "It has been recently established that in the Grójec area foreign Jews are still moving about. The residents of the Grójec area are thereby exposed to the danger of a serious outbreak of typhus. The entire population must cooperate in the elimination of this danger. I have decided to reward those residents who are particularly successful in participating in this defensive action. To this end I make the following known:

1) He who provides to the responsible police organization the name of an illegal and transient Jew, in such a way that leads to his capture, will receive from the Kreishauptmann 1 m. [cubic meter] of wheat.

2) The same reward will be given if, instead of a Jew, the name of someone who gives shelter or aid to a Jew [is provided]."

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German troops occupied the town on September 8, 1939. Shortly after the arrival of the Germans, they started to rob and persecute the Jews. Before the Germans arrived, many refugees arrived in Grójec; however, after hostilities ended, most returned home or moved on to other towns.

On September 12, the Germans assembled thousands of Polish and Jewish able-bodied men in Grójec and led them away on foot. Some of those who fell down were shot immediately along the way. The Poles were released shortly afterwards along with some Jews who paid bribes, but other Jews were taken away to places elsewhere in Poland or to Wrocław. The survivors returned to Grójec at the end of the month. In the first weeks of the occupation, the wooden synagogue was razed. Later, the Jewish cemetery was devastated, and broken tombstones were used to build a road to Kobylin, where the Kreishauptmann, Werner Zimmermann, had settled in a manor.

On January 24, 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Grójec. The following became members: Chaium Amberg, Chaim Braun, Noah Bitter, Yaakov Aaron Rechtszajd, Itzhak Brumer, Gecel Rotbard, Elai Wasserman, Szymon Zylberminc, Szlama-Majer Rozental, Szoel Lachman, Fryd-Chil Motel, and Chaim-Szoel Groman. Noah Bitter became the chairman, and Yaakov Aaron Rechtszajd was his deputy. Later, J. Lewkowicz became the Judenrat chairman. Dr. Nathan Boim was in charge of welfare issues; Dr. F. Kotowski

managed health. In the first months of 1940, the Gestapo arrested 100 Jews in Grójec, including four members of the Judenrat, demanding a ransom of 170,000 złoty. The prisoners were not released until this sum was paid.

Each day, a designated number of Jewish laborers had to gather at the market square to perform forced labor in Grójec. The most common jobs were cleaning the town, fixing roads, and clearing snow from the roads in the winter. Apart from these tasks, repairing the sewers and irrigation work were also conducted. More wealthy Jews were able to pay for substitutes via the Judenrat.

Approximately 400 persons worked in a labor camp in Częstów, established to support the Luftwaffe military airport in Słomczyn. Between 1940 and 1942, six small labor camps operated in the vicinity of Grójec, in which Jews were employed in drainage for the Water Regulation Office (Wasserwirtschaftamt) along the Jeziorka River and its inflows. The camps were in Grójec (400 inmates), Jasieniec (70 inmates), Boglewska Wola, Krobów (300 inmates), Częstów (70 inmates), Moczydłów (existed 1942–1943), and Słomczyn (200 inmates).¹ Labor camps of the Road Construction Office of the Governor of Distrikt Warschau operated in Kreis Grojec in the following localities: Gołków, Jeżewice, and Tarczyn.² Hilfspolizei and auxiliary police, consisting of *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans) and Polish (Blue) Police, respectively, guarded Jewish workers in these labor camps.³

In June 1940, 4,889 Jews were living in Grójec. Due to the deportations of Jews from Polish territories incorporated into the Reich, a number of refugees had arrived from towns such as Łódź, Aleksandrów Kujawski, Lipno, Sierpc, and Włocławek. The influx of refugees and the resulting deterioration of living conditions for the Jewish residents necessitated the creation of a committee for refugee relief affiliated with the Judenrat. Chaim Margulis led the committee. The committee received financial help from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), which covered only a part of its necessities. Apart from financial help from the AJDC, the committee also received assistance with food and clothing. The committee opened a soup kitchen, which cared for approximately 1,000 people.

The first plans for the establishment of a ghetto in Grójec probably date from the summer of 1940. Around this time 94 Jewish families were evacuated from Piłsudski and Laskowa Streets, and other Jews were also evicted from their homes to make room for Germans. This may explain why the yizkor book dates the ghetto's creation in July 1940, although it states that the dating is uncertain.⁴ The Polish doctor, responsible for health in Kreis Gojec, however, claimed after the war that through his intervention he managed to postpone the establishment of the ghetto for several months.

On November 14, 1940, the Kreishauptmann ordered the creation of a residential district for the Jews in Grójec. Consequently, a ghetto was set up in Grójec on November 25–28, 1940, in the western part of the town. The plans for the ghetto included the following streets: Kościelna, Mszczonowska, Zatylna, Lewiczyńska, Mogielnicka, Stodolna, Stokowa,

Starostokowa, and Nowostokowa. According to a key letter from the Jewish Council addressed to the mayor, before the creation of the ghetto, some 2,685 Jews (in 808 rooms) and 1,027 Poles (in 414 rooms) were residing in the planned ghetto area, to which another 2,108 Jews from the eastern part of Grójec were now to be added. As a result the ghetto would become severely overcrowded, with about 6 people sharing each room. A further result of the ghetto's establishment would be the almost complete exclusion of the Jews from trade, as they would no longer have access to the market square. After November 28, any Jews still living outside the ghetto faced being severely punished.⁵ According to survivor testimony, the ghetto remained unfenced, but guards were posted at regular intervals around the perimeter.⁶

Just prior to the establishment of the ghetto, a unit of Jewish Police was organized, which was armed with wooden batons. Its duties included keeping order, collecting requisitions, and the mobilization of assigned workers for forced labor.

On January 21, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Grójec, Zimmermann, ordered that all Jews living outside of the towns of Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec were to move to these towns immediately, all of which were to be considered as ghettos. Any Jew caught elsewhere after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.⁷ The reason given for the transfer was that the Jews living in the countryside were not subject to necessary sanitary controls and were suspected, therefore, of spreading epidemics. However, the aim of concentrating the Jews in larger towns, such as Grójec, was to prepare for their deportation to the Warsaw ghetto.

The liquidation of the Grójec ghetto took place in the last days of February 1941. On February 25 and 26, all residents were gathered on the market square. After forming a column, they were directed to the Grójec train station. From there, they were transported to the Warsaw ghetto. The deported were allowed to take only a small amount of luggage. Cleaning squads were brought in to the deserted ghetto to collect any remaining items of value. The Jews from Grójec were resettled in the Warsaw ghetto and quarantined at 109 Leszno Street.⁸

To arrest any Jews that remained in the Kreis, an announcement, published by the Grojec Kreishauptmann on December 19, 1941, offered a reward of one cubic meter of wheat for information about Jews in hiding or persons providing them with help. To deter the population from providing help to hiding Jews, the Kreishauptmann warned that Jews were allegedly carriers of typhus.

In the course of the deportation to the Warsaw ghetto, about 100 young and healthy men were selected—craftsmen of different professions: carpenters, locksmiths, tailors, cobblers, and others—and employed to work for the German army. According to the yizkor book, in September 1942, these Jews were taken to the Warsaw ghetto and subjected to a selection. Of the group, 83 were then sent to Smolensk for forced labor as part of a larger group of men and women.

Only 3 of these men returned to Grójec after the war.⁹ Another group of Jews was quartered in a barracks near the airport in Słomczyn as forced laborers from 1942 until the summer of 1943. On July 14, vehicles transported them to a forest near Dębówka village, to ditches already dug by Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), where they were shot and buried.

There were numerous instances of local inhabitants helping and hiding Jews in Grójec and its vicinity. More than a dozen persons were honored with the title of Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

After the war, in 1945, only about 30 pre-war Jewish residents returned to Grójec. Unfortunately, 2 of them, Dr. Jerzy Grus and his wife Jadwiga, were murdered by a Polish underground organization. Other Jews left Grójec and moved to Lower Silesia, where they set up the Committee of Grójec Jews in Wrocław. By 1947, there were 82 Grójec Jews living in Lower Silesia. They were scattered among different towns of the region, mainly in Wrocław, Dzierżonów, Legnica, and Wałbrzych.

SOURCES Relevant publications include Karolina Panz, “Losy żydowskich mieszkańców Grójca—historia Zagłady: Między pamięcią a zapomnieniem” (M.A. thesis, Warsaw University, 2006); I.B. Alterman, *Megilat Gritse* (Tel Aviv: Gritse Association in Israel, 1955); Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 4, Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 172–175; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 228.

Documents on the persecution of the Jews of Grójec can be found in the following archives: APW (GM, sygn. 542, pp. 568–569); AŻIH (211/436 [JSS]; Ring I/881, 1054, and 1069; 301/4802, 5584 [Relacje]); BA-L (Ordn. Vers. XXI, p. 364); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079 [Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF (e.g., # 58, 17574, 26319); and YVA (e.g., M-10/Ring I/881, 1054, and 1069).

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NOTES

1. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 317.
2. Ibid., pp. 276–277, 319.
3. Ibid., p. 297.
4. Alterman, *Megilat Gritse*, p. 281.
5. APW, GM, sygn. 542, pp. 568–569, as cited by Panz, “Losy żydowskich,” pp. 87–89. Panz also gives a more precise description of the ghetto boundaries actually implemented and cites also an interview with the Polish doctor.
6. VHF, # 17574, testimony of Aisic Hirsch; # 26319, testimony of David Drayer.
7. AŻIH, Ring I/881.
8. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 252; YVA, M-10, Ring I/1069.
9. Alterman, *Megilat Gritse*, pp. 294–298; AŻIH, 301/4802, testimony of Adam Bitter, 1950.

JADÓW

Pre-1939: Jadów (Yiddish: Yadov), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Jadów, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jadów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Jadów is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) northeast of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, around 1,800 Jews lived there.

Following the outbreak of war, waves of refugees began to pass through Jadów, believing they would be safer in a small town. Some were fleeing east to the territories that came under Soviet rule after September 17, 1939.

After the town's occupation by German forces, some Jews began returning to Jadów. German soldiers persecuted Orthodox Jews, shaving their beards in public. Hunger developed in the town due to the economy's collapse.

A Judenrat (Jewish Council), chaired by Mojsze Zabraniecki, was established in Jadów. One of the first assignments of the Judenrat was the collection of a 150,000 złoty "contribution" imposed by the German authorities. The Germans threatened to shoot 50 hostages if their demands were not met. With great effort, only 80,000 złoty was collected. Following negotiations assisted by the ethnic German mayor, Schroeder, the German authorities accepted this sum.¹ The Jews of Jadów were subjected to the same anti-Jewish laws as throughout the Generalgouvernement. In the autumn of 1939, 529 Jewish refugees arrived in Jadów: 448 from Wyszaków and 81 from Pułtusk, Gaworów, Stok, Długosiodło, and Radzyń. A self-help committee was established, which provided assistance to some 1,000 poor and displaced Jews.²

Among the refugees from Wyszaków was Ellen Karsh, whose family found shelter in an empty auditorium, along with 10 other families. Many refugees arrived with few possessions or money, having fled from severe fires caused by German bombardments. Karsh recalls that there was no school and that she had to stand in line for bread. Sometimes the bread ran out before she reached the front of the line.³ In 1940, there were 2,591 Jews living in Jadów; as of April 1940, 802 Jewish refugees were registered there.

The Jews were obliged to perform forced labor. Initially, the Polish (Blue) Police seized Jews off the street. However, the Judenrat subsequently organized labor recruitment. Some impoverished Jews volunteered for the labor detachments to obtain some bread. From the summer of 1940, Jews from Jadów were sent to forced labor camps.

A closed ghetto was established in Jadów, after the holiday of Sukkot (October 17) in 1940. The Jews were ordered to build the ghetto fence, which was topped with barbed wire. Because the Jews, constituting almost 90 percent of the town's residents, were concentrated in just one third of the town's area, there was severe overcrowding in the ghetto, with several families sharing each apartment. The Jews attempted to increase the ghetto area through bribery, without success. They were only permitted to take with them a small amount of personal

possessions, leaving the remainder for the, mostly Polish, new occupants of their homes. The transfer was overseen by the German Gendarmerie and the Polish (Blue) Police, which also included ethnic Germans and Ukrainians. Once the ghetto was created, a unit of Jewish Police was established.⁴

In June 1941, there were 2,787 Jews in Jadów, including 2,085 local residents and 702 newcomers.⁵ Workshops for shoemakers and other trades were organized to meet the needs of the German army, police, and administration. In July 1942, 100 Jews were sent to a labor camp in Wilanów and 50 to another in Izabelin.⁶ The Jadów Judenrat sent clothing and food to these laborers.⁷

Fur garments, iron, and precious metals were collected from the Jews. The Jews also worked to build an airfield at Zawiszyń, 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside of Jadów. Each day a group of Jews left Jadów, returning to the ghetto after work. One day, five Jewish laborers were detained after work. On their release, equipped with special passes, they went on foot to Jadów. On the way, they met a car with Gendarmes from Tuszcz who, without listening to any explanation, shot the laborers near the bridge over the Osownica River.⁸

There were outbreaks of disease due to overcrowding and inadequate medical care in the ghetto. Dr. Goldberg, a Jewish doctor from Warsaw, was sent to establish a hospital, but he was unable to improve the health of Jadów's Jews. To relieve the suffering of the poor, a public kitchen was established, which in January 1941 was serving 500 meals daily.⁹

There were many cases of Jews being beaten during forced labor and being shot in the streets. In the summer of 1942, the killings of Jews caught outside the ghetto intensified. On May 5, 1942, German Gendarmes shot two Jewish men; two more men were shot on May 28, 1942. The Gendarmes shot another Jewish man on June 10. On August 19, 1942, Gendarmes shot four Jewish women, and another two on August 27.¹⁰

According to the yizkor book, in the summer of 1942, a group of Roma (Gypsies) was placed in the Jadów ghetto, including many children. The Jews were ordered to feed them and ensure that they remained in the ghetto. However, the Germans subsequently shot a number of them, including some children. Later, a second group arrived unannounced. These Gypsies did not enter the ghetto but were shot nearby, on the orders of Oberleutnant Lipsch. The Jews were ordered to fill in the graves.¹¹

It should be noted that the Warsaw-Małkinia Górna railway line leading to the Treblinka extermination camp passed only 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from Jadów. As of July 1942, transports of Jews sent from the Warsaw ghetto and other localities for annihilation were passing by on this line. Many Jews managed to jump from those trains. The fugitives, who fell onto the railway tracks, were often wounded or killed by their fall. Gendarmes patrolled the vicinity and finished off the wounded. Ghetto residents heard about the trains passing by and of the Jews' attempts to escape.¹² The liquidation of the nearby Węgrów ghetto (on September 21, 1942) was especially bloody and was perceived as a warning that the liquidation of Jadów would soon follow.

The deportation Aktion in Jadów began on September 23, 1942 (the 13th day of Tishri, two days after Yom Kippur). On that day, all the Jews were ordered to gather near the cattle market. There was a warning that anyone who did not report would be shot. Armed Germans, Gendarmerie, Polish (Blue) Police, and other auxiliaries participated in the Aktion, commanded by Lipsch.¹³ Before the Aktion, the Gendarmes drank copious amounts of alcohol. Jews who did not report to the assembly point but sought to hide in their houses were shot on the spot. The conduct of the liquidation was especially bloody. The elderly, sick, and children were shot in and around the town.

Probably between 100¹⁴ and 200¹⁵ Jews were murdered in Jadów, although one witness estimated that there were up to 600 victims. The murdered Jews were buried at the Jewish cemetery. A few months later, the bodies were exhumed and transported to Węgrów, where they were burned.¹⁶

Jewelry and other valuables were taken from the Jews collected near the market square, and some Jews were tormented and shot while gathered there. After several hours, the ghetto residents were formed into a column and marched out of town; anyone who fell behind was shot.

The Jews were marched to the Łochów train station and from there deported to Treblinka, where they were gassed. During the march, the column stopped for about an hour near Zawiszyn, due to a lack of ammunition among the guards; a truck was sent to Tłuszcz to get more. Reportedly, fewer people were shot on the ensuing march from Zawiszyn to Łochów.¹⁷ After the ghetto's liquidation, some local inhabitants looted the deserted houses.

A group of 20 to 30 young men, including the chairman of the Judenrat, remained in the ghetto to sort out Jewish possessions. Upon finishing their assignment, the group was sent to the Warsaw ghetto.

Following the ghetto's liquidation, Jews discovered hiding in cellars and attics were shot by the Gendarmerie. One of the families who managed to escape at the time of the roundup was that of Finkelman. A partisan unit comprising Jadów ghetto fugitives under the leadership of Mosze Zieleniec was active subsequently in the forests surrounding Jadów.¹⁸

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jews of Jadów during the Holocaust include A.W. Jassni, *Sefer Yadov* (Jerusalem, 1966); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), p. 241; T. Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 108; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1985), pp. 87–88. The Jadów ghetto is mentioned also in Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 201; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 62, 207, 297; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the*

Ghettos during the Holocaust (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 896.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/370 [AJDC]; 211/454–455 [JSS]; 301/5204; Ring I/222 and 599/35); BA-L (B 162/6852); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079 [Ring I]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF (e.g., # 27133); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2151).

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NOTES

1. Jassni, *Sefer Yadov*, p. 233.
2. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 207.
3. VHF, # 27133, testimony of Ellen Karsh (born 1925), 1997; Jassni, *Sefer Yadov*, p. 234.
4. Jassni, *Sefer Yadov*, pp. 236–237.
5. Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," p. 108.
6. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 297.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 31, 1942.
8. YVA, O-3/2151, p. 1.
9. AŻIH, 211/455, as cited by Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 207.
10. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów . . . : Województwo siedleckie*, pp. 87–88.
11. Jassni, *Sefer Yadov*, pp. 247–248.
12. YVA, O-3/2151, p. 2.
13. BA-L, B 162/6852, pp. 88–90, as cited in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 62.
14. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów . . . : Województwo siedleckie*, p. 88.
15. BA-L, B 162/6852, pp. 88–90, as cited in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 62.
16. YVA, O-3/2151, p. 9.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
18. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 207.

JEZIORNA

Pre-1939: Jeziorna (Yiddish: Yeziorna), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Konstancin-Jeziorna, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Jeziorna is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. As of September 1, 1939, there were around 655 Jews living in Jeziorna.

The Germans captured Jeziorna on September 14–16, 1939. Initially the 300 Jewish families residing in Jeziorna were permitted to remain in their homes and continued to lead more or less normal lives. The Jews were required to wear the Star of David, and Jewish children no longer attended Polish schools.

On the establishment of a German civil administration in October 1939, Jeziorna became part of Kreis Warschau-Land. The Kreishauptmann was Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht. The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in early 1940. Its members included men named Szumacher, Grinstein, Działowski, Freiman, and others. The Judenrat had to fulfill the demands of the Gestapo but tried as

far as possible to protect the interests of the community.¹ The Judenrat organized Jewish forced laborers for the Germans; labor tasks included cutting down trees in a nearby wood. In June 1940, there were around 780 Jews residing in Jeziorna.

The German authorities established a ghetto in Jeziorna at some time in 1940.² Reliable information regarding the date of the ghetto's establishment is difficult to find. Jewish survivor Bella Pelcman recalled that pretty soon after the Germans' arrival, she and her family had to leave their homes and move to the ghetto. The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence, but it was not permitted to go out to the non-Jewish area, and non-Jews were not permitted to enter it. There was also a curfew until 9:00 A.M.³ Solomon Freiman's family did not have to relocate, as their house was located within the ghetto area. However, living conditions in the open ghetto were more crowded than before, due to the Jews that came in. He recalls also that one ethnic German family that owned a large property with a farm also remained in the area reserved for the Jews. The head of this household continued to sell milk to the Jews and was appointed mayor of Jeziorna by the German authorities.⁴

The ghetto in Jeziorna did not exist for long—according to Freiman's recollection, only a couple of months. Only one letter from the welfare committee of the Jews of Jeziorna has survived in the archives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), dated January 16, 1941.⁵ In January 1941, the German authorities issued detailed instructions for the sealing of the Jeziorna ghetto.⁶ An internal document from the Department for Resettlement (Abteilung Umsiedlung) in the office of the Gouverneur of Distrikt Warschau, dated January 20, 1941, states that the remaining 700 Jews of Jeziorna were scheduled to be deported to the Warsaw ghetto on January 28.⁷

On January 24, 1941, the chief of the Polish (Blue) Police, Weclaw, warned Abram Konigstein, a former leader of the pre-war Jeziorna kehillah, that the Germans had issued an order to deport all the Jews on the following day. In response to this, Konigstein arranged for an ambulance to transport his family and also the town's rabbi in safety to the Warsaw ghetto before the resettlement.⁸

According to documents in the Ringelblum Archive, on January 25, 1941, the German police rounded up more than 600 Jews from the Jeziorna ghetto and transferred them to the Warsaw ghetto.⁹ Freiman recalls that "German soldiers" arrived and told the Jews to take what they could. Then all the Jews were put on trucks and transported to the Warsaw ghetto, where they were accommodated in synagogues. He notes that almost the entire town was sent to Warsaw, except for a few who managed to escape.¹⁰

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, the Jews from Jeziorna were quarantined at 109 Leszno Street. Here they were held for dozens of hours under unpleasant conditions. A critical account by one of the expellees from Jeziorna, preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, complains that in the quarantine center bribery, corruption, and theft were rife. The deportees had to pay to collect the parcels they were entitled to and could only be released from the quarantine center early in

exchange for a bribe. A note attached to the account accuses the quarantine manager, Helber, of being a collaborator of the Gestapo.¹¹

In the Warsaw ghetto, most Jews from Jeziorna shared the fate of the other Jews concentrated there: many were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp in the summer of 1942.

SOURCES Information on the persecution of the Jewish population in Jeziorna during the Nazi occupation can be found in the following publications: T. Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 106; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 240; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 270.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APW; AŻIH (Ring I/22 [488], 821 [780], 980 [781]; 210/383; 301/2980); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.079 [Ring I]; Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); and VHF (e.g., # 30190, 47896).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2980, testimony of Felicia Rotstein.
2. Ibid.
3. VHF, # 47896, testimony of Bella Pelcman (born 1923), 1998.
4. Ibid., # 30190, testimony of Solomon Freiman (born 1926), 1997. Freiman estimates that the ghetto may have been established as early as January 1940, but this contradicts his own testimony that it existed only for a couple of months, as he dates its liquidation in February 1941.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/383.
6. AŻIH, Ring I/980.
7. The order is partially reprinted in Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Vollstrecker: Die Liquidation von 500.000 Juden im Ghetto Warschau* (Berlin: Arani, 1961), pp. 329–330.
8. AŻIH, 301/2980, pp. 1–3.
9. Ibid., Ring I/22 and 821.
10. VHF, # 30190.
11. AŻIH, Ring I/22.

JEŻÓW

Pre-1939: Jeżów (Yiddish: Yezhov), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jezow, Kreis Skierniewice, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jeżów, village, Łódź województwo, Poland

Jeżów is located 13 kilometers (8 miles) southwest of Skierniewice. In 1921, there were 1,048 Jews living in Jeżów.

Following the occupation of the town by the Germans in September 1939, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in the fall. Jews were forced to wear armbands bearing the Star of David, Jewish children were no longer permitted to go to school, and Jews were subjected to forced labor.

On September 9, 1940, the Kreishauptmann in Skierniewice, Regierungsrat Dr. Rupe, reported to Gouverneur Hans Frank in Kraków that there were 1,400 Jews living in Jeżów. In addition, he reported that in Jeżów the bathing facilities were being equipped with showers, and a hot-air disinfection apparatus was also being installed.¹

The Jeżów ghetto was probably established in the fall of 1940 around the same time as the ghetto in Skierniewice, which was closed on November 15.² According to the recollections of Jewish survivor Albert Sliwin, the ghetto was apparently set up over a period of time. The Germans divided the town; they moved the Poles into the better Jewish houses and then crammed the Jews together. Even some houses were divided, half with Poles and half with Jews. "It was crazy the way they did this. It was not a regular ghetto. It would go on like this for 3 or 4 months." At the end of 1940, Albert's family left Jeżów with several other families, taking some of their possessions with them on horses and carts. They moved first to a vacation home in Włodzimierz and later ended up in the Rawa Mazowiecka ghetto.³

In the fall of 1940, at least 400 Jews in Jeżów were receiving welfare support, which included subsidized meals from a public kitchen, financed with the support of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC).⁴ A report dated January 21, 1941, noted that there were about 1,600 Jews residing in Jeżów, of which about 600 were refugees, mainly from Łódź, Stryków, Głowno, and Kraków. The last letter from the Jewish welfare committee in Jeżów is dated February 4, 1941: at this time there were 1,570 Jews, of which 552 were refugees. The welfare committee was supplying 200 meals to needy Jews each day.⁵

In late January 1941, the Jews of Jeżów were informed that they would soon be transferred to the Warsaw ghetto as part of a large-scale plan to clear all the Jews from the Kreise of Distrikt Warschau to the west of the city.

On March 4, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Skierniewice reported that in view of the planned expulsion of all the Jews of the Kreis to the Warsaw ghetto in mid-March, most of the Jews in the Jewish residential areas (ghettos) in Skierniewice and Jeżów and at the Rogów railway station had voluntarily moved to Warsaw. In Skierniewice, there were now only about 180 Jews; in Jeżów, just over 40; and at the Rogów station, only 4. The same report noted that in the course of the departure of the Jews in February, 6,252 people had been deloused and 6,845 had been bathed. The sanitary facilities, which had been established for the Jews, remained operational and were to be used in the future for the Aryan population. The houses abandoned by the Jews were being cleaned and disinfected by work columns supervised by the disinfection staff. The removal of the Jews had resulted in a shortage both of agricultural laborers and of craftsmen.⁶

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, most of the Jews from Jeżów were put into improvised hostels designated for refugees. A report in the Ringelblum Archive from March 1941 noted the terrible conditions in one of these shelters based in a school building. Refugees from Jeżów were among 460 peo-

ple being cared for in the facility. The report mentions difficulties encountered with hygiene and medical care and numerous deaths from hunger.⁷ A large number of the refugees from Jeżów died of starvation and contagious diseases in the Warsaw ghetto. Most of those who survived until the summer of 1942 were among those deported to the Treblinka extermination camp at that time.

SOURCES The ghetto in Jeżów is mentioned in Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 113; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/384; Ring I/116); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-14.052 [BA-BL, R 52]; RG-15.079 [Ring]); VHF (# 33609); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/23, p. 7, Kreishauptmann Skierniewice, monthly report, September 9, 1940.

2. Yitshak Perlov, ed., *Seyfer Skernyevits: Le-zeykher der fartiliker kebileh kdosbeh* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Skernivits be-Yisrael, 1955), pp. 636–637, dates the establishment of the Skierniewice ghetto in the fall, as does AŻIH, 301/2063. See also Erster Bekanntmachung über die Errichtung eines besonderen Wohngebiet für Juden in der Stadt Skierniewice, October 15, 1940, published in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 721.

3. VHF, # 33609, testimony of Albert Sliwin, 1997.

4. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212 USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154, 210/384, p. 17, indicates that in October 1940, more than 500 people were receiving support.

5. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154, 210/384, p. 22.

6. See *ibid.*, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, pp. 96, 88, Kreishauptmann Skierniewice, monthly report, March 4, 1941. No further information could be found about the existence of a ghetto in Rogów.

7. AŻIH, Ring I/116.

KALUSZYN

Pre-1939: Kałuszyn, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kałuszyn, Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kałuszyn, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Kałuszyn is located 61 kilometers (38 miles) east of Warsaw. The 1921 census reported 5,033 Jews in Kałuszyn. Estimates of the number of Jews living there on the eve of World War II range from 5,200 up to 6,500.

German troops occupied Kałuszyn on September 11–12, 1939, after intense fighting. In the first weeks of occupation, the Germans executed 30 residents for having participated in



Jews are rounded up for murder in the market square of Kałuszyn, ca. 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #18569, COURTESY OF IPN

the initial resistance and began to abuse and rob the town's Jews.¹ Following this initial round of persecution, hundreds of Jews fled east to the Soviet-occupied Polish territories. As much of the town had been destroyed, those who remained built shacks as shelter for the upcoming winter or repaired their damaged houses. Others moved into mass quarters in the remains of the Bet Midrash, the Bund meetinghouse, and other community buildings. As overcrowding led to the spread of disease, the German Gendarmerie was established in nearby Mrozy (instead of Kałuszyn). Nevertheless, Kałuszyn's Jews were charged with providing furniture for the Gendarmerie's offices. A jail and a unit of Polish (Blue) Police were set up in Kałuszyn. Both the Polish (Blue) Police and German Gendarmes were corrupt and treated the Jews badly.

In November 1939, the German authorities ordered the town mayor, Pliwaczewski, to establish a 12-man Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Judenrat included many pre-war community council members who were obligated to carry out German instructions. Initially, Rubin Michelson was the Judenrat chairman. After his death (before August 1940), local dentist Abram Gamze took over. The Judenrat also included Mojsze Kisielnicki (deputy), Mojsze Berman (who chaired the Judenrat in early 1941, to be replaced again by Gamze), Jidl Pięknawieś, Mojsze Alter Guzik, Lajzer Borensztajn, Aron Rapaport, Motel Aronson, Herszel Feldman, Mordka Rinwrot, and talles maker Lis. One of the Judenrat's first tasks was to collect 10,000 złoty; to ensure its payment the Germans arrested 10 wealthy Jews.

From the very beginning, Jews were seized for forced labor that included cleaning jobs, road construction, and drainage works. In early March 1940, the Kreishauptmann in Mińsk Mazowiecki, Dr. Bittrich, ordered the mayor of Kałuszyn to register all Jewish property by March 18. Some Jews were permitted to run their own businesses for a time.

At the turn of 1939–1940, approximately 1,000 deportees from Kalisz, Łódź, and Pabianice were transferred to Kałuszyn via Mińsk Mazowiecki. Some either were transferred back to Mińsk or departed on their own initiative shortly after. For

example, 37 Jews from Pabianice settled in Kałuszyn.² Approximately 140 deportees from Mińsk Mazowiecki arrived in Kałuszyn in the autumn of 1940.³ On average, there were 210 refugees and deportees living in Kałuszyn in the second half of 1940.⁴

In the winter of 1939–1940, all Jewish males aged 18 to 45 years were registered for work in labor camps. In April 1940, 38 of those registered were taken to a labor camp in Biała Podlaska. In the summer of 1940, another group was sent to the vicinity of Janów Podlaski; many of these men returned after a few months in very bad health. At the end of that summer, German soldiers arrived in Kałuszyn to recruit Jews for the construction of the train station in Mrozy. As the work was poorly paid and nobody volunteered, the laborers were conscripted.

Opinions regarding the date of establishment and also the location of an open ghetto in Kałuszyn are divided, as the sources provide conflicting information: one reports the ghetto's delimitation in October 1940, with Kałuszyn's Jews remaining wherever they lived as the entire town was declared to be a ghetto; another dates it in September 1941, with only the northwest part of the town comprising the ghetto. Most sources, however, support the former assertion. At places where Jews lived, signs with the following inscription were posted: "Jewish Quarter—Kałushin Ghetto." Despite this, its residents were still permitted to leave the town during daylight hours, as the curfew and blackout were imposed only in the evening.

Similar discrepancies arise regarding the nature of the ghetto's enclosure and when this took place. According to Michael Kishel, the ghetto was declared closed a few months after its establishment but never fenced. Jews needed a permit to leave it safely.⁵ However, according to the Judenrat, the ghetto was still open in September 1941 and sometime afterwards surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.⁶

With the establishment of the ghetto, the Kreishauptmann ordered the Judenrat to organize a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) that included a sanitation unit. The following were its members: Goldwasser, Piasecki, Czapka, Radzyński, Gontarski, Berman, Kisielnicki, Wajnkranc, Dimentman, Gelbard, Kuska, Jaworski, Sadowski, Obronzka, Grodzicki, and Zylberman. A refugee from Łódź named Dembowicz commanded the unit.

Kałuszyn's Jewish Police was charged with maintaining order inside the ghetto. Its sanitary unit was responsible for cleanliness and also supervised an epidemic hospital that the Judenrat opened in the summer of 1941. According to Kishel: "Though the police had to obey the commands of the Germans, they did whatever they could to lighten the Jews' burden." With the ghetto's enclosure, Kałuszyn's police were ordered to prevent Jews from leaving it, but "people ignored them."⁷

In October 1940, refugees from Pabianice and Kalisz wrote to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) that although the Judenrat had promised 9,000 złoty monthly for the soup kitchen, over the following months it not only withheld all incoming cash subsidies but even sold groceries that were supposed to be distributed free of charge. They did so to cover previous

months' debts, thereby treating the initial "contributions" as loans that were to be paid back. The soup kitchen was closed a short time later. The same letter also quotes Judenrat members as saying: "There are no people in need in Kałuszyn, but debts must be paid." Other complaints include accusations of theft, waste, and discrimination against refugees in the provision of assistance.⁸

The situation did not improve with time. News of the political infighting, mainly due to the efforts of A. Gamze to chair welfare institutions not only in Kałuszyn but also in the Kreis center Minsk, finally reached Dr. Gamsej Wielikowski in Warsaw. In October 1941, Wielikowski addressed the Judenrat as follows: "The essence does not rest in paperwork or fiction, but in real work and help for the broad multitude of the Jewish people."⁹

In March 1941, approximately 1,000 of Kałuszyn's Jews were deported to Warsaw, but most of them returned within a week. The Judenrat reported only 3,000 Jews living in the ghetto at the end of April 1941.¹⁰ By September, their number had risen to 3,166.¹¹ Around December 1941, all Jews living in the vicinity, as well as groups from Dobrze, Latowicz, and Stanisławów, were ordered to move to Kałuszyn. The number of ghetto residents increased to 4,000. During the winter of 1941–1942, 40 to 45 Jews were reportedly dying each month.¹²

In the months preceding the German invasion of the Soviet Union, forced labor was intensified, and more Jews were assigned to dig trenches, fell trees, and repair roads and bridges. Poles and Germans supervised the labor. These laborers were often beaten, even executed. When the Mińsk-based Wolfe and Goebel company arrived in the spring of 1941 (immediately following the deportation to the Warsaw ghetto), very few Jews resisted poorly paid job offers for fear of new deportations. In September 1941, 500 Jews were employed and paid 5 to 8 złoty per day. A small share of the Kałuszyn Jews' bread rations was withheld by the Judenrat for the benefit of the laborers and those in most need.

After the ghetto's closure, the situation for Kałuszyn's Jews worsened considerably, as almost all of them lived from trading with neighboring villages. Therefore, despite the risks, many Jews continued trading, sneaking out mostly at night. In the course of 1941, 12 Jews were executed at the Jewish cemetery.

According to Kishel, when Kałuszyn's Jews learned of the deportations from the Warsaw ghetto in July 1942, Judenrat member Kishelnitski (actually his father) brought a number of Kałuszyn Jews from that ghetto back to their hometown with the help of the Jewish Police.¹³ The community later became aware of the liquidation of the Mińsk ghetto on August 21, 1942, and believed that their turn would come soon. Despite assurances given by the German authorities that the Kałuszyn ghetto would remain intact throughout the winter, the town's Jews did not believe them. Around this time, the Gendarmes and Gestapo tripled their demands for money and various goods. Many young Jews began to flee to the forest or to nearby camps, including Kiflev (Kuflów estate), Jeziorek, Mienia, and Siedlce.

On September 19, 1942, the chief of the Mińsk Gestapo, Schmidt, came to Kałuszyn demanding 500 laborers to be ready for work in Jeziorek the following day, which happened to be the eve of Yom Kippur. As very few Jews appeared for work, since most men chose to hide, Kishelnitski was jailed, and in spite of attempts by the Judenrat to bribe the Germans for his release, he was shot.

The liquidation of the Kałuszyn ghetto took place on September 25, 1942. The Warsaw and Mińsk deportation commando, Mrozy Gendarmerie, and Polish (Blue) Police conducted the operation, possibly assisted by Ukrainian, Latvian, and Lithuanian auxiliaries.¹⁴ According to Kishel, the Jewish Police did not take part in the liquidation; its members could move freely, and many escaped from the town. When the Judenrat chairman, Abram Gamze, categorically rejected the Gestapo request to deliver Jews for "resettlement," he was shot in his home.

The ghetto's inhabitants were ordered to assemble at the market square. Several hundred to a thousand Jews were randomly selected and shot either there or at the Jewish cemetery, where they were taken in groups. The Polish manager of the Berman plant, Sheradzinsky, succeeded in getting permission for the 30 Jews employed there to stay and work at the plant, despite having already been detained.

That night, the Jews still remaining were led to the train station in Mrozy. Although women and children were taken on wagons, the men had to run to keep up with the Germans who rode horses. These Jews were loaded into freight trains and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Available sources give figures in the range of 2,000 to 3,000 for the number of deportees. These disparities probably reflect either the inclusion or exclusion of those executed in Kałuszyn prior to transportation.

In November 1942, the Germans began liquidating the small camps in the vicinity and moved the conscripted laborers into a newly created ghetto/labor camp in Kałuszyn. The underlying purpose was to attract out of hiding and contain those Jews who had managed to escape the deportations, as Kałuszyn was one of only six remnant ghettos announced by Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Krüger for Distrikt Warschau at the end of October 1942. By December, 2,000 to 2,500 Jews had been settled in the ghetto.

This ghetto was liquidated on December 9, 1942. The children were taken away first; however, they were not included in the transport (but killed on the spot). Then the adults were marched to the Mrozy train station; that evening they departed for Treblinka. A number of Jews were able to jump from the train.

Following the town's liberation by Soviet forces, three Jews allegedly were murdered in Kałuszyn: Szmuel Lew Stolarz, Nosyn Finkelsztajn, and a man named Kuski.

SOURCES The following publications include information on the fate of Kałuszyn's Jewish population: Aryeh Shamri et al., eds., *Sefer Kalushin: Gebaylikt der borev gevorener kebile* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kalushin be-Yisrael, 1961), translated

into Hebrew by Yitshak Shoshani as *Kebilat Kalushin*, 2 vols. (Tel Aviv: Y.L. Perets, 1977); Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 399–404; and Joseph Berman, *Autobiography of the Survivor* (West Bloomfield, MI: J. Berman, 1994).

Most of the information in this article is derived from unpublished memoir material and documentation, which can be found at the following archives: AAN; APO (Oddział AP M. St. Warszawy, Akta Miasta Kałuszyna [zespół nr 52]); AŻIH (Ring I/822–823, 210/506–510, and 211/129); BA-BL (R 52 III/29); USHMM (RG-15.079M [Ring I], reel 38; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reels 8 and 27; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-02.067*01 [statement of Michael Kishel, born Majlech Kishelnitski [Kisielnicki], translated from Yiddish]; RG-02.066*01 [Michael Kishel Holocaust memoir]; VHF (e.g., # 6526, 12547, 20270); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 20270, testimony of Paula Popowski, 1996.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 27, 211/508; Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 141.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/393, November 24, 1940, and December 4, 1940.
4. Engelking, “Życie codzienne,” pp. 216, 220.
5. VHF, # 6526, testimony of Michael Kishel, 1995.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 8, 211/129, Sprawozdanie z podróży służbowej odbytej po Dystrykcie Warszawskim w dniach od 8-14 września 1941; Kałuszyn’s Judenrat delegation, while visiting Gamsej Wielikowski (a member of the JSS Presidium in Warsaw and an adviser to the head of Distrikt Warschau, Dr. Ludwig Fischer) in September 1941, reported the existence of “a Jewish quarter, but open”; J.A. Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhard,’” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 65; Berman, *Autobiography*, p. 36; VHF, # 12547, testimony of Carl Grushka, 1996.
7. USHMM, RG-02.067*01 (statement of Michael Kishel, born Majlech Kishelnitski, 1946 or 1947). It should be noted, however, that in this testimony Kishel did not reveal his own membership in the sanitation unit of the Jewish Police and also that deputy chair Kishelnitski was his father—facts subsequently revealed in his 1995 testimony, VHF, # 6526. See also USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/508.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/506–510; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/393, October 30, 1940.
9. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/506, October 5, 1941.
10. Ibid., 211/507, April 27, 1941; A. Żbikowski, “Żydowsky przesiedleńcy z dystryktu warszawskiego w getcie warszawskim 1939–1942 (z pogranicza opisu i interpretacji),” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 227; Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhard,’” p. 65, which erroneously dates the deportation as 1940. According to USHMM, RG-02.067*01, 2,000 Jews were deported, but half of them returned to Kałuszyn. See also BA-BL, R 52 III/29, p. 75, report of Kreishauptmann

Minsk Mazowiecki, March 5, 1941; and Dr. Josef Kermisz, “Martirologie, Viderstand un umkum fun der yiddisher kehillah in Kalushin,” in Shoshani, *Kebilat Kalushin*, pp. 324–325; both mention plans in early 1941 to resettle some Jews to the Warsaw ghetto because of overcrowding in the Kałuszyn ghetto.

11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 8, 211/129, Sprawozdanie z podróży.

12. Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhard,’” p. 65; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/510, January 2, 1942, and May 17, 1942.

13. USHMM, RG-02.067*01.

14. Berman, *Autobiography*, p. 37; USHMM, RG-02.067*01.

KARCZEW

Pre-1939: Karczew, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Karczew is located about 27 kilometers (17 miles) southeast of Warsaw. On the eve of the war in August 1939, about 500 Jews were living in Karczew out of a total population of some 6,000.

On September 2, 1939, German planes bombed Karczew. Many younger people fled to eastern Poland. The town was occupied in mid-September, and shortly afterwards the Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which put some order into the daily recruitment of forced laborers. More well-to-do members of the community paid the Judenrat to keep them off the work assignments, and the poorer people were sent to work in their place. Skilled workers were sent to work in the German barracks and in local industrial enterprises set up by the Germans.

On December 1, 1940, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Karczew. About 700 Jews were confined within the “Jewish residential area.” At first it was an open ghetto, which made it possible for the inhabitants to barter goods for food with the local Polish population. After a short while the ghetto was closed and such commerce was forbidden.

The records of the Jewish aid committee subordinated to the Judenrat in Karczew do not make specific reference to the existence of a ghetto, but on December 26, 1940, the committee noted that the Jews of Karczew, who mostly lived from trading with Warsaw, were now unemployed and could not afford to buy peat to heat their homes.¹

The shortage of food brought on increased hunger. The malnutrition and overcrowded conditions, in turn, led to outbreaks of disease and increased mortality. Jewish communal assistance institutions opened soup kitchens for the destitute, but there were insufficient resources to help them, and the population grew weaker and weaker by the day.

In January 1941, only a few weeks after its establishment, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. The Jewish inhabitants of Karczew were transported to the Warsaw ghetto on trucks.

With the evacuation, the Jews of Karczew were left virtually destitute on entering the Warsaw ghetto. A few Jews who had relatives in Otwock escaped from the Warsaw ghetto to join their families in the Otwock ghetto. In April 1942, the Germans established a forced labor camp in Karczew; about 400 Jews from ghettos in the region, including some from the Otwock ghetto, were crowded into huts that were erected on the grounds of the camp.² They were put to work digging water channels, and many died in the camp. In May 1943 there was an escape from the camp, which continued to exist at least until September 1943. Only a few Jews from this camp survived to the end of the war.

The 1948 yizkor book notes that relations with the local Polish population did not improve during the war.³ However, one Pole from Karczew, Albin Szerepko, has been recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. He brought food and water to two Jewish boys, Yitzhak and Zvi Gontarski, who hid in the cowshed of the Szerepko family for more than a year. The two boys had fled to Kołbiel from the Karczew ghetto at the time of that ghetto's liquidation and returned to Karczew with their mother after the liquidation of the Kołbiel ghetto in September 1942. Szerepko's father had been employed by the boys' father, Zeev Gontarski, before the war.

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by Shimon Kanc, *Sefer Zikaron: Otvotsk-Karchev* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Otvotsk and Kartshev, 1968), is concerned primarily with Otwock but does include a small section on the pre-war history of Karczew. The earlier yizkor book edited by Benjamin Orenstein, *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev* (Bamberg: Former Residents of Otvotsk, Falenic and Kartshev in the American Zone in Germany, 1948), also includes a couple of pages on the fate of the Jews of Karczew under German occupation. There is also a brief article on the Jews of the town in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 406–407. The Karczew ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 218; and in BŻIH, no. 1 (1952): 106–107.

Documentation on the fate of the Jewish community of Karczew during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/525 [JSS]); IPN (ASG, sygn. 62, k. 257); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 211/525, Hilfskomitee beim Judenrat Karczew an Jüdisches Hilfskomitee Warschau, December 26, 1940.

2. Orenstein, *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev*, p. 43; Kanc, *Sefer Zikaron: Otvotsk-Karchev*, p. 843. The Karczew forced labor camp is mentioned in the report of a meeting on the forced labor of Warsaw Jews outside the ghetto, held in the office of the Kommissar of the Warsaw ghetto, Auerswald, on March 20, 1942; see Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung*

und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg, 1960), pp. 234–235.

3. Orenstein, *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev*, p. 43.

KIERNOZIA

Pre-1939: Kiernozia, town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Lowicz, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Kiernozia is located about 18 kilometers (11 miles) north-northwest of Łowicz. In 1921, there were 284 Jews living in the town out of a total population of 726.

On September 2, 1939, shortly after the start of the German invasion, Kiernozia was flooded with refugees fleeing from Włocławek, Toruń, and other places to the north and west. Then on September 15, 1939, the Germans started a heavy bombardment of Kiernozia. Most residents fled to nearby villages for safety. Only around 30 Jews remained, and 20 of them were killed in the synagogue on September 16 while praying. About half of the town was severely damaged by the bombing.¹

When the Germans arrived in the town, they rounded up the entire population and drove them all on foot to Żychlin, about 17 kilometers (10.6 miles) away. The column of people, which included women and children, arrived exhausted and hungry and were detained there overnight. On the next day the Germans segregated the Jews from the rest of the detainees, requesting that they go to one side. Those who did not react quickly enough were pointed out by local ethnic Germans and severely beaten by the German guards.

The Jews of Kiernozia were held in Żychlin for another four days, during which they were required to perform forced labor together with other Jews from Żychlin. When the Kiernozia Jews reported to the German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) to receive their passes to return home, the Germans humiliated them, shaving off the beards of elderly Jews. On returning home, in addition to the severe destruction, the Jews found that many Jewish shops and homes had been robbed. In these difficult circumstances, the Jews did their best to help each other out. Those who had lost their homes moved in with other Jewish families—two or three families shared each of the few houses that remained. As no Jewish stores were left operating, those Jews who still had a few possessions exchanged them with local farmers for food.²

According to the detailed account in the yizkor book, the Germans established a ghetto in Kiernozia in March 1940, which would make it perhaps the first ghetto in Distrikt Warschau.³ Other sources, however, date its establishment in May 1940, at the same time that Kreishauptmann Lowicz Regierungsrat Dr. Schwender established four other ghettos in the Kreis, including that in the Kreis center of Łowicz.⁴ The yizkor book notes that the Jews were given only five days to move into two small streets on the edge of town, where no Jews had been living previously. At the same time the Germans resettled the former Polish inhabitants of the ghetto

area into the larger number of Jewish houses being vacated. The overcrowding in the ghetto created unhygienic conditions, and many Jews became sick.⁵

All Jewish men over the age of 15 were subjected to forced labor. When the ghetto was set up, some of the men were soon tasked with erecting a fence around the ghetto. German Gendarmes came to the ghetto every day and seized both young and old Jews for work. At the same time, they also stole the last few possessions from Jewish homes.⁶

Some secondary sources mention that in July 1940 about 240 Jews from the surrounding villages were brought into the Kiernozia ghetto.⁷ This seems likely, as in December 1940, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Łowicz reported that there were 650 Jews then living in Kiernozia, of which 360 were receiving welfare support.⁸

In February 1941, the Jews of Kiernozia were informed by the German authorities that they had about four weeks to prepare for their transfer to the Warsaw ghetto. In response, some Jews moved voluntarily to Warsaw before the deadline, and others sought to arrange their transfer to other parts of the Generalgouvernement where ghettos had not yet been established. According to the yizkor book, with the assistance of paid non-Jewish intermediaries, one group of 36 Jews managed to organize their successful transfer by truck to the town of Ćmielów in Distrikt Radom.⁹

In March 1941, most of the remaining Jews in Kiernozia were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto. It is likely that a small group of Jews was retained in the empty ghetto in Kiernozia for a short period after the transfer to sort out Jewish property.¹⁰

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, many of the Jews from Kiernozia were put initially into improvised hostels designated for refugees. In the Warsaw ghetto, the Kiernozia Jews shared the harsh fates of the other Jews trapped there. Very few of them survived until the end of World War II.

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on the Łowicz yizkor book, Gedaliah Shaiak, ed., *Lovitsb—a shtetl in Mazovye un umgegent, seyfer zikorn* (Melbourne and Sydney, Australia: Łowicz Landsmanschaften, 1966), pp. 364–365, which contains one detailed account regarding the fate of the Jews of Kiernozia under the Nazi occupation. The ghetto in Kiernozia is mentioned also in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 313; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 231; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/674); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-14.052 [BA-BL R 52]); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 364.
2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 231, date it in May 1940. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212, state March 1940. See also Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 109, citing the report of Kreishauptmann Lowicz, dated July 20, 1940, which indicates that in May 1940 a ghetto existed in Kiernozia.

5. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, p. 364.

6. Ibid.

7. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212; Miron, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, p. 313.

8. USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/674, pp. 37–38.

9. Shaiak, *Lovitsb*, pp. 364–365.

10. See USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, p. 57, Kreishauptmann Lowicz, situation report, March 13, 1941.

KOŁBIEL

Pre-1939: Kołbiel, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kolbiel, Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kołbiel, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Kołbiel is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) southeast of Warsaw and 14 kilometers (9 miles) southwest of Mińsk Mazowiecki. In September 1939, there were 704 Jewish inhabitants in Kołbiel.¹

German soldiers occupied the town on September 15, 1939. In the days immediately following the occupation, all the young men were ordered to gather in the local church. From there, they were sent to a military camp in Komorowo (near Ostrów Mazowiecka), where they were held for 10 days. During that time 13 of the men were shot. After that the Germans permitted them to return to Kołbiel. In November 1939, Jews over 10 years old were ordered to wear the Star of David. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Kołbiel. A Jewish police force was formed in November 1939. Subsequently, a Jewish aid committee was organized, which provided assistance to more than 200 people. Among them there were 110 refugees from other localities.²

A labor camp was established in Kołbiel whose inmates were assigned to regulate the Świder River. This was one of many camps established as part of a major German program for the regulation of rivers and the irrigation of fields in the Generalgouvernement.³

The German authorities established a ghetto in Kołbiel in 1941.⁴ The Jewish population was resettled into a few houses located between two streets. The ghetto was very densely populated.⁵ Many refugees arrived in Kołbiel from other areas. Among them were 157 Jews from Jakubówka and Wielgolas who were moved into the Kołbiel ghetto in November 1941.⁶ Some of around 1,000 Jews who had escaped from the Mińsk Mazowiecki ghetto during its liquidation on August 22 and 23, 1942, sought refuge in Kołbiel. At this time, the population

of the Kołbiel ghetto was around 1,100 Jews.⁷ Due to the overcrowding, the difficult sanitary conditions, and hunger, many diseases thrived in the ghetto, including an outbreak of typhus.

In August 1942, the Germans executed about 25 men from Kołbiel—15 Poles and 10 Jews—in the forest near the road to Mińsk Mazowiecki. The bodies were buried at the site of the execution. In the fall of 1942, another 30 Jewish men were murdered by the Germans.⁸

On September 27, 1942, the second day of the Sukkot holiday, German armed forces surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were taken from their homes and escorted to the train station in Pilawa. About 300 Jews—100 men, 80 women, and 120 children—were killed on the spot in Kołbiel or on the way to Pilawa.⁹

From Pilawa, the Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. The Germans retained a small group of about 50 Jews in Kołbiel to clear out the ghetto. Another 100 or so people had succeeded in evading the deportation. After a short time, many of these escapees returned to Kołbiel, where the Germans used them as forced laborers. After some time, the remaining Jews in Kołbiel were resettled to the Warsaw and other remaining ghettos. In November 1942, a large group of Jews was sent from the liquidated labor camps to Warsaw. Among these Jews were a number of Jews from Kołbiel. After Rabbi Landau from Kołbiel arrived in the Warsaw ghetto, he continued to establish yeshivot until the liquidation of the ghetto in April 1943.¹⁰

After the liquidation of the Kołbiel ghetto, many Jews were caught and killed in the area around Kołbiel. In January 1943, Gendarmes from the post in Nowa Wieś shot a Jewish family—6 children and their parents—at the cemetery in Kołbiel. In December 1943, Gendarmes killed 5 Jews—3 children and their parents—again at the Jewish cemetery in Kołbiel. In 1943, the Nazis murdered 80 Jews in the forest near Kołbiel. The bodies were buried at the site of the execution.¹¹ According to the testimony of Elijachu H., the wife of the chairman of the Judenrat in Kołbiel was hidden with her child in the forest, where they initially received aid from a Polish forester; eventually, the forester denounced her to the Polish (Blue) Police. The German Gendarme Liebscher arrived; he first shot the child, then the mother.¹²

Of the pre-war Jewish population of Kołbiel, only a few families survived.

SOURCES Articles on the Jewish community of Kołbiel can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 409–411; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 645; and Roman Mogilanski, *The Ghetto Anthology: A Comprehensive Chronicle of the Extermination of Jewry in Nazi Death Camps and Ghettos in Poland* (Los Angeles: American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps, 1985), p. 142.

The book edited by Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), contains brief information on the Kołbiel ghetto (pp. 15–16, 72, 230, 275–276, 317). Additional information on the ghetto and German crimes in Kołbiel can also be found in: *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 120; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 238; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1985), pp. 114–116.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Kołbiel under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/28 [AJDC]); BA-L (B 162/6852); IPN (AGK, Kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; AGK, Ankiety GK, woj. warszawskie, “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel pow. Otwock; AGK, Kolekcja “Z” sygn. 488/c.s. 32; AGK, Alert ZHP, t. XV, z. 13, k. 107; AGK, Ankiety OK, Warszawa “Represje na ludności żydowskiej przed utworzeniem gett,” “Inne represje stosowane przez okupanta hitlerowskiego,” “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel, pow. Otwock; ITS; and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

Grzegorz Kołacz

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 310/A; Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 216.
2. AŻIH, 210/28 (AJDC, Wykaz Miejscowości, Komitetów Pomocy), pp. 1–6, May 6 and June 1, 1940.
3. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 276.
4. AŻIH Web site, www.jhi.pl/pl/gminy/miasto/279.html.
5. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 409–411.
6. AGK (IPN), Kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; IPN, GK, Zh III/31/35/68, o. pr. woj. warszawskie; AŻIH, 310/A; ITS; *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 120; T. Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 278; Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 216; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 238.
7. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 215–216.
8. IPN, AGK, Ankiety GK, woj. warszawskie, “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel pow. Otwock; AGK, Ankiety OK, Warszawa, “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel pow. Otwock; AGK, Kolekcja “Z” sygn. 488/c.s. 32; AGK, Alert ZHP, t. XV, z. 13, k. 107; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni*, pp. 114–115.
9. IPN, AGK, Ankiety OK, Warszawa “Represje na ludności żydowskiej przed utworzeniem gett,” “Inne represje stosowane przez okupanta hitlerowskiego,” “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel, pow. Otwock; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni*, p. 115; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 409–11.
10. AŻIH, Ring II/338, “Wiadomości no. 3”; Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 230; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 409–411.
11. IPN, AGK, Ankiety OK, Warszawa, “Represje na ludności żydowskiej przed utworzeniem gett,” “Inne represje stosowane przez okupanta hitlerowskiego,” “Egzekucje,” Kołbiel, pow. Otwock; AGK, Ankiety GK, woj. warszawskie; AGK,

Alert ZHP, t. XV, z. 13, k. 107; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni*, pp. 115–116.

12. BA-L, B 162/6852, testimony of Elijachu H., June 6, 1962, p. 70, as cited in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 72.

KOSÓW LACKI

Pre-1939: Kosów Lacki, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kosow Lacki, Kreis Sokolow, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kosów Lacki, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Kosów Lacki is located about 89 kilometers (55 miles) northeast of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, the town had approximately 1,400 Jewish residents, constituting 85 percent of the total.

In the opening weeks of World War II, Kosów Lacki's location, 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) west of the Bug River, enabled an unknown number of the town's Jews to escape German occupation. Although the Germans entered Kosów Lacki on September 11, 1939, with no resistance from the Polish army, they did not remain long. As Kosów Lacki was originally assigned to the Soviet occupation zone, the Germans evacuated Kosów Lacki only two days after their arrival. The Red Army's presence in Kosów Lacki, shortly after September 17, 1939, also proved brief. The Soviets in turn evacuated the town after a few days, retreating behind the Bug River, as subsequent negotiations had placed Kosów Lacki back in the German occupation sphere. Some of the town's Jews, particularly the young, decided to leave with the Red Army.

Among the greatest pressures in the first two years of German occupation, which began in Kosów Lacki at the end of September 1939, was the sharp increase in the Jewish population, which more than doubled, from 1,400 at the start of the German occupation to 3,800 by December 1941. Part of this influx came initially from Jews denied entrance at the Soviet border who found it impossible to survive hiding in nearby forests over the winter. Another part came from German forced resettlement to consolidate Jewish communities in the Warsaw region. Seventy Jews from Prostyn were relocated to Kosów Lacki, as were Jews from Wyszaków nad Bugiem, Pułtusk, and Ostrów Mazowiecka.¹

The largest part of forced Jewish resettlement into Kosów Lacki came from German efforts to render those territories annexed to the Reich cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*). On December 13, 1939, German authorities charged the town's rabbi, Jerrucham Fishl Don, with receiving and caring for 750 Jewish deportees who had arrived from Kalisz. Even though the Germans took some of the Kalisz Jews to Sterdyń in March 1940, the sudden influx created enormous pressure on Jewish families in Kosów Lacki. Approximately 15 Kalisz families, about 70 people, were given shelter in the synagogue. Don also expected every Jew to take in as many families as they had rooms. To resolve tensions over the resulting cramped housing situation, the rabbi established a committee composed of

Jewish representatives from Kosów Lacki and Kalisz. The committee ordered Kosów Lacki's Jews to feed their Kalisz guests on Fridays and Saturdays. Don also established a kitchen and dining hall, which served hot meals free of charge to refugees and local Jews displaced by the deportees.

In the fall of 1939, the Germans ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to act in the name of the town's Jewish population. In Kosów Lacki, the Judenrat, composed of pre-war kehillah functionaries, was initially chaired by Itzhak Liberman. Youth leaders from different political parties also organized, with permission from the official Judenrat, a parallel Judenrat. This youth Judenrat appears to have provided many of the ghetto's social services. It organized a sanitation committee, opened a small hospital for contagious diseases, and distributed food products to the weak, sick, and impoverished. It also created a social committee and arranged special passes enabling some, including the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), to remain outside beyond the curfew. The date of the establishment of the Jewish Police is not known, but a 20-man force was headed by an officer named Enoch.²

Although the town's Jews were expected to meet German demands for money, furs, and exotic foodstuffs, the German insistence on forced labor posed the greatest challenge to the Judenrat. While organizing female work brigades for neighboring farms expropriated for German and Ukrainian use proved relatively easy, the Judenrat experienced difficulties finding 500 to 600 men willing to travel 145 kilometers (90 miles) by train to spend a week draining the swamp in Łęki. The main Judenrat turned to the youth Judenrat to fulfill the quota for workers in Łęki. They did so by establishing a Work Committee to assign forced labor duties. The youth Judenrat also organized a militia of Jewish youth to enforce the labor quotas. The main Judenrat also broke up a Sabbath strike of female farm laborers launched within the first weeks of their assignment. The Judenrat assisted the German police in arresting the protesters' mothers, which soon brought the strikers back to work to obtain their release.³

In his monthly report for February 1941, the Sokolow Kreishauptmann noted that the movement of Jews in the Kreis had been forbidden and that the establishment of six Jewish residential districts (*Judenwohnbezirke*), including one in Kosów Lacki, would be completed in March. Any Jews remaining in the villages were being moved to one of these six places.⁴ The same report indicated that the ghettos would be enclosed as soon as the weather permitted. However, most eyewitness testimony maintains that Kosów Lacki remained an "open ghetto," at least up until the main deportation Aktion in September 1942. It seems that as the bulk of the town's population was Jewish, the Germans designated Kosów Lacki a Judenstadt (Jewish town)—and rather than establish a separate ghetto within the town, they treated the entire town as a ghetto, refusing to allow Jews to cross the town's borders.⁵

In early 1941, the welfare expenditures of the Judenrat expanded considerably, from a monthly average in 1940 of about 800 złoty to around 6,500 złoty per month. This steep increase

resulted primarily from the new orders preventing Jews from leaving the town, as previously trade and labor in the surrounding villages had been a major source of food and income for many Jews. The Judenrat responded by launching a Bread Action in which all ghetto residents received half a kilogram (1.1 pounds) of bread free of charge, subsidized with the help of the Kraków-based American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in January and February 1941.⁶

As Germany began preparing for the invasion of the Soviet Union in the spring of 1941, Kosów Lacki's Jews were assigned the task of unloading German trains at the railroad station. Then on June 22, 1941, following the German invasion, Soviet planes bombarded Kosów Lacki, sparking a fire in which 42 people died.⁷ Jewish labor obligations were now increased, as a number of craftsmen formed the worker pool at the Treblinka labor camp, less than 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) away. In the fall of 1941, SS troops and Ukrainian guards surrounded Kosów Lacki and took local craftsmen, their assistants, and their equipment to the Treblinka labor camp on trucks. A second roundup of craftsmen took place in 1942. Because carpenter Yankel Kuklavka was not at home at this time, the Germans threatened to kill many of the town's Jews if he were not surrendered. Kuklavka subsequently managed the carpentry shop at the Treblinka labor camp.⁸

The labor camp roundups were accompanied by SS demands for material "contributions." Several weeks after a roundup, SS guards presented the Judenrat with lists of SS demands for a range of goods, from tools and building materials for the labor camp to luxury items and cash payments for the camp's German staff. To obtain the construction materials, the Jewish community disassembled buildings destroyed by Soviet bombing. The Judenrat imposed stiff taxes to meet the SS demands and resorted to harsh measures to extract exotic foodstuffs from local residents, locking up the head of the Cegal household for his refusal to turn over coffee sent from France.⁹

Some residents of Kosów Lacki's ghetto believed that the craftsmen's labor and the town's financial contributions had established a special relationship with the SS at the Treblinka labor camp. When in 1942 SS officers from the Treblinka extermination camp gave a similar list of demands to the Judenrat, it appealed directly to Theodor von Eupen, the commander of the labor camp, with some success. However, the increasing failure of bribes and ransoms to protect the Jews undermined the Judenrat's authority and provoked a leadership crisis. In early 1942, the SS murdered several craftsmen at the labor camp, including locksmith Mordechai Liberman, son of the Judenrat chairman. After losing his son, the Judenrat chairman began drinking heavily. He was found shot dead in the street. His successor, Alter Burstein, failed to secure the release from Warsaw's Pawiak Prison of three young Jewish leaders. The Judenrat's policy of levying heavy taxes to pay for ransoms came into question, particularly after the parents of Joshua Liberman received a letter telling them their son had died in the Auschwitz concentration camp.¹⁰

Jews in Kosów Lacki were relatively well informed about the terrible events unfolding around them. They had learned about the creation of the Warsaw ghetto from Jews who escaped from the capital in August 1941, seeking better conditions in Kosów Lacki's open ghetto. Polish traders who came to Kosów Lacki to hire Jewish middlemen to help them with illicit trading brought news of deportations from the Warsaw ghetto. The craftsmen at Treblinka, who continued to come home for weekends throughout 1942, reported on their construction work at Treblinka's extermination camp. Ghetto residents also gave assistance to at least three Jews who had jumped from transports headed there. The town offered similar protection and travel papers to four escapees from the extermination camp. Some younger Jews in Kosów Lacki began preparing hiding places in the early fall of 1942. The funeral for Joshua Liberman's grandfather, timber merchant Abraham Liberman, who had died naturally, provided an opportunity to mourn the impending extinction of the town's Jewish community: "Young and old, enemies and friends came to his funeral. . . . People wept bitterly and long for themselves." Survivors later recalled the funeral as "the last time that dignity and ritual accompanied the burial of a Kosów Lacki Jew."¹¹

The liquidation of the Jewish community in Kosów Lacki began on September 22, 1942. Early in the morning, Germans, Ukrainian guards, and the Polish fire department cordoned off the town. SS officers ordered the Judenrat and Jewish Police to gather all the Jews in the marketplace but separated off the families of the labor camp craftsmen in the building where the Judenrat met. SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries accompanied the Jewish Police on a house-to-house search for those in hiding, shooting those they found. Others, including a doctor, a female dentist, and at least two refugees from Warsaw, committed suicide. About 150 ghetto residents were killed trying to flee and were buried in a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery. The next day, the SS searched Polish houses throughout the town and in the surrounding countryside, killing Jews they discovered there.¹² Disagreement exists over how the 3,800 Jews from Kosów Lacki's ghetto were transported to the Treblinka death camp. In some accounts, they were escorted to the railway station and loaded into wagons; in another account, Kosów Lacki's Jews walked to Treblinka.¹³

The craftsmen's families were relocated to two narrow streets in an impoverished part of town and were ordered not to leave under penalty of death.¹⁴ Over the course of the next month, the Germans encouraged Jews who had escaped the previous roundups to return to Kosów Lacki, promising them they would not be deported. On October 28, 1942, Kosów Lacki was announced to be one of only six remaining Judenwohnbezirke in Distrikt Warschau.¹⁵ Between 50 and 100 people came out of hiding and joined the craftsmen's families. They were the target of further SS roundups in December 1942, which once again spared those families whose sons and husbands worked at the Treblinka labor camp.¹⁶ Ghetto residents became subjected to random SS violence. One evening, shortly after the second roundup, a group of SS arrived in town

“to have fun by shooting young Jewish men.” On what subsequently became remembered as “Yankel Evening,” the SS “caught several young Jewish men, including five named Yankel, and chopped their heads off with axes.”¹⁷ In February 1943, an SS unit took Kosów Lacki’s remaining Jews to the Treblinka labor camp, ostensibly to reunite them with their families.¹⁸

No more than 50 of Kosów Lacki’s Jews survived the war. Of those deported to the labor camp, only Szymon Cegiel is known to have escaped during the August 1943 uprising there. The other Jews from the ghetto who survived did so mainly thanks to acts of rescue from Poles in the countryside.¹⁹ Tragically, as many as 11 Jews who had survived the war were killed in its immediate aftermath, along with Poles, when the non-Communist underground blew up Kosów Lacki’s Citizen’s Militia building.²⁰

SOURCES The best source about the Jews of Kosów Lacki during the interwar and World War II eras is the yizkor book *Kosow Lacki* (San Francisco: Holocaust Center of Northern California, 1992), based largely on interviews with two survivors. Other survivor testimonies are from Jews who came from outside the town. The most valuable of these are the accounts of Hanna Lewkowicz, a deportee from Kalisz, who recounts her family’s unsuccessful attempt to cross into the Soviet Union along with some recollections of Kosów Lacki’s ghetto (USHMM, RG-15.079M [Ring I/478], “Podróż do Rosji. Kosów Lacki w październiku 1941 r.,” pp. 1–6, parts of which are published in “Podróż do Rosji,” in Andrzej Żbikowski et al., eds., *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 3, *Relacje z Kresów* [Warsaw: ŻIH, 2000], as well as in another partial publication in “Archiwum Ringelbluma,” *Karta*, no. 39 [2003]: 12–13). More valuable for its descriptions of day-to-day ghetto life and organization is Lewkowicz’s “Notatki o życiu przesiedleńców z Kalisza w Kosowie Lackim 1939/1941,” pp. 1–9 (USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/479). Testimony of escapees from Warsaw who lived for at least a few days in the Kosów Lacki ghetto include the accounts of Józef “Jerzy” Himelblau (AŻIH, 301/3073 [in Polish] and 301/3615 [in Yiddish]), Heniek Ostrowicz (AŻIH, 301/3534), and also Aron Czechowicz (AŻIH, 301/688), who sought refuge in the Kosów Lacki ghetto after escaping from the Treblinka extermination camp.

Further documentation on the fate of the Jews in Kosów Lacki’s ghettos can be found in the following archival collections: APSi (Akta Gminy Kosów 98); BA-BL (R 52III/29); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6846); and USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, JSS], reel 30, 211/573-574; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH, AJDC], 210/422 and 425).

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NOTES

1. T. Berenstein, “Deportacja i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskich,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952), table 10; AŻIH, 301/2732, testimony of Rozalina Kozuchowicz, p. 1; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/479, p. 3, and Ring I/478, pp. 6–7; APSi, Akta Gminy Kosów, 98, “Pismo Przedwodniczącego Prezydium w Kosowie do Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie z dn. 3 kwietnia 1952 roku,” p. 1; and *Kosow Lacki*, p. 23.

2. *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 24–26; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH, JSS), 211/573, p. 6; RG-15.079M, Ring I/479, pp. 6–8.

3. *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 24–27.

4. USHMM, RG-14.025M (BA-BL), R 52III/29, Lagebericht des Kreises Sokolow-Wengrow für den Monat Februar 1941, published in T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 106.

5. This interpretation of “Judenstadt” is in *Kosow Lacki*, p. 24. According to eyewitness testimony, the ghetto remained open at least until the first German liquidation in September 1942, as mentioned in AŻIH, 301/3073, p. 1, and 301/3534, testimony of Heniek Ostrowicz (aka Kuczowski), p. 1.

6. The Judenrat’s social welfare expenditures and discussions of various campaigns to provide nourishment after the creation of the ghetto are in AŻIH, JSS, 211/573; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/479, pp. 1–8. For AJDC assistance, see USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/422, pp. 1–3, and 210/425, pp. 1–5.

7. See Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz et al., eds., *Raporty Ludwiga Fischera, gubernatora dystryktu warszawskiego, 1939–1944* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1987), pp. 344–345; and *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 27–28.

8. *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 28–29, 35.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–30.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 30–33.

11. AŻIH, 301/3534, p. 1; 301/688, testimony of Aron Czechowicz, p. 14; and *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 33–37.

12. *Kosow Lacki*, p. 37; AŻIH, 301/3073, pp. 3–5; 301/3534, p. 1.

13. For disagreement over methods of transportation to Treblinka, compare *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 36–37, with AŻIH, 301/688, p. 14, and the “provinces” section of the report sent from the Warsaw ghetto to the London Polish government-in-exile, “Sprawozdanie zjednoczonych organizacji antyfaszystowskich getta warszawskiego z dnia 15 listopada 1942 roku,” in Berenstein, Eisenbach, and Rutkowski, *Eksterminacja*, p. 310.

14. Survivor H. Ostrowicz claimed that after the November 1942 deportations the Germans relocated the town’s remaining Jews to a ghetto “on the [town’s] square” and physically enclosed it. Other eyewitnesses, however, do not mention the smaller ghetto’s physical enclosure. Compare here AŻIH, 301/3534, p. 1, with *Kosow Lacki*, p. 38.

15. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, October 28, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 342–344.

16. *Kosow Lacki*, pp. 38–40. BA-L, B 162/6846, p. 97, dates two roundups on December 9 and 19, 1942.

17. *Kosow Lacki*, p. 39.

18. *Ibid.*

19. See Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 61–62, 362–363.

20. Edward Kopówka, “Kosów Lacki,” Treblinka: unpub. draft, 2008, pp. 5–6.

ŁASKARZEW

*Pre-1939: Łaskarzew, village, Lublin województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Łaskarzew, Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau,
Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łaskarzew, town, województwo
mazowieckie, Poland*

Łaskarzew is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) southeast of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 1,252 Jews living in the village.

On September 17, 1939, the Wehrmacht shot 53 residents, of whom 30 were Jewish, in retaliation for their defense of the town. In addition, the Germans also razed 85 percent of the buildings in the village center, including the synagogue and the ritual bath. Another 27 Jews were shot on November 28, 1939.

At first, German Gendarmerie officials from the towns of Sobolew and Garwolin were in charge of affairs in Łaskarzew; a Schutzpolizei unit was later stationed in the village. A unit of Polish (Blue) Police, commanded by Kazimierz Smarzewski, was based in Łaskarzew. Smarzewski reportedly helped the local Jews, among them ghetto survivor Zygmunt (Srul) Warszawer.¹

A 12-man Judenrat was established in late 1939 with Yaakow Hersch Frimer (Jankiel Frymer) as its chairman. By January 1941, Chaim Goldberg chaired the Judenrat; tradesman Dawid Zelman was his deputy. Other Judenrat members included Mendel Zylbersztajn, A. Lerner, and S.B. Wakszal. A unit of Jewish Police was established later.

In March 1940, approximately 100 refugees from Garwolin settled in Łaskarzew. In November 1940, a second wave of Jews from Garwolin arrived, due to the partial deportation of the Jews from the Kreis center.

In April 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Łaskarzew. It was staffed mostly by members of the Judenrat; Zelman served as chairman, Zylbersztajn was his deputy, and Goldberg and Frimer were also members. The JSS committee opened a soup kitchen on May 20, 1941.²

An open ghetto was established in November 1941. The ghetto was located in the western part of the village and included the following streets: Dąbrowska, 11 Listopada, Wolska, Garbarska, and Alejowa. It housed between 1,300 and 1,500 Jews, including deportees from nearby Maciejowice, Wola Rębkowska, Górzno, and Pilawa. During its existence, approximately 200 Jews were rounded up for a nearby labor camp in Wilga. The labor consisted of digging drainage ditches along the Vistula River.³

On January 19, 1942, as reported in *Gazeta Żydowska*, it was announced that the ghetto was closed: "The Jews are not to leave the borders of the [Jewish] quarter on pain of retribution," warned the newspaper. The Poles who had property within the ghetto's perimeter were allowed access with special passes issued by the local authorities. The Jews and Poles were able to visit each other's quarters only with written permission. The Polish police were charged with checking the passes.⁴

According to survivor Warszawer, the ghetto was unguarded. Kazimierz Majewski, a teenage scout at the time, testified that although the ghetto was fenced, entering it was very easy for the Poles. Majewski's scout unit was charged with the delivery of food to ghetto residents and surveillance of the ghetto. In particular, they were to report whether there were Poles taking advantage of the Jews' situation. Warszawer, who was a ritual slaughterer, was still able to conduct some business by smuggling kosher meat into the Warsaw ghetto.⁵

By February 1942, a medical office for walk-in patients and a small hospital had been opened in the ghetto. At this time, the JSS tried to procure orders for craftsmen who still possessed their workshops (25 tailors, 25 cobblers, and three carpenters). Although the six pre-war manual tanneries were razed in 1939, the tanners were still able to produce Russian leather and were seeking employment.⁶

Survivor Estera Waldman testified that the Jews were aware of and frightened by deportations in the region. "The Bürgermeister . . . promises to keep holding back the deportation of the Jews, and for this they pay [him]." The Bürgermeister Madejski also took hostages and released them upon payment. Equally as hostile to the Poles, Madejski was sentenced to death by the Polish Underground State and executed after his transfer to Osiecko. In the course of the summer of 1942, local Jews were paving the Łaskarzew-Sobolew road. Estera Waldman has described the weeks prior to the ghetto's liquidation:

The men are escaping to the Wilga camp and pay to be admitted there, although before they were paying not to be taken to that camp. Women with children also want to be admitted to the camp, but they are not let in. They have been standing outside the "Lager" [camp] for two days begging to be let in, while their husbands remain inside advising them to run away. On the third day, the Gestapo comes and orders the surrender of all valuables, for which they promise good jobs on estates. When the women gave up everything they were walked into the forest and shot. . . . Sixty-seven women and children were murdered.⁷

The ghetto was liquidated on the morning of September 30, 1942. The Germans managed to round up only about 400 Jews and transport them to the Treblinka extermination camp via Sobolew. According to Waldman, as many as 900 Jews managed to escape the deportation and reach the forests, including the elderly rabbi. Another source, the Polish court inquiry (Ankieta Sądow Grodzkich), contradicts Waldman's estimates, reporting 900 deported, 200 escapees, and 200 sent to the Wilga camp.

Shortly after the ghetto's liquidation, the Germans announced that they were "establishing a second ghetto," reported Waldman. She further added: "The Jews are returning from the forests." This remnant ghetto existed for about six

weeks, after which its residents were sent to Treblinka. Approximately 120 Jews were shot in the hunt for escapees of the first and final ghetto liquidations.⁸

SOURCES The following publications refer to the Łaskarzew ghetto: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 287; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 214, 297.

Archival sources include the following: AŻIH (211/658 [JSS]; 211/393–394 [JSS]; 301/35 [Relacje]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos], reels 13 and 18; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 15795, 39015).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos), reel 13, p. 234; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/658 (Łaskarzew), p. 1; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), p. 136; VHF, # 39015, testimony of Kazimierz Majek, 1997; # 15795, testimony of Zygmunt (Srul) Warszawer, 1996; free.of.pl/l/laskare/historia_laskarzew_1939-1945_3.html.

2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/393 (Garwolin), pp. 4, 19–20; 211/394 (Garwolin), p. 32; 211/658, pp. 4, 6.

3. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 18, file 52; free.of.pl/l/laskare/historia_laskarzew_1939-1945_3.html.

4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 24, 1942.

5. VHF, # 39015; # 15795.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/658, pp. 24–26.

7. AŻIH, 301/35, testimony of Estera Waldman, undated; free.of.pl/l/laskare/historia_laskarzew_1939-1945_3.html.

8. AŻIH, 310/35; *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 137; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 18, file 52.

LATOWICZ

Pre-1939: Latowicz, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Latowicz is located approximately 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Siedlce. According to the 1921 census, Latowicz had 416 Jewish residents.

Ninety percent of the town's Jewish buildings, including a synagogue and ritual bath, were razed in the initial days of World War II. The Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which included the following members: Chaim Platek, Majer Piaskowski, Majer Akierman, Chajm Zysman, Wolf Zabielski, Mendel Szlechter, Aron Winograd, Gerszon Warszaw, Abram Berger, and Munysz Aizenberg. All were

also members of the Committee for Help to Poor Jews established to assist local homeless and refugees. Platek was the committee's president, and Piaskowski was his deputy. According to the committee's register, there were 418 Jews living in Latowicz in April 1940. Of that number, 110 people (23 families) had lost their dwellings.¹

Latowicz's Jewish organizations were also to take care of more than 130 Jews living in three-neighboring gminy at the time: 105 Jews living in gmina Jeruzal (Waliska, 3 families; Jeruzal, 5; Dębówce, 4; Lipiny, 1; Borki, 1; Płomieniec, 2; Łukowiec, 2; Wężyczyn, 1); 18 Jews living in Wielgolas (Dęby Małe, 3 families; Kamionka, 1); and 11 people from Iwowe (Iwowe, 2 families; Oleksianka, 1).²

The community began restoration of both the synagogue and the ritual bath in 1939 but was short 8,000 złoty needed to finish the project. The plan was to use the bath also as a location for the soup kitchen. In July 1940, the committee reported that Latowicz's Jews were occupying 10 percent of the pre-war households, with two to three families sharing an apartment, adding: "As regards accommodation: we would like to mention that the local authorities are clearing the Jewish families from Polish-owned buildings." By that time several dozen families had been removed already. The letter ended: "All our interventions were futile and so the Judenrat was forced to crowd those [removed families] in with other Jews." Nine additional Jewish families occupying one house were given until August 11, 1941, to move out.

Due to a few cases of typhus among the Jews, the Kreis doctor ordered the immediate establishment of a quarantine facility for 32 persons. The doctor also forced the Judenrat to finish renovation of the bath for this purpose. The severely ill were sent to a hospital in Mińsk Mazowiecki. Dr. Eliaż Piętroń treated local patients.³

By mid-September 1941, there were 600 Jews living in Latowicz. Dr. Wielikowski of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Warsaw, who inspected the village at the time, stated that there was no Jewish quarter in the village. Fifty Jews labored in the Chyżyn labor camp located 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside of Latowicz. The Judenrat provided them with half a kilogram (1.1 pounds) of bread daily and 10 złoty.⁴

A ghetto was established in November 1941. A German report on the concentration of Jews in Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki of March 3, 1942, states that in November 1941 "120 Jews from Jeruzal were resettled to the Jewish quarter in Latowicz."⁵

According to the Latowicz JSS branch, the relocation from Jeruzal took place a little later, at the beginning of December 1941. The number of newcomers was in fact twice that given in the above-cited German report. The registration of Jeruzal's Jews conducted on January 4, 1942, after their arrival in Latowicz, revealed 226 newcomers, of which only 118 were previously registered officially as living in the Jeruzal gmina and therefore included in the German statistics.

With the resettlement of the Jews from Jeruzal, the ghetto was declared closed. One Judenrat member lamented: "One is unable to trade at all because one cannot leave our locality as it is 'Closed for the Jews' [forbidden for the Jews to leave]."

The typhus outbreak reached epidemic proportions. At the beginning of January 1942, five infected people were transported to the Mińsk Mazowiecki hospital. The community struggled to pay hospital bills, feed the sick, maintain quarantine, and pay its guards.

In April 1942, there were 700 Jews in Latowicz. As of April 20, 27 Jews from Latowicz were conscripted to work at a labor camp in Kuflew (7 kilometers [4.4 miles] away), to which they had to walk daily. Those laborers were compensated with 20 grams (0.7 ounces) of bread and a bowl of rutabaga soup.⁶

According to J.A. Młynarczyk, a number of Jews from Latowicz were ordered to move to Kałuszyn; the date of this resettlement is unknown.

Secondary sources report that the ghetto was liquidated on October 14, 1942, when the Latowicz community was sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

SOURCES Publications that include references to the Latowicz ghetto include Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 265; and Jacek A. Młynarczyk, “Akcja Reinhard w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawn. IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 65.

The following archival sources were used in the preparation of this entry: AŻIH (210/445 [AJDC]; 211/129 and 634 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/445 (Latowicz), pp. 6–9, 18, 23; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/634 (Latowicz), pp. 10–11.

2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/445, p. 19.

3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/634, pp. 10–11, 13.

4. Ibid., 211/634, p. 22, and 211/129 (Korespondencja Prezydium ŻSS z Gemisem Wielikowskim—członkiem Prezydium ŻSS i Doradcą przy Sefie dystryktu warszawskiego, 2 IX 1941–30 X 1941), “Sprawozdanie z podróży służbowej odbytej po dystrykcie warszawskim w dniach od 8–14 września 1941,” p. 57.

5. T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), Document 145, pp. 278–279; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/634, pp. 40–42.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/634, pp. 26, 40–42.

LEGIONOWO

Pre-1939: Legionowo, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: town, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Legionowo is located 22 kilometers (14 miles) north of Warsaw. Ludwisin, where the ghetto was located, is a southwestern neighborhood of Legionowo that borders the gmina of Jabłonna. The number of Jewish residents before the war is unknown, but it is unlikely that it exceeded 400.

A 12-man Judenrat was established in February 1940. In December of that year its members included Chil Rozenberg (chairman), Chaim Rozenberg, Abram Rozen (secretary and in charge of Jewish labor), Dr. Abraham Finkelsztejn, Hersz Finkelsztejn, Efraim Szafraniec, Szlama Sterdyner, Moszek Horowicz, Lejb Brzoza, and Motel Nizki.¹ Chana Ruta Magied wrote about the chairman Rozenberg: “I know of one incident when he acted with impropriety. It was shortly before the ghetto liquidation. The son of the Judenrat chairman was caught outside of the ghetto. Rozenberg gave the Germans some other Jew, because he wanted to save his son.”²

In January 1940, the Judenrat reported to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) that there were approximately 1,000 refugees in Legionowo benefiting from the local soup kitchen, which was financed primarily by the AJDC. The AJDC conducted an inspection and requested a list of Jews, which was conducted by the Judenrat in March 1940. It showed that there were only 588 Jews in Legionowo, and no more than 300 of them were refugees. The inspector established that a “fictitious register” had been made, falsely inflating the number of family members. The Judenrat was ordered to decrease the number of kitchen meals it delivered accordingly and reconstitute the composition of its self-help committee, led by the Judenrat chairman Rozenberg. At this time, there were refugees from the following localities in Legionowo: Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, Serock, Nasielsk, Żuromin, Bieżeń, Sierpc, Chorzele, Nowe Miasto, Włocławek, Bukowiec, Wieliszew, Lipno, Pomiechówek, Ciechanów, Różany, and Pułtusk.

Legionowo’s head (*wójt*) stated that based on a register dated April 4, 1940, there were 981 Jews living in Legionowo. That same month, the Judenrat stated there were 1,667 Jews living in the village.³

On November 19, 1940, the Judenrat wrote to the AJDC in Warsaw: “We are reporting that on November 15 [1940] a Jewish quarter was established on the territory of Legionowo; it includes [the Jewish] population of three gminas: Legionowo, Jabłonna-Henryków, and Nieporęt”—the latter having already been resettled.⁴ There is little information as to how many Jews were transferred from each of these localities, but it is known that Henryków and Płudy had no more than 200 residents—including 88 refugees—in August 1940.⁵

The ghetto was located on the periphery of Legionowo in a neighborhood called Ludwisin; some sources refer to it only by this name. Other names include Ludwisin-Legionowo, Legionowo, but also Jabłonna, due to the ghetto’s proximity to that town’s border. Hence Magied’s description: “They created [the ghetto] on Pola Ludwisińskie [Ludwisin Fields], between Jabłonna and Legionowo. . . . It was a pretty neighborhood, practically half-rural, green, full of orchards. The

only reason the Germans picked it for a ghetto was probably because it was so isolated. All the time they had us as if in the palm of their hand, as they could easily surround and shell [the ghetto].”⁶ The following streets delineated the ghetto’s borders: Sobieski, Mieszko I, Prymasowska, Kozietulski, Pomorska, and Zygmuntowska. The Judenrat was located at 77 Chrobry Street and the soup kitchen at 55 Sobieski Street. The ghetto remained unfenced. The streets leading into the ghetto had signs posted at the ghetto border with the following inscription: “Jüdische Gegend. Polen und Wehrmacht Eintritt verboten”—Jewish Area: Entrance Forbidden for Poles and German Army Personnel.⁷

Jewish policeman and ghetto survivor Nachman Józef Kazimierski testified that a Jewish police force was established in December 1940 on the orders of the Kreishauptmann Warschau-Land, Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht. The selection of candidates for the Jewish Police was left to the Judenrat chairman. According to Kazimierski, Rozenberg chose “serious citizens, so there were no underhanded tricks.” Feldmann was the commander of the Jewish Police; the police wore special armbands and badges, as well as navy blue hats. The Jewish Police set up a jail but “allowed the incarcerated Jews to leave [the jail] during the day and trade,” reporting back to the jail at night. Because the policemen enjoyed certain privileges and were excused from forced labor, wealthier Jews paid Rozenberg money to get their sons into the force. Every day Legionowo’s Jewish Police was required to provide 150 laborers for the Germans and collect them from their workplace in the evening. There was also an arbitration court in the ghetto, conducted by a lawyer named Federman and two other citizens.⁸

Apart from the localities mentioned above, Jews from the following villages were ordered to move into the Legionowo ghetto: Dąbrówka, Łomianki, Białoleka Dworska, and Wiśniewo. In December 1940, the Judenrat reported around 2,500 Jews living in the ghetto. Almost half of the residents (1,200) were in need of support. Nonetheless, the soup kitchen was now closed for several months. “They live in accommodations under construction . . . which are located on a wide-open field and exposed to terrible winds,” the Judenrat reported in January 1941, asking for money to buy fuel. One month later (February 1941), the ghetto was declared closed.⁹

Kazimierski wrote of life in the ghetto:

We lived well in the town. Officially, we received 210 kilograms (463 pounds) of bread and 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of sugar [a week], but nobody ever paid attention to the ration coupons. In the ghetto we had 50 small bakeries and two large [ones]. One of them baked rationed bread; the other was mine. . . . There were 50 ritual slaughterers. People were taking a risk by going to villages, buying cattle, and then herding it to Warsaw for ritual slaughter, [where it was] supervised by two slaughterers and a rabbi from Henryków.¹⁰

In April 1941, 10 Jews with typhus were sent to a hospital in Wołomin. Despite the danger of an epidemic developing, 400 deportees from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki were sent to Legionowo on May 14, 1941. Initially they were housed in the ghetto’s isolation ward, consisting of five rooms, equipped with only two beds. Sixty of them left for Warsaw the next day. The local committee had no resources to help these newcomers aside from distributing some coffee to the elderly and children. As of June 1941, the committee was ordered to feed dinners to 300 laborers working for the German army in Legionowo. In July 1941, 3,000 Jews, of which 1,300 were refugees, were reported to be living in the ghetto. The soup kitchen was closed.¹¹

A typhus epidemic eventually broke out in October 1941. By that time, the ghetto had its own epidemic hospital with 30 beds. The soup kitchen reopened only on December 8, 1941, serving a mere 400 meals daily. By February 1942, the epidemic was dying out.

A number of Jews from the ghetto worked in nearby labor camps, including those at Piekiełko and Żerań. There was also a camp in Jabłonna, where approximately 400 Jews from the ghetto were taken in the summer of 1942 to work on the embankment of the Vistula River.

The first reports of Jews being shot for leaving the ghetto appeared in the summer of 1942—for example, a man and a woman were murdered on August 4, 1942; two Jews were shot on August 11; a Jewish woman was shot on August 22.¹²

Following the deportations from the Warsaw ghetto in the summer of 1942, many escapees from those roundups started arriving in Legionowo. Kazimierski testified that the Jewish Police would take bribes of 5,000 złoty per head to legalize the fugitives in Legionowo. He also recalls how the Jews tried to save themselves by joining the Jewish Police. There were 40 policemen in the ghetto at the time of its liquidation.

The ghetto’s destruction, on October 4, 1942, was unannounced, although the Polish (Blue) Police had warned some residents that it was coming. A German named Brandt, arriving with his unit from Warsaw, supervised the Aktion. Upon arrival at the Judenrat’s office, the Germans announced that the Jews would be resettled to the east, where they would get land and work in agriculture. Following this, all but 10 policemen were dismissed. The Judenrat chairman was included in this group after he handed over “a sack of gold,” recalled Kazimierski, who was selected as 1 of the 10 policemen. These policemen were ordered to go around the ghetto and call for all the residents to assemble on Chrobry Street, in front of the Judenrat. The 400 laborers regulating the Vistula remained in their barracks. Approximately 70 people, including the Judenrat chairman Rozenberg and the police chief Feldmann, were killed.

From the assembly point, Legionowo’s Jews were taken to the Radzymin train station via Struga village. The community was deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, together with most of the remaining Jews from Wołomin and Radzymin.¹³

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jewish communities in the Legionowo ghetto include Jacek A. Młynarczyk, "Akcja Reinhard w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943," p. 63; Barbara Engelking, "Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego," pp. 206, 209; and Marta Janczewska, "Aneks," pp. 275, 297, 304—all in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 200, 265.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/360, 210/466 [AJDC]; 211/635, 211/655, 211/1081–1083 [JSS]; 301/23 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-15.084M [Relacje]); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1570).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/23 (Relacje), testimony of Nachman Józef Kazimierski; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/446 (Legionowo), pp. 5, 53.

2. Testimony of Chana Ruta Magied (YVA, O-3/1570), as cited by Engelking, "Życie codzienne Żydów," p. 135.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/446, pp. 6–8, 11, 15–24.

4. Ibid., p. 51.

5. Ibid., 210/360 (Henryków), p. 42.

6. Testimony of Chana Ruta Magied, as cited by Engelking, "Życie codzienne Żydów," p. 170.

7. Krzysztof Kołodziejczyk, "Zagłada w Dniu Radości," *Mazowieckie To i Owo*, June 6, 2008; AŻIH, 301/23; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1081 (Warszawa), p. 5.

8. AŻIH, 301/23.

9. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/466, pp. 62–63; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/635 (Legionowo), p. 1.

10. AŻIH, 301/23, p. 53.

11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/655 (Ludwisin), p. 3; 211/1081, p. 52; 211/1082 (Warszawa), pp. 15–16; 211/1083 (Warszawa), p. 18.

12. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo stołeczne warszawskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), p. 115; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/635, pp. 2, 4, 6–7; AŻIH, 301/23.

13. AŻIH, 301/23.

ŁOCHÓW

Pre-1939: Łochów (Yiddish: Lochov), village, Lublin województwo, (later Warsaw województwo), Poland; 1939–1944: Lochow, Kreis Sokolow, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łochów, town, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

The civil parish of Łochów, on the northwestern border of the Węgrów powiat, abuts the Bug (River) National Park (Nadbużański Park Krajobrazowy). The civil parish's administrative seat, a town also named Łochów, lies about 55 kilo-

meters (34 miles) north-northeast of Warsaw and 30 kilometers (19 miles) west-northwest of Węgrów. Judel Jakowlewicz Perlis (d. 1893), a Jewish merchant from Grodno, contributed to the establishment of a Jewish settlement there. In 1876, in the forest of Baczki, an estate east of Łochów, he built a factory for manufacturing steel farm implements. On clearings north and northwest of his factory, Perlis created several villages including in Jasiorówka (1875), Ostrówek (1882), and Łopianka (1883). He encouraged Jews to build homes there.¹ Important too was the 1882 purchase of the Łochów estate by Zdzisław Zamoyski (1842–1925). He welcomed Jews to Budziska village, on his estate's western edge, to develop trade and handicrafts.²

In 1921, Jews constituted 133 (27 percent) of Baczki's 486 inhabitants, 119 (28 percent) of Budziska's 425 residents, 224 (53.2 percent) of Łopianka's 421 residents, 92 of Jasiorówka's residents, and 56 of Ostrówek's inhabitants. By 1939, Łochów's Jewish population (800) had grown by almost 40 percent. That year, 90 of Łochów's Jews worked in commerce, mostly as small traders, 260 worked in handicrafts, 41 were industrial workers, and 38 were professionals. They belonged to the Jewish council of Stok (Polish: Stoczek-Węgrowski), 11 kilometers (about 7 miles) north.³

On September 10, 1939, the German army occupied Łochów. Fearing the Germans' arrival, the Perlis and Loewenstein families joined many Jews from Łochów fleeing to territories occupied after September 17 by the Soviet Union.⁴ From October 1, the command of a German artillery unit was billeted at Perlis's factory. The Germans also seized the Zamoyski estate. They established a German Gendarmerie post there of between 10 and 15 policemen, under Karl Tetzen's command. Regional military authorities ordered the registration of Jewish property in the county and closed all Jewish enterprises on October 14, 1939. With these orders, the Germans formally expropriated Perlis's and Loewenstein's factories and placed them under German administration when they reopened in late November. (In the fall of 1941, the Germans turned half of the Loewenstein factory into the *Stammlager* [Stalag] 333 Soviet prisoner-of-war [POW] camp.) The Germans also expropriated vacation homes in the Urle Forest, between Łochów and Jadów. These homes were moved to Łochów for offices, housing, and other venues for German military and civil administrators.⁵

On November 28, 1939, the county's new Kreishauptmann, Landrat Friedrich Schultz, ordered Łochów's Jews to nominate a Judenrat. The Judenrat's chair, Mojżesz Goldsztejn, a blacksmith, was a pre-war supervisor at Perlis's factory. A resident of Baczki, he was an activist from Poale Zion-Left. The Judenrat's assistant chair, P. Płater, was a Zionist. The Judenrat established its headquarters in Łopianka. It placed medical services under the direction of the Perlis factory physician, Zofia Kirchen. Much later, it organized a six-member Jewish police force.⁶

Local German policies towards Łochów's Jews, at first uneven, became more uniform and violent by the fall of 1940.

Soldiers quartered at the Perlis factory in Baczki treated the factory's Jews well, as did a military unit that replaced them. Jews employed there and at the Loewenstein factory, both of which operated with expanded labor forces of 500 and 300 workers, respectively, received such high wages that Distrikt Warschau administrators sent several delegations to the Baczki factory to threaten its German administrator and Jewish technical director with prison terms if workers' earnings were not cut. Jews were not ordered to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David, mandated in Kreis Sokolow in December 1939, until the fall of 1940.⁷ Outside of Baczki, Gendarmes harassed Jews, forcing those in Łopianka, Budziska, and Jasiorówka to engage in menial day labor, seizing animals and carts, and stripping stores of merchandise. In Jasiorówka, they repeatedly searched the homes of Jews with pre-war firearm permits. From September 1940, the Gendarmes unleashed several violent attacks against Jews, murdering three and raping adolescent girls in Łopianka. These attacks, almost always associated with Gendarme Hartmann, may have led the Judenrat to try to reduce violence with bribes.⁸

Migration also challenged Łochów's Jews. From November 1939 through 1940, Jewish refugees flooded Łochów, seeking refuge there while arranging to cross into the Soviet Union.⁹ In the winter of 1939–1940, the Germans deported to Łochów Jews from Kalisz and Wyszaków. By August 1, 1940, Jews comprised 1,200 of Łochów's 14,015 residents.¹⁰ By May 1941, 1,400 Jews, including 756 refugees, lived there. Local Jews blamed the refugees for a 1940 typhus outbreak. The Judenrat created an old-age home for refugees from Kalisz. It ordered Łochów's Jews to house the remaining refugees. It extended free medical care and provided 240 free meals daily in April 1941 to the refugees.¹¹

Appointed on June 10, 1940, the new Kreishauptmann Sokolow, Reichslandwirtschaftsrat Ernst Grams, took steps in 1941 to ghettoize Łochów's Jews. In February 1941, he forbade Jews from leaving villages where they lived without special permission. This order transformed many of Łochów's villages into open ghettos. In a February 1, 1941, report, Grams stated that Łochów was one of six places in his county in which Jews had been concentrated and promised to close the ghettos in these places as soon as the weather permitted.¹² Grams never implemented this plan fully. Łochów's Jews were ordered to be more tightly concentrated. In the fall of 1941, the Germans deported to Baczki the Jews of Ostrówek, Budziska, and Jasiorówka. The Kreishauptmann's office also ordered 359 Jews from Sadowne to Baczki by December 15, 1941.¹³ Only the Jews of Łopianka were not transferred there. The ghettos in Baczki and Łopianka were never closed. Jews moved freely around these two villages.¹⁴

The creation of open ghettos in Baczki and Łopianka pushed a large number of Jews into poverty. In May 1942, unemployment had risen by 30 percent.¹⁵ By August 1942, more than 700 Jews qualified for reduced-cost or free meals every second day. On September 10, 1942, the Judenrat chair reported his organization's financial bankruptcy. He warned that Łochów's 1,640 Jews stood on the brink of tragedy.¹⁶

By then, the Jews of Łochów realized that they would not be spared deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. Living near the railroad leading to Małkinia, they had heard trains traveling to Treblinka, located about 34 kilometers (21 miles) northeast, throughout August 1942. They had aided several Jews who had jumped from those transports. News about the Germans murdering Jews at Treblinka also had arrived from Kosów Lacki's Jews and from local Poles. Survivors in Jadów of a July 1942 deportation there detailed how the Germans had shot hundreds of that town's Jews.¹⁷

The liquidation of Łochów's ghettos began on September 25, 1942. A large number of Baczki's and Łopianka's Jews refused to assemble for the deportation, choosing instead to hide. In Łopianka, intoxicated Gendarmes and members of the SS, assisted by Polish (Blue) Police and Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, shot Jews every few steps on the way to Łochów's train station. After selecting between 18 and 20 people for a postliquidation ghetto, the Germans ordered the Jews into wagons. The train, which departed Baczki at 3:05 p.m., stopped 25 minutes later in Sadowne to load Jews assembled there from Stoczek's ghetto. Once the train departed there at 4:48 p.m., several Jews opened one of the train wagons, about 10 minutes later. Scores were mowed down by armed guards as they jumped from the train. At 5:37 p.m., the train carrying the remainder of the Jews of Łochów and Stoczek arrived at Treblinka.¹⁸

A postliquidation ghetto was created in Budziska in a building near the Gendarmerie. When 50 survivors reported there, the Gendarmes executed 30 people who had not been issued residency permits. The postliquidation ghetto's 18 to 20 residents, tailors and shoemakers from two extended families, made boots and clothing, including leather coats, for the Gendarmes. On December 11, the Gendarmes surrounded the building that housed the ghetto. About 6 Jews managed to escape. The Gendarmes took the remaining 14 Jews to the forest, ordered them to undress, and then shot them.¹⁹

The Germans also continued to search for Jews in hiding. The day after the liquidation of the Baczki and Łopianka ghettos, Gendarmes shot more than 50 Jews found at the Perlis factory. In Budziska that day, Gendarme Hartmann shot another 30 Jews. The Germans also found and murdered Zofia Kirchen, the Judenrat physician. In September 1943, the Gendarmes shot 16 Jews in Łopianka.²⁰ They also killed Jews found hiding in Budziska and Jasiorówka. In May 1944, the Gendarmes shot 25 Jews in Kamionna village, south of Baczki.²¹ The Germans murdered the largest number of Jewish survivors in the forest areas north of Łochów, in neighboring Sadowne. There between January and February 1943, they killed about 300 Jews and escaped Soviet POWs.²² In the winter of 1942–1943, the Germans also attempted to extricate hidden Jews by taking punitive measures against Poles thought to be assisting them. These *Aktions* included an execution on January 13, 1943, of 2 Jewish women, outside of Sadowne, along with the baker Leon Lubkiewicz, his wife, and son, for having given the women bread.²³ From March 16 to 31, 1943,

the SS tortured and then executed 16 farmers from around Zarzетка (Sadowne parish), arrested about 150 others suspected of aiding Jews and escaped Soviet prisoners, stripped villagers of their livestock and agricultural stores, and then set fire to a part of Zarzетка. The number of Jews who perished in this reprisal is unknown.²⁴

Less than 25 of Budziska's Jews survived the German occupation. Most did so with aid from Poles. The Lesiński family in Ostrówek gave refuge to Rozalia Kalecka, a supervisor at Perlis's factory, her sister Tzivia, brother-in-law Menashe, and nephew Bolesław. The Grzesiak family sheltered nine-year-old Natan Najman, from Łopianka, who had jumped from the Treblinka deportation train. The Zduński family in Józefów, near Warsaw, hid 10 members of the Brzostek family, from Jasiorówka, including several survivors of Budziska's postliquidation ghetto. The Roguszewski family in Łochów hid Ida and Chana Dzierzbowicz and also Najman and his brother for a time. They also helped the Najman brothers find escaped Soviet POWs, who agreed to arrange forest hiding places for them.²⁵

Łochów's Jewish community, which numbered about 70 with returnees from the Soviet Union, was not reconstituted. After nationalist partisans attacked the Brzostek family, on March 20, 1945, fatally injuring two, the survivors in Łochów joined others already in Łódź.²⁶ The majority later immigrated to Israel, Canada, and England.

SOURCES Useful secondary accounts on the Jews of Łochów include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 81 (Budziska), pp. 115–116 (Baczki), p. 275 (Łopianka), and p. 321 (Sadowne); as well as the more general history of the Łochów region (including a detailed chapter on the Perlis and Loewenstein families) by Stanisław Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa i okolic," ed. Tadeusz Krupa (unpub. MSS, available on the Web site of the Łochów gmina at www.gminalochow.pl/historia.htm).

Documentary evidence on the history of the Jews of Łochów's ghettos can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 211/660-661, 211/938, 301/4238, 301/4390); IPN (e.g., ASG); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 33, 211/660-661 (Łochów), and reel 45, 211/938 [Sadowne]; RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 14, vol. 45 [Warsaw woj.: Warszawa and Węgrów], 932-933 [Budziska], 936 [Jasiorówka], 938 [Kamionna], 939-941 [Łojki], 942 [Łopianka], 954 [Sadowne gmina, forest in Sadowne]); and VHF (e.g., # 04663, 14739).

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NOTES

1. Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa," pp. 44–84, 87–91.
2. Ibid., pp. 21–34, 44–82.
3. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 81, 115–116, 275; and occupational statistics from a 1939 Łochów kehillah survey cited in USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 33, 211/660, p. 21 (report for the period from September 1, 1939, to July 1, 1941).

4. Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa," p. 80; and VHF, # 04663, testimony of Genofewa Minor.

5. AŻIH, 301/4390, testimony of Abram Flug, p. 1; Tomasz Szczuchura, "Terror okupanta w powiecie węgrowskim w latach 1939–1944," *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce* 27 (1977): 60; Tomasz Szczuchura, "Życie i zagłada społeczności żydowskiej w powiecie węgrowskim w latach 1939–1944," *BŻIH* no. 1 (105) (January–March 1978): 39–44; and Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa," p. 33.

6. AŻIH, 301/4238, testimony of Helena Brzostek, pp. 1, 3–4; and Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa," p. 63.

7. AŻIH, 301/4390, pp. 1–3; and Szczuchura, "Życie i zagłada," p. 44.

8. VHF, # 14739, testimony of Natan Najman; AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 2–3; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1985), p. 146; and Szczuchura, "Życie i zagłada," p. 60.

9. AŻIH, 301/4238, p. 2.

10. August 1940 German census figures cited in Szczuchura, "Życie i zagłada," p. 41.

11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 33, 211/660, p. 15; 211/661, p. 6; and AŻIH, 301/4238, p. 2.

12. On the creation of six regional concentration points for the Jews in Kreis Sokolow, see document # 45, under the heading "Początek marca 1941. Ze sprawozdania starosty powiatu sokołowsko-węgrowskiego, Gramsa, za luty 1941," in T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 108.

13. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 81, 275; VHF, # 14739; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 33, 211/661, pp. 1, 9, and reel 45, 211/938, pp. 49–50, 52.

14. AŻIH, 301/4238, p. 3; and VHF, # 14739.

15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 33, 211/661, p. 30.

16. Ibid., pp. 48–52.

17. AŻIH, 301/4238, p. 2; and VHF, # 14739.

18. Eyewitness accounts include AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 4–5; and VHF, # 14739. The train schedule for the Łochów and Stoczek deportations appears as document # 46, under the heading "Rozkład jazdy z dnia 21.9.1942 r. pociągów transportowych do Treblinki," in "Zagłada Żydów w obozach na ziemiach polskich," *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce* 13 (1960): 105–106 (Polish translation); on p. 65 F there, see photograph of original German document.

19. AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 5–6.

20. VHF, # 14739; Sęczyk, "Dzieje Łochowa," p. 63; and USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 14, vol. 45 (Warsaw woj.: Warszawa and Węgrów), 944, pp. 1–2.

21. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, vol. 45, 932-933 (Budziska village, Łochów gmina), and 936 (Jasiorówka), and 938 (Kamionna), pp. 1–2; and see as well 940-941 (Łojki).

22. Ibid., reel 14, vol. 45, 955 (Sadowne civil parish, forest in Sadowne), pp. 1–2.

23. Wacław Zajęczkowski, *Martyrs of Charity*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: St. Maximilian Kolbe Foundation, 1987), p. 217; and Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, p. 467.

24. Waclaw Piekarski, *Obwód Armii Krajowej Sokółów Podlaski 'Sęp' 'Proso,' 1930–1944* (Warsaw, 1991), pp. 25–27; Tadeusz Piotrowski, *Poland's Holocaust. Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic, 1918–1947* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1997), p. 121; Zajączkowski, *Martyrs*, vol. 1, pp. 279–280; and *Głos Pracy*, May 13, 1943 (no. 20), reprinted in Paweł Szapiro, ed., *Wojna żydowsko-niemiecka. Polska prasa konspiracyjna 1943–1944 o powstaniu getcie Warszawy* (London: Aneks, 1992), p. 163. On these events, see also Dariusz Libionka, “Polska konspiracja wobec eksterminacji Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 498–502.

25. Gutman and Bender, *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 259, 451, and pt. 2, pp. 933, 672; AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 7–19; VHF, # 04663; # 14739.

26. AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 6, 14.

ŁOMIANKI

Pre-1939: Łomianki (Yiddish: Lomianki), village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Lomianki, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łomianki, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Łomianki is located about 15 kilometers (9 miles) north-northwest of the center of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population of Łomianki was 89, with another 130 Jews residing in Łomianki Górne nearby.

German forces occupied Łomianki in September 1939. In October 1939, Łomianki became part of Kreis Warschau-Land; the Kreishauptmann was Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht.

Information about the Jewish community of Łomianki under German occupation is very sparse. The existence of a ghetto in the village is documented in an anonymous account preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, dated February 12, 1941, titled “Expulsion from Łomianki near Warsaw.” An annotated translation of this account is included below, as it contains most of what is known about the ghetto:

In September 1940, it became known to the Jewish community in Łomianki from a secret source that the Jewish population faced the dangers of an expulsion. We immediately contacted the “Ortsleiter” Sturmführer “K” about obtaining an easement [of this order]. He received 1,200 złoty for this task. After great efforts, he succeeded in transforming the expulsion order into the establishment of a ghetto [in Łomianki]. When the ghetto began to be implemented, the number of houses assigned to the Jews was so small that there was no way they could accommodate the entire Jewish population. We were again forced to give to the same Ortsleiter an additional

1,000 złoty to give us another few houses. The final date for the transfer into the ghetto was September 15, 1940. Into this very small ghetto were also driven the Jews from the surrounding communities.

This situation only lasted until November [1940]. Then an order was issued that all the Jews had until November 10, to leave Łomianki and to depart for [Fort] Solipse and to settle into military quarters [an old fortress]. Between November 3 and November 10, we again contacted the Ortsleiter about intervening, to allow us to remain in our location. He demanded 3,000 guilders, and even if his efforts were to fail, he would still get 500 złoty. We agreed. His efforts did not succeed and we were obliged to pay the 500 złoty. In the last days, several “Volksdeutsche” [ethnic Germans] secretly informed us not to go to [Fort] Solipse, but to leave immediately for Warsaw. The ghetto in Warsaw was at that time functioning, and so some 300 people sold the possessions and provisions they had accumulated for winter, with [the expectation] that in Łomianki there would be an enclosed ghetto.

They sold [everything] at the cheapest prices and paid from 500 to 2,000 złoty to be able to get transportation to Warsaw. Some 60 people departed for [Fort] Solipse and 25 to [the ghetto] in Legionowo [also established on November 15, 1940], where they remain till today. In January, the Jews who lived in [Fort] Solipse were within a half hour, put in cars and brought to Warsaw, not permitted to take along anything other than a few bedding items. The entire Łomianki population—those who were in Warsaw, as well as those who were shipped from [Fort] Solipse to Warsaw and left everything behind—lives now in terrible need and poverty.¹

Confirmation of the arrival in the Włochy ghetto, also known as Fort Solipse, of a group of Jews from Łomianki can be found in an official Polish postwar questionnaire, signed by the deputy mayor of Włochy. According to this report, the Włochy ghetto was established on November 15, 1940. Among its roughly 300 Jewish inhabitants were many brought in from the surrounding area, including 67 from Łomianki (gmina Młociny).² Personal details of 296 Jews registered in the Włochy ghetto, including the town from which they came, were recorded by the town administration of Włochy and added to the postwar report on the ghetto as an appendix.³

The committee of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) for Kreis Warschau-Land, headed by Dr. Ignaz Schiper, reported on February 25, 1941, that among the Jews recently resettled to Warsaw were also Jews from Łomianki and Włochy.⁴ Another report dated March 25, 1941, recorded 317 Jews from Łomianki among more than 40,000 Jews recently resettled in groups into the Warsaw ghetto.⁵

SOURCES The existence of a ghetto in Łomianki is mentioned in Robert Moses Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein, eds., *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes-Ringelblum Archive: Catalog and Guide* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), p. 189. The transfer of Jews from Łomianki to Fort Solipse is mentioned in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 208, but dated, probably erroneously, in December 1940.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/847; 211/1075, 1080 [JSS]); IPN (ASG); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring]).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, Ring I/847 [874.], "Geyrush Lomianki bay Varshe," February 12, 1941.

2. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 19, sygn. 62, pp. 299–312.

3. The list includes the name and surname, names of parents, profession, date of birth, and place from which each person arrived; see *ibid.*, pp. 301–312.

4. *Ibid.*, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1080, p. 38, Protocol of meeting of JSS committee for Kreis Warschau-Land, February 25, 1941.

5. *Ibid.*, 211/1075, pp. 28–29.

ŁOSICE

Pre-1939: Łosice (Yiddish: Losbits), town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Łosice, Kreis Siedlce, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łosice, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Łosice is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) east-northeast of Siedlce. Approximately 2,900 Jews lived in the town on the eve of the German invasion of Poland.

The Germans occupied Łosice on September 12, 1939. On September 29, control of Łosice was transferred from the Germans to the Soviets, who, however, only stayed briefly. As the Soviets subsequently pulled out in accord with the provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, many Jews left town with them. In early October, the Germans returned and reoccupied Łosice, this time permanently. The initial period of occupation was marked by general abuse of the Jews, not only by German forces but also by local Poles. The high point of early persecution came on November 29, 1939, when seven Jews were taken to the outskirts of town and executed on the pretext that they were Communists.¹

A 10-member Judenrat (Jewish Council) was created in Łosice in March 1940. The Judenrat was headed by Gershon Lewin as chairman and also included Yehoszua (Szyja) Rozen-cwajg as his deputy,² as well as Elihau Rewicz. A unit of Jewish Police, "outfitted with ridiculous blue hats and truncheons,"³ was established under the authority of the Judenrat, as was a post office. One of the most significant functions of the

Judenrat was providing the Germans with workers to perform forced labor in and around Łosice. Some of the projects on which Jews worked included the construction of barracks outside of town and various jobs in Siedlce, the largest railway hub in the area, in anticipation of the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.⁴ The provision of social services was another central area of activity for the Judenrat, which included the distribution of clothing and medicine and the operation of a soup kitchen. Starting in January 1940, adult Jews received 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of bread and children 0.5 kilogram (1.1 pounds) per day. The quality of meals provided by the soup kitchen varied, sometimes consisting of soup made from only water and mashed potatoes.

The demands on the Judenrat continually grew as the number of Jewish refugees in Łosice from other areas steadily increased. In March 1940, more than 200 Jewish families (numbering some 900 individuals, 70 percent of whom were children) arrived from Łódź and Poznań and the small towns of Błaszki, Kalisz, Aleksandrów Łódzki, and Ciechocinek. The result of the influx was that by December 1940 Łosice counted around 4,000 Jewish residents and, by September 1941, around 4,600.⁵ In March 1940, a letter of protest signed by both local Jews and newly arrived refugees was sent to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw to complain that the Judenrat was only acting in its own narrow interests. The letter-writers reported that Jews were dying of hunger and cold and lacked basic medical care.⁶ The memoirs of one former resident of Łosice portray the members of the Judenrat in a similarly negative light, though not without acknowledgment of the complex circumstances, which shaped their situation: "In our town those on the Judenrat were considered mere stooges, incurring less hatred than contempt and ridicule. . . . In time they acquired blank faces and false smiles, became isolated and dehumanized, and it was a measure of their fitness for the job that they could endure the ostracism of a closely knit small town. We sneered at them openly."⁷

In April 1940, the refugees from Kalisz appealed to the AJDC in Warsaw for a new supply of underwear and clothing. In the same month, the Judenrat received approximately 2,200 kilograms (4,850 pounds) of matzot from the AJDC for distribution to refugees and others in need. In June 1940, the number of those receiving assistance from the Judenrat rose to approximately 1,300 persons, including 900 refugees. On July 20, 1940, an aid committee was constituted under the authority of the Judenrat. The chairman of the committee was Abram Wajman, a refugee from Pułtusk, and the deputy chairman was Aron Szejnkloper, a member of the Judenrat.⁸ In September 1940, the committee provided meals, warm clothing, and medicine to nearly 1,600 individuals, including approximately 1,100 refugees. On September 21, 1940, Dr. D. Seid, who had been in Łosice for two months, wrote a petition to the AJDC in Warsaw calling for immediate assistance for Łosice's Jews. In response to his letter, more than 1,500 people in the town's infirmary and in private homes received medical treatment, sometimes for a small fee but often for

free. The Judenrat continued to receive monetary and material aid on a fairly regular basis from the AJDC in Warsaw, as in April 1941 when the sum of 500 złoty was provided.⁹

A ghetto was created in Łosice in late 1941.¹⁰ One native of Łosice, who dates the creation of a ghetto on December 1, 1941, describes Jews' initial reactions as "curious": "There was a deceptive feeling of strength, an illusion of safety, in living in a purely Jewish community."¹¹ At its peak (in the spring of 1942), the ghetto held upwards of 5,500 Jews, including both locals and refugees and deportees from other areas. Jews in the ghetto were compelled to perform various types of forced labor, including road repair and construction, snow removal, and agricultural work. There was no well located within the boundaries of the ghetto, and special passes were required to exit to fetch water. One Holocaust survivor from Łosice relates that Jews sometimes left the ghetto without passes (to collect water or for other reasons, such as obtaining provisions) and, if caught, were shot by the Germans on the spot,¹² as on November 16, 1941, when 7 Jews were caught outside the ghetto and executed.¹³ With people clothed in filthy rags and living in cramped accommodations in old wooden homes that stank of putrefaction and were overrun by insects, typhus and tuberculosis were rampant. To alleviate the situation, Seid, one of the ghetto's doctors, planned to create a bathing and disinfection station.¹⁴ People sometimes congregated in a rabbi's house for common prayer. The Germans became aware of this and amused themselves from time to time by abusing those they found there.¹⁵ The relationship between Jews in Łosice and nearby Sarnaki was a peculiar one, as Jews from the latter were occasionally granted permission to visit relatives in the former as well as to buy food and supplies at the market there.¹⁶ In the winter of 1941–1942, German authorities ordered the Jews of Łosice to relinquish their furs; 6 Jews who chose instead to burn theirs were executed. Around 500 Jews from the Sarnaki ghetto were transferred to Łosice in May 1942,¹⁷ exacerbating what was already a very strained situation in respect to provisions and space. The Łosice Judenrat received 1,000 złoty from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków in July 1942 and in turn requested a greater amount of aid to care for the newly arrived refugees.¹⁸

In the spring of 1942, some Jews who had escaped the deportations from Lublin and other towns arrived in Łosice. The Germans conducted searches throughout the ghetto and executed all the escapees they found. Rumors then began swirling that the Łosice ghetto itself would soon be liquidated and its inhabitants deported. At approximately the same time, the Judenrat was obliged to collect a "contribution" of 600,000 złoty imposed by the Germans on the town's Jews. The designated amount was paid, which led some to believe that liquidation and deportation might be staved off or even avoided altogether.

This belief was proven tragically wrong on August 22, 1942,¹⁹ when the SS, together with Ukrainian police detachments, sealed the ghetto, marking the start of the liquidation and deportation process. Jews were rounded up in the town

square in preparation for a forced march to the railway station in Siedlce, although some managed to avoid the German dragnet.²⁰ A number of Jews were executed both in and around Łosice and during the march to Siedlce.²¹ The Jews from the Łosice ghetto who reached Siedlce (likely around 5,000 in total) were subsequently deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Following the August deportation, the ghetto was reconstituted as a "small ghetto" or remnant ghetto, which housed between 200 and 300 Jews who had avoided deportation. The reconstituted ghetto was also intended to lure any remaining Jews in hiding out into the open, as the German authorities announced that anyone returning to the ghetto would not be punished. Gathering and sorting the possessions of those who had already been deported represented the primary occupation of Jews in the remnant ghetto. On November 27, 1942, the small ghetto was liquidated, and its inhabitants were deported to Siedlce and on to Treblinka.

Despite the Nazis' efforts, some Jews from Łosice were able to avoid deportation and the near-certain death it entailed. The family of one Renée G., who was 10 years old at the time, escaped the small ghetto with the help of a family friend and was hidden by a Polish farmer in a small pit under a pile of manure for 18 months before being liberated by the Red Army.²² Chaya Gitla Zylbersztajn and her daughter Stella escaped during the liquidation of the ghetto in August 1942, and although Chaya was killed, Stella was given shelter by a number of different Polish families and ultimately survived.²³ Sara Riwner (née Weiman), who was 9 years old in 1942, likewise survived, thanks to the refuge provided for 2 years by Roman and Maria Perycz.²⁴

SOURCES Extensive information on Łosice and its inhabitants before and during World War II can be found in the personal testimonies of Łosice natives in the yizkor book *Łoshits: Le-zeykber an umgebrakhter kehile* (Tel Aviv: Farband fun Loshits'er landsleyt in Yishroel un in di tfutses, 1963). Personal accounts of life in Łosice during World War II can also be found in Oscar Pinkus, *The House of Ashes* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, 1964); Abrachah, *Je n'oublie pas, Natantchik* (Paris: Le Sycomore, 1979); Eddi Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2008); and Joshua M. Greene and Shiva Kumar, eds., *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 2000), pp. 46, 57–65.

Secondary sources containing information on the ghetto in Łosice include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 280–284; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 748–749; Tatiana Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 122–123; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 291; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*

during the Holocaust, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009), pp. 415–416; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo białkopodlaskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWp, 1984), pp. 108–113; Fred Skolnik, ed., *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., vol. 13 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA in association with Keter Publishing House Ltd., 2007), p. 211; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFIS PAN, 2007), pp. 21, 52, 56–59, 67, 69, 124–125, 128, 139, 169, 217, 297, 302, 528, 533, 546, 566, 587, 591, 598.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archival collections: AŻIH (210/472 [AJDC]; 211/673 [JSS]; Ring II/304); BA-L (B 162/6876); IPN (163/6 sygn. 17 and 163/15 sygn. 49 [ASG]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]); and VHF (e.g., # 2417, 11582).

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NOTES

1. The incident may have occurred in December 1939 and may have involved six Jews and one Pole.

2. Some sources identify Rozencajg as head of the Judenrat and Lewin as his deputy. In one such source, Oskar Pinkus, a native of Łosice, describes Rozencajg as “a rosy-cheeked, tiny, and clever Jew.” Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, p. 31.

3. Ibid., p. 52.

4. For a firsthand account of forced labor in and around Łosice, see *ibid.*, pp. 37–42.

5. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” pp. 122–123.

6. AŻIH, 210/472 (AJDC).

7. Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, p. 32.

8. AŻIH, 210/472.

9. Ibid., 211/673 (JSS).

10. Extant sources provide conflicting data on exactly when the ghetto was established. Several claim that a ghetto was established as early as 1940, but, if correct, this was likely an open ghetto, which may have preceded the closed ghetto created towards the end of 1941.

11. Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, p. 52.

12. Greene and Kumar, *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*, p. 46.

13. IPN, 163/6 sygn. 17, Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych.

14. AŻIH, 210/472.

15. Moyshe Smolazh, “Peynen in geto,” in *Losbits: Le-zeykber an umgebrakhter kehile*, pp. 249–255.

16. Pesah Perlman, “Elef yamim bageto ube-mahteret,” in Dov Shual, ed., *Sefer yizkor li-kebilat Sarnaki* (Haifa: Irgun yots’e Sarnaki be-Yisrael, 1968), pp. 147–194.

17. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada.”

18. AŻIH, 211/673.

19. The liquidation process may have begun as early as August 19.

20. Pinkus hid with a number of other Jews in an attic and subsequently fled Łosice with the help of a Polish policeman. Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, pp. 75–88.

21. One roughly contemporaneous source speaks of more than 50 dead (IPN, 163/6 sygn. 17, Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych), but the total number killed during deportation was likely larger by several degrees of magnitude. VHF, # 2417, testimony of Dave Gewitzman, reports seeing several people shot in the town at the start of the roundup.

22. Greene and Kumar, *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*, pp. 57–65.

23. Israel Gutman, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, p. 326.

24. Ibid., pt. 2, pp. 598–599.

ŁÓWICZ

Pre-1939: Łowicz (Yiddish: Lovitsh), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Łowicz, Kreis center, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łowicz, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Łowicz is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) north-northeast of Łódź on the Bzura River, a tributary of the Vistula. In 1931, the Jewish population of Łowicz numbered 4,339—25 percent of the total. At the start of World War II, 1,300 Jewish families were living in Łowicz (about 5,000 people).¹

Łowicz was bombarded by the Germans on September 3, 5, and 6, 1939. A large part of the population, mostly its younger members, fled towards Warsaw. When the German forces first entered the town on September 9, 1939, the remaining male Jews were gathered in the synagogue and held there for three days without food. There were beatings and shootings. The Germans then retreated, and the Jews joyfully received the Polish forces that reentered the town. The battle for Łowicz lasted for eight days in total. More than half of the city was destroyed. When the Germans reoccupied Łowicz after September 13, their torture and humiliation of the Jews soon started again.²

On November 11, 1939, the synagogue was destroyed by fire (the Torahs were hidden previously in private homes). In December 1939, hundreds of Jewish refugees arrived from Łódź and its surroundings. The Jewish community tried to find accommodation for them, placing some in the homes of wealthier Jewish families, and it organized a soup kitchen to aid the needy. By 1940, the Jewish population in Łowicz exceeded 8,000 people, including some 3,500 refugees.

The Łowicz ghetto was created in May 1940. According to the personal report of the Kreishauptmann, Regierungsrat Dr. Schwender, to the Generalgouverneur, Hans Frank, he initiated this first ghetto in Distrikt Warschau because of the large influx of Jews from the Polish territories incorporated into the Reich and the resulting high incidence of typhus—some 200 cases having been registered in Łowicz—as well as the accompanying threat to security.³ Around this time, a total of five ghettos were established in Kreis Łowicz, the other four being in Łyszkowice, Kiernoza, Bolimów, and Głowno.⁴

Some secondary sources also report a ghetto existing in Sobota, which had a Jewish population of 356 in 1921. However, no primary sources could be found to confirm this. The absence of Sobota from the list of ghettos reported by the Kreishauptmann in July 1940, as well as its absence from a similar list of Jewish communities recommended for the establishment of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branches in December 1940, appears to indicate that no ghetto existed there.⁵

In the Łowicz ghetto there was a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which controlled a sanitary commission, a housing committee, a Jewish hospital, a Jewish artisans' house, and a bathhouse intended to serve as a delousing facility.⁶ Baruch Shapiro (Szapiro) was chairman of the Judenrat. The ghetto was located in the center of town and initially was composed of four sections. At certain times of the day the Jews were allowed to cross from one part of the ghetto to the others. The ghetto gates were guarded externally by the Polish (Blue) Police. The Polish population demanded that the ghetto be moved outside the city. The ghetto was successively reduced in size until it only occupied one and a half streets, including Zduńska Street. A high fence enclosed the reduced ghetto. Jews managed to leave the ghetto and smuggle in some food. After two months, Jews were able to purchase permits to go outside the ghetto (in exchange for a large bribe to the German authorities).⁷

There was also a Jewish police force armed with whips, which was commanded by Josef Weinshtok. Members of the police were handpicked, and most reports about the Jewish Police are quite positive, but there was some corruption due to the nature of the times. For example, there is a report that some refugees on arrival in Łowicz were required to pay an entrance fee by the Jewish Police before being allowed through the ghetto gates.⁸ On October 8, 1940, Hans Frank visited the Łowicz ghetto, and the Jewish policemen in the ghetto were provided with police hats for the occasion.

Shortly after the establishment of the ghetto, 300 Jewish workers were sent daily on the four-month project to divert the Bzura River away from town. For their work they received 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread and a thin soup. Many died, weakened and exhausted from this hard physical work. However, the Jewish Police had to ensure that the quota was filled every day. Other forced labor tasks for Jews included road construction work and cleaning sewers.⁹

There were also Jewish workshops and shops within the ghetto. The Germans supplied the ghetto with a certain amount of flour, and the Jewish Council was able to smuggle in more illegally with the aid of the Jewish Police. This was used to bake bread, which was distributed generously to aid the poor. Nevertheless, the extreme overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions led to the spread of disease. According to witness accounts, Baruch Shapiro, chairman of the Judenrat, carried out the Germans' orders but personally tried with all his might to ameliorate suffering and related to everyone with friendliness and understanding. He did all he could to accommodate the many refugees and to provide them with minimal

living conditions, given the very small budget of only some 3,000 złoty per month available to the Jewish Council.¹⁰

At the end of 1940, efforts were made to establish a branch of the JSS for Kreis Łowicz to obtain extra resources to assist with welfare efforts. Under the chairmanship of Ignacy Dąb, the JSS Kreis committee held a meeting on February 17, 1941. However, the committee was soon disbanded in March due to the resettlement of the Jews to Warsaw.¹¹

On January 22, 1941, the Jews of the Łowicz ghetto were ordered to transfer 300 Jews per day from Łowicz to the Warsaw ghetto. They were to travel on their own, but only from Łowicz to Warsaw. Some were attacked and robbed on the way, but there were few restrictions on what property they could take with them. Indeed, according to some reports, the elderly German official in charge, Meister Shans, advised them to take as much as they could.¹² Subsequently transportation and even blankets were provided for the deportations, which proceeded without the brutality usually associated with such events. Some Jews were even permitted to return on special passes to collect possessions they had left behind. By March 15, very few Jews remained in Łowicz.¹³ About 7,000 Jews had been transferred to Warsaw.¹⁴ The JSS committee in Warsaw reported in April that it was holding funds in reserve for the last remaining 3,000 Jews expected from Kreis Łowicz, but probably most of these people had managed to flee to other places within the Generalgouvernement.¹⁵

A "remnant ghetto" of 150 craftsmen who worked for the Germans and their families remained in Łowicz for another year, located in the former primary school building on Bet Midrash Street. Among their tasks was clearing up the area of the ghetto. A Jew who sneaked back to Łowicz from Warsaw at the end of 1941 noted that "the walls of the former Łowicz ghetto had been pulled down and the old Jewish stores were filled with strange non-Jewish faces." Nevertheless, he received assistance from non-Jewish former acquaintances who mailed food packages to his family in Warsaw, and he was even aided rather than betrayed by two Polish policemen he had known from before the war.¹⁶

In the Warsaw ghetto the Jews of Łowicz occupied places designated for refugees. The largest percentage of these refugees died of starvation and contagious diseases in the course of their one-and-a-half-year stay in the Warsaw ghetto. Some were recruited as laborers for various work camps. In the summer of 1942, the first transports of Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp included many of these refugees.

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on the yizkor book, Gedaliah Shaiak, ed., *Lovitsh—a shtet in Mazovye un umgegent, seyfer zikorn* (Melbourne and Sydney, Australia: Łowicz Landsmanschaften, 1966), which contains a number of articles related to the fate of the Jews in Łowicz under the Nazi occupation.

Additional Jewish testimonies and documentation concerning the Łowicz ghetto can be found, for example, in the

following archives: AŻIH (210/473–475; 211/674; Ring I/789); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-02.178; RG-14.052 [BA-BL R 52]; RG-15.079 [Ring]); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, pp. 65–87.
2. Ibid., pp. 223–225.
3. Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, eds., *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1975), pp. 286–287, entry for October 10, 1940; see also the report of Schön, the head of the resettlement section of the Governor of the Warsaw Distrikt, January 20, 1941, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg, 1960), pp. 108–109.
4. See Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 109, citing the report of Kreishauptmann Lowicz, dated July 20, 1940. Some sources, however, date the establishment of the Kiernozia ghetto in March 1940; see Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. 364.
5. Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 109. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 462, indicate a ghetto existed in Sobota from 1940 to 1942, which is unlikely given the clearance of the Kreis by March 1941, and cite only unspecified documentation in ITS Arolsen as the source. See also USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/674, pp. 37–38, JSS Łowicz to JSS Kraków, December 27, 1940.
6. Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch*, p. 287.
7. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, pp. 220–233; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/475, pp. 33–37.
8. AŻIH, Ring I/789, Report by Daniel Fligelman; USHMM, RG-02.178; Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. xv, “Saved from the Gas Chamber,” as told by Joseph Szemkura to G. Shaiak.
9. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, pp. xiv–xv, G. Tcharneson-Shaiak, “A River Disappeared and with It—A Jewish Community”; USHMM, RG-02.178.
10. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. xv, “Saved from the Gas Chamber,” as told by Joseph Szemkura to G. Shaiak; *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 12, August 1, 1940.
11. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/475, p. 46; Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/674, pp. 37–38, 75.
12. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, pp. xv–xvi.
13. Report of the Lowicz Kreishauptmann for February 1941, dated March 15, 1941, published in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 63.
14. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. 229.
15. Ibid., p. 230. The yizkor book contains a facsimile of the document, which presumably comes from the archives of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in AŻIH; see also USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124.
16. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. xvi, “Saved from the Gas Chamber,” as told by Joseph Szemkura to G. Shaiak.

ŁYSZKOWICE

Pre-1939: Łyszkowice (Yiddish: Lishkovits), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Łyszkowice, Kreis Lowicz, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łyszkowice, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Łyszkowice is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) west-southwest of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 545 Jews living in the town. According to the Łowicz yizkor book, there were more than 1,000 Jews living in the town on the eve of World War II, but this number may be too high.¹

German forces occupied the town in mid-September 1939. In the first months of the occupation, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures: the Jews of the town were subjected to forced labor; they were required to wear armbands bearing the Star of David; and a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established.

A number of Jews from Łyszkowice fled to the east, probably towards Warsaw, during the first days of the war. In their place, up to 300 Jewish refugees from Aleksandrów Łódzki, Brzeziny, Łódź, Zgierz, and other places arrived in the fall and the winter of 1939–1940.²

The Łyszkowice ghetto was established in May 1940 on the orders of Kreishauptmann Lowicz, Regierungsrat Dr. Schwender.³ A report on the situation of the Jews in Łyszkowice was published in the official Polish-language newspaper for Jews, the *Gazeta Żydowska*, in September 1940: “From the moment a special Jewish quarter [*dzielnica żydowska*] was established, our work was adjusted to reflect the new situation.” A labor section (Arbeitsabteilung) was created within the Judenrat, which managed to employ about 60 percent of the men. They worked on bridge construction, in agriculture and forestry, and at the local sugar factory, “Irena.” In the late summer of 1940, a group of workers was sent to Distrikt Lublin to participate in drainage work. The Judenrat also directed its attention towards sanitation in the ghetto: it appointed a sanitation committee composed of 10 men and a nurse. There was also a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) formed in the ghetto.⁴

In late December 1940, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Łowicz reported that there were around 500 Jews then living in Łyszkowice, of which some 40 percent were receiving welfare support. At this time 3 people were proposed to form a local committee of the JSS in Łyszkowice: Jakub-Dawid Kacnelbogen (a member of the Judenrat); Mojsze Nasielski (a former member of the Judenrat); and Chil-Majer Grosman (a former member of the Judenrat).⁵

However, plans for the establishment of JSS branches in Kreis Lowicz, including in Łyszkowice, were soon cut short. The Generalgouverneur’s Office for Internal Administration, Section for Population and Welfare, instructed the JSS headquarters in Kraków on March 15, 1941: “Since the resettlement of the Jews from Kreis Lowicz to Warsaw has been ordered, the establishment of a Jewish aid committee in Łowicz is no longer necessary.”⁶

In March 1941, the Jews in the Łyszkowice ghetto were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto as part of a large-scale plan to clear all the Jews from the Kreise of Distrikt Warschau to the west of the city. According to the Łowicz yizkor book, only about 300 Jews remained at this time to be resettled.⁷ On March 13, the Łowicz Kreishauptmann reported that most of the Jews had now left the Kreis, with only small groups of Jews retained in the empty ghettos for a short period after the transfer to Warsaw, to sort out Jewish property. After being cleaned and disinfected, the remaining houses in the ghetto areas were to be used to alleviate the housing shortage among the rest of the population.⁸

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, most of the Jews from Łyszkowice were put into improvised hostels designated for refugees. Many of the refugees from Łyszkowice died of starvation and disease in the Warsaw ghetto. Most of the others were among those deported to the Treblinka extermination camp during the large-scale Aktion in the summer of 1942.

SOURCES The ghetto in Łyszkowice is mentioned in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 445; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 302; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/674); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-14.052 [BA-BL R 52]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Gedaliah Shaiak, ed., *Lovitsb—a shtet in Mazovye un umgegent, seyfer zikorn* (Melbourne and Sydney, Australia: Łowiczer Landsmanschaften, 1966), p. 366.

2. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212.

3. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 231, date it in May 1940; Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212, state March 1940. See also Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 109, which cites the report of Kreishauptmann Łowicz, July 20, 1940.

4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 20, 1940, p. 4.

5. USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/674, pp. 37–38.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

7. Shaiak, *Lovitsb, seyfer zikorn*, p. 366.

8. See USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, p. 57, Kreishauptmann Łowicz, situation report, March 13, 1941.

MIŁOSNA

Pre-1939: Miłosna, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Miłosna, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Miłosna, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Miłosna is located about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) to the east of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population was 143 out of a total of 792 inhabitants. By 1939, the number of Jews in Miłosna had declined to around 100.

Miłosna was occupied on September 16, 1939. When German troops entered Miłosna, they dragged Polish and Jewish men from their homes and drove them on foot to the village of Morawiec, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) away. After being held there overnight without food or water, the men were released to go home. The Germans confiscated Jewish merchandise and stole items of value from Jewish homes. At the end of 1939, Jews were compelled to wear white armbands bearing blue Stars of David on their sleeves.

According to Hirsh Noshevski, a survivor from Miłosna, the Okuniew and Miłosna Jews shared a common Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was based in Miłosna. The council was headed initially by two Jews named Fridman and Spekman, appointed on the recommendation to the Germans of the Polish local council (gmina). These men had little aptitude or inclination for the task. Therefore, they sent an offer to a former Polish officer, Kh. Lubliner, then living in Warsaw to return to Miłosna and become head of the Judenrat. In return for a good salary, Lubliner accepted the task and is described in the yizkor book as having been an energetic and upstanding leader, who “did much to benefit the ghetto inhabitants of Miłosna and Okuniew.”¹

Information regarding the establishment of a ghetto in Miłosna is scant and somewhat contradictory. *Pinkas ha-kehillot* dates it in early 1940, but this is most likely too early. The Noshevski account states that in early 1941 the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto. The Jews attempted to postpone or cancel this order by appealing to the police or the mayor (wójt). Noshevski then states that as a result “no ghetto was formed,” but the Jews were moved into a separate quarter consisting of a number of houses, from which the Christians had been removed—in effect an open ghetto.² There was considerable overcrowding in the ghetto, with about four families sharing each small dwelling.

According to the yizkor book, the Jewish butchers of Miłosna, Okuniew, and Rembertów were the main source of meat for the Warsaw ghetto, supplying up to 2,000 kilograms (4,410 pounds) per month with the help of Polish smugglers. At great personal risk, they acquired cows and chickens from the local farmers, which they then slaughtered.³ At the beginning of 1942, there were about 500 people in the ghetto, including a number of families of refugees from Łódź, Kalisz, and Pabianice.

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) existed in Miłosna, which received small subsidies from the JSS headquarters in Kraków to provide assistance to impoverished members of the community. The correspondence concerning this support came to an end on March 20, 1942.⁴

On March 26, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Miłosna ghetto and deported the inhabitants to the Warsaw ghetto.⁵ To carry out the deportation, an SS officer came to Miłosna. As the Jewish Council received some warning, a number of Jews

fled the ghetto on the eve of the deportation Aktion. The remainder was assembled early in the morning in the courtyard of a lumber company. Here the Germans ordered the Jews to surrender their valuables. One man, who was found to have concealed some money in his pockets, was shot.⁶ Betty Horne also recalls that at least one child was killed while the Jews were assembled in the lumberyard.⁷

Horse-drawn wagons from surrounding villages arrived to transport children, the elderly, and the infirm. The other Jews were made to march behind the wagons, sometimes being urged to hurry up; those people who fell behind or collapsed were shot by the guards. On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, the Jews of Miłosna were put in a quarantine building for three days, where they also received some food.⁸

The deportees shared the fate of the Jews of Warsaw and perished at the Treblinka extermination camp. A small number were saved by Poles who provided them with hiding places.

SOURCES Relevant publications include the following: Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kebilat Rembertow, Okuniew, Milosna* (Tel Aviv: Rembertow, Okuniew and Milosna Societies in Israel, the USA, France, Mexico City, Canada, Chile, and Brazil, 1974); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4., *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 273–274. The ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 480.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/701 [JSS]; Ring I/501 and 875); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring I/501 and 875]); VHF (# 10879); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Shimon Ahronson, “Der ayfkum un umkum fun yidishn yishuv,” pp. 411–412; and Hirsh Noshevski, “Der veg fun peyn un greyl,” p. 435—both in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron le-kebilat . . . Milosna*.
2. Noshevski, “Der veg,” p. 435.
3. Zvi Noshevski, “Der shmugl in geto,” in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron le-kebilat . . . Milosna*, pp. 431–432.
4. AŻIH, 211/701.
5. Ibid., Ring I/875; Ring I/501.
6. Noshevski, “Der veg,” p. 436.
7. VHF, # 10879, testimony of Betty Horne.
8. Ibid.

MIŃSK MAZOWIECKI

Pre-1939: Mińsk Mazowiecki, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Minsk Mazowiecki, Kreis center, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Mińsk Mazowiecki, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mińsk Mazowiecki is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 4,130 Jews living there out



A Jewish policeman poses with his young cousin, Guta (now Genevieve) Tyrangiel, in the Mińsk Mazowiecki ghetto, 1942.

USHMM WS #09373, COURTESY OF GENEVIEVE TYRANGIEL-BENEZRA

of a total population of 10,518. On the eve of World War II, almost 5,000 Jews lived there.

During the first days of the war, thousands of refugees from Warsaw arrived in Mińsk Mazowiecki. The Germans captured the town on September 13, 1939. On the pretext of searching for Polish soldiers in hiding, German troops broke into Jewish apartments to steal money and valuables. A few days later they began to confiscate Jewish property and kidnap Jews for forced labor. Under these circumstances, about 200 Jews fled eastward into the area occupied by the Soviet Union after September 17.¹ At the same time, refugees from other towns in western Poland that had been incorporated into the Reich arrived in Mińsk Mazowiecki, including from Łódź, Pabianice, Lipno, Kalisz, Kutno, Włocławek, and elsewhere. These movements of people continued for an entire year.

The Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which consisted of men from differing political backgrounds. The head of the Judenrat was Moshe Kramarz, and his deputy was Leon Wajnberg. The Judenrat had to meet German demands for various items to be delivered within a certain time. A 15-man Jewish police force was also established to assist the Judenrat, headed by Izydor (Icek) Lipczinsky, who subsequently cooperated with the underground.

In the summer of 1940, several dozen young men were sent to various labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, including those at Tomaszów Lubelski and Bełżec. When word of the horrendous conditions in the camps reached Mińsk Mazowiecki, Judenrat chair Kramarz and his deputy undertook efforts to rescue them. They succeeded in having the men released in the winter of 1940–1941.²

On July 1, 1940, in response to orders from the SS that the Jews of Mińsk Mazowiecki create a ghetto within 14 days, the Jewish community wrote a petition, with the aim of reversing or at least deferring the order. The petition stressed the order's ruinous economic effects and especially the danger to hygiene of squeezing some 6,000 Jews into the poorest section of the whole town, without an adequate water supply. The letter stressed that so far not a single case of typhus had emerged among the Jewish population and had appended to it letters

from the senior medical officials in the town and also other Polish citizens, which stressed the dangers of spreading disease if such a ghetto were to be set up. The letters requested at least a deferral of several months, to give the Jews time to establish the necessary sanitary infrastructure, such as an isolation hospital, within the designated ghetto area.³

On July 5, Adam Czerniaków, the head of the Jewish Council in the Warsaw ghetto, noted in his diary: "In Mińsk Mazowiecki, the ghetto is at hand." A few days later, however, on July 15, Czerniaków wrote: "It is rumored that there will be no ghetto in Mińsk Mazowiecki. It seems that a meeting was held yesterday in Warsaw to reach a decision on the subject of the ghetto. The verdict—no ghetto."⁴

On October 11, 1940, Kreishauptmann Dr. Bittrich confirmed that in July 1940 initial efforts to establish a ghetto had been put on hold, due to instructions from his superiors. However, in the next few days, Reichsamtsleiter Schön, the head of the Resettlement Department, was expected to visit Mińsk Mazowiecki and to make a decision on the projected location of the ghetto on the basis of the prepared plans.⁵

It appears that the Jews of Mińsk Mazowiecki gained only a few months with their protest. According to the ghetto questionnaire submitted to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) headquarters in Kraków in April 1942, the ghetto was established on November 15, 1940.⁶ The testimony of Mojsze and Brajndla Siekierka also dates the ghetto's formation at the end of 1940. Regarding overcrowding in the ghetto, they reported that 14 people lived in their small two-room flat with a kitchen. They also indicate that a barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto.⁷

The area of the ghetto included Siennicka Street, where most of the houses had burned, as well as part of the marketplace (*Rynek*), Mostowa, Nadrzeczna, Błonie, Warszaw, and other streets. A total of more than 5,000 Jews were packed into the ghetto, including local Jews, refugees, and people expelled from other towns. As a result of overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions, a typhus epidemic broke out in the winter of 1940–1941. To relieve hunger, Jews would sneak out of the ghetto to buy potatoes and bread from Polish farmers.⁸

In addition to its obligation to obey German orders, the Judenrat also had to handle the affairs of the imprisoned Jewish community. Members of the Judenrat sought to protect it to the best of their ability. They provided care for refugees and people expelled from other towns. They established a department of sanitation to maintain cleanliness and to manage the Jewish hospital. The hospital director was Dr. Shimon Grynberg, the only doctor in the ghetto (himself a refugee from Łódź). The Judenrat organized a public kitchen to distribute meals on a daily basis to hundreds of impoverished people. Every day a certain number of Jews had to perform forced labor. People who still had some means were able to pay for a substitute.⁹

Some members of the Judenrat maintained ties and provided assistance to the Jewish underground, which was organized in the ghetto in 1941. Kramarz gave them 10,000 złoty to acquire arms. There were four underground groups, each

with five to six members. Some were from the ranks of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir or the Communist Party, and others were nonaffiliated, but the groups worked together in cooperation. The overall commander was Asher Grabownik, an activist with the Communist Party in Mińsk Mazowiecki. He had escaped to the Soviet side when war broke out but returned to Mińsk Mazowiecki after the German invasion of the Soviet Union. After some time, a link was established between the Jewish underground in Mińsk Mazowiecki and underground units of the Polish Communists.¹⁰

In November 1941 an order was issued for remaining Jews from the villages to be moved into the Mińsk Mazowiecki ghetto by December 1. Ita Gartenkranz was among the Jews transferred from the village of Stojadła at this time.¹¹ In February 1942, the Kreishauptmann reported another outbreak of typhus in the Mińsk Mazowiecki ghetto. A public bath and a delousing facility were opened inside the ghetto to combat the outbreak.¹²

In the summer of 1942, rumors spread that the ghettos would be liquidated. The Judenrat hoped that they would be able to avert this by bribing German officials, but on August 21, the Germans began the liquidation.¹³ The ghetto was encircled by hundreds of German Gendarmes, Polish (Blue) Police, Sonderdienst, and Lithuanian, Latvian, and Ukrainian (Trawniki-trained) auxiliaries. On that day around 4,000 Jews were rounded up from their homes and assembled in the market square. After the Germans and their helpers had robbed them of their valuables, the Jews were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp. About 1,000 Jews refused to leave their houses and were shot on the spot. By evening, "Mińsk looked like a battlefield. There were dead bodies, puddles of blood."¹⁴

At the time of the roundup, two Gestapo men, Brandt and Handtke, arrived from Warsaw during a brief pause in the deportations from the Warsaw ghetto. In Mińsk Mazowiecki, they presented the chairman of the Judenrat, Moshe Kramarz, with a document stating that the council hereby delivered the Jews of their own free will. Kramarz tore it into small pieces and warned those around him of the real meaning of the impending "resettlement." The Gestapo men beat him and dragged him, with three other Judenrat members—Leon Weinberg, Meir-Sholem Briks, and Jacob Popowski—and several Jewish policemen, first to a camp in town, then to the Gestapo building, where they were shot.¹⁵

Only a small number of Jews were able to break out of the encircled ghetto and escape into the nearby forests. Thirteen organized into a partisan group commanded by former Polish army sergeant Yosef Wiszniewski. They acquired three rifles, two revolvers, and some hand grenades. After several months of bold actions against the Germans and their helpers, they were surrounded in their hiding place in the Łuków Forest. All but one of them was killed. Other escapees from the ghetto joined a partisan unit of the People's Guard (Gwardia Ludowa, GL).¹⁶

After the ghetto's liquidation, about 370 Jews, whose skills the Germans needed, remained in the ghetto. About 150 men

worked in facilities run by the German army at the Rudzki Factory, for the Wolfer und Goebel Company engaged on road construction, or in other places. Another 220 were put into a labor camp housed in the three-story Mikołaj Kopernik School on Siennicka Street. Over time, they were joined by several hundred others, including women and children, who had fled into the forest or other hiding places during the roundup. When the men were taken each morning to forced labor, these “illegals” hid in the camp. There were frequent searches, during which unregistered inhabitants were shot.

In the closing months of 1942, the Germans began a “selection” process at the Kopernik camp. At the end of November, about 100 men were removed to Kałuszyn. They were then deported from there to Treblinka in December. On December 24, another 218 were taken out, brought to the Jewish cemetery, forced to dig a mass grave, and shot. On January 10, 1943, the rest of the Kopernik prisoners, about 300 in all, were marked for liquidation, but they chose to resist. A group of 30 men being taken to the cemetery attacked their German escorts. Almost all were killed, but during the confusion 3 managed to escape. Those still in the school building were also determined to resist. They barricaded themselves in and resisted the attackers with whatever was at hand: stones, scrap iron, and Molotov cocktails.¹⁷

The Germans attacked the building with flamethrowers and met those who jumped out of the burning building with gunfire. Almost all were killed. According to reports, Moshe Goldstein, one of the rebels, died with a Torah scroll in his arms. The only Jews left in Mińsk Mazowiecki were the 104 workers at the Rudzki factory. They were killed on June 5, 1943.¹⁸

According to a document in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, at least 46 Jews from Mińsk Mazowiecki are known to have survived the German occupation.¹⁹ Several Jewish children were hidden in Mińsk Mazowiecki with Polish families. For example, a priest helped to transfer the infant child Guta Tyrangiel to Józef and Bronisława Jaszczuk, who defied blackmailers to preserve the child's life.²⁰

SOURCES Publications discussing the ghetto in Mińsk Mazowiecki include the following: Ephraim Shedletzky, ed., *Sefer Minsk-Mazowiecki* (Jerusalem: Minsk-Mazowiecki Societies in Israel and Abroad, 1977); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 274–279; “Minsk Mazowiecki,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 12 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), pp. 59–60; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 482–484.

Published sources concerning the Holocaust in Mińsk Mazowiecki include the following: Leyb Rokhman, *The Pit and the Trap: A Chronicle of Survival* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1983); Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 96.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/702; 301/1010, 1680, 3335, 4072, 4093, 4098, 4103, 4158, 4324, 4629, 4761, 5088, 5874; 302/101, 123,

297); BA-BL (R 52III/29); IPN (ASG, sygn. 61, p. 1118); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); VHF (e.g., # 21519, 38132); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4098, testimony of Mojsze and Brajndla Siekierka (née Fiszbajn).
2. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278.
3. AŻIH, 211/702, pp. 1–4, Petition of the Jewish population of Mińsk Mazowiecki, unsigned, July 1, 1940, letters of the Town Doctor and the Kreis Doctor, July 1, 1940, letter from citizens of Polish ethnicity in Mińsk Mazowiecki, July 2, 1940.
4. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kerr, eds., *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow: Prelude to Doom* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), pp. 170, 174.
5. Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, p. 96.
6. AŻIH, 211/702, p. 12, ghetto questionnaire, April 1, 1942.
7. Ibid., 301/4098.
8. VHF, # 995, testimony of Michael Sien.
9. AŻIH, 302/123, testimony of Brandla (Bronka) Siekierka (née Fiszbajn).
10. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278.
11. AŻIH, 301/4103, testimony of Ita Gartenkranz.
12. BA-BL, R 52III/29, monthly report of the Minsk Mazowiecki Kreishauptmann, March 5, 1942.
13. AŻIH, 301/4229, testimony of Diana Kagan; VHF, # 21519, testimony of Ralph Jorden.
14. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278; AŻIH, 301/4229.
15. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 441.
16. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278.
17. AŻIH, 301/1680, testimony of Efraim Siedlecki; 301/5088, testimony of Boruch Gartenkranc, Aleksander Walewski, Ludwik Michalski, and Icek Lipczyński; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278; VHF, # 38132, testimony of Genevieve Benezra (born October 26, 1940); # 995.
18. AŻIH, 301/1680; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 278.
19. AŻIH, 301/4072, list of 46 Jews from Mińsk Mazowiecki who managed to survive the German occupation.
20. Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 308; VHF, # 38132.

MOGIELNICA

Pre-1939: Mogielnica (Yiddish: Mogelnitsa), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Grojec, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mogielnica is located 68 kilometers (42 miles) southwest of Warsaw. In 1921, 2,722 Jews were living in Mogielnica, comprising 51.1 percent of the town's total population of 5,321 people. On the eve of the German invasion in 1939, there were 3,050 Jewish inhabitants.

German mobile forces occupied Mogielnica on September 8, 1939. The town was not seriously damaged in the fighting, but on the first day, Germans set fire to the old wooden synagogue. The Germans soon began to steal Jewish property and torment Jews they caught on the streets, kidnapping them for forced labor.¹

On September 14, 1939 (Rosh Hashanah), the Germans dragged Hasidim and Orthodox Jews out of the Bet Midrash, including Rabbi Pinchas Osełka (Osalka) and another rabbi. They took them to the market square and pulled out their beards and side locks. They compelled them to sing holiday songs and dance. According to one testimony, a majority of the Poles, who observed this, clapped their hands and laughed. Some Poles even helped the Germans and beat the Jews. In the fall of 1939, the Germans converted the Bet Midrash into a stable for horses. Torah scrolls and other holy books were burned in the market square.²

The German authorities banned Jewish children from attending primary schools and ordered Jews to wear the Star of David.³ In October 1939, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force. Józef Falc was appointed as chairman of the Judenrat. Other Judenrat members included Abraham Milsztajn and Chaim Danner. Majlech Osełka, Rabbi Osełka's son, was head of the Jewish Police, which reportedly had a good reputation.⁴

On the establishment of a German civil administration in October 1939, Mogielnica became part of Kreis Grojec. Initially there was little German presence in Mogielnica. German officials from Grójec visited occasionally to rob the Jews and make demands. To contain the damage, the Judenrat in Mogielnica negotiated with the Kreishauptmann to pay a weekly "contribution" of butter, eggs, and other items. As a result, the Jews in Mogielnica remained largely unmolested for a time.⁵

In December 1939, on the initiative of Sara Skotnicka and Majlech Osełka, the Jews of Mogielnica established an Aid Committee for Refugees and Indigent Jews. Fajwel Rajnbenbach was its chairman. An audit commission oversaw its operations.⁶ In 1940, the aid committee provided assistance to more than 700 people, including 500 refugees and 150 children.⁷

In the first six months of 1940, 23 percent of the aid committee's funds (7,215 złoty) came from private donations. Additional funds came from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), which provided 21,000 złoty (68 percent), and from the Society for the Protection of Health (TOZ). In addition, a small fee was charged for some meals. A public soup kitchen was opened on February 7, 1940, and until June 1940, 73 percent (30,000 złoty) of all aid committee funds went to the soup kitchen. The remainder was used for medical assistance (doctors visits, free baths, vaccines against typhus, and sugar or milk for sick people, children, and pregnant

women), for building repairs, or for buying fuel. The soup kitchen distributed three quarters of a liter of soup (about 3 cups) and 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread on every day except Saturdays to needy Jews.⁸

In April 1940, there were 2,774 Jews residing in Mogielnica. Among them there were 500 refugees, mainly from Łódź and other towns in the Warthegau. Refugees were placed in private houses and in Jewish community buildings, including two small prayer houses. In June 1940, some Jewish businesses were still operating, including four bakeries, five groceries, three ironmongers, two restaurants, and a pharmacy.⁹

Probably in the summer or fall of 1940, a German Gendarmerie post was established in Mogielnica.¹⁰ Then at some time before January 20, 1941, probably in late November 1940 (as was the case in Grójec), the German authorities established an open ghetto in Mogielnica. According to one survivor's recollection, it was at the beginning of 1940, but this appears to be too early.¹¹ The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence, a wall, or any barbed wire. It consisted of two or three streets near the synagogue and the Bet Midrash.¹²

According to Jakov Rotbart, after the creation of the ghetto, life became more difficult for the Jews. Bribery still served to weaken the effects of some German regulations. For example, the full quota of forced laborers for clearing snow was not always sent. However, by this time the Judenrat had imposed a progressive tax on the community, to pay forced laborers recruited from among the unemployed Jews 4 złoty per day and to meet the German "contributions."¹³

On January 21, 1941, the German authorities decreed that in Kreis Grojec the Jews could live only in the following towns designated as ghettos: Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec. In addition, all Jewish families from nearby villages and towns had to move into one of these ghettos. Any Jew caught outside the ghettos after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.¹⁴ As a result of this decree and the previous influx of Jews from the Warthegau, the Jewish population of Mogielnica had risen to 4,000 people by February 1941.

The ghetto was very densely populated. According to one survivor, her 5-person family had to share cramped quarters with another 10 Jews, and people slept on the floor.¹⁵ Due to the overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions, and hunger, many diseases spread within the ghetto, including typhus. Those infected were removed from their homes and placed in the hospital, which had two or three rooms for quarantine purposes.¹⁶

On February 27–28, 1941, about 4,000 Jews from the Mogielnica ghetto were resettled to the Warsaw ghetto. At 4:00 or 5:00 A.M., the Germans arrived with dogs and started to drive people from their houses. Most Jews could take with them only the clothes they hastily put on and some food. They were transported on military trucks to the Mogielnica railway station. From there, the Jews were sent in cattle wagons to the Warsaw ghetto.¹⁷ On February 27, 950 Jews were sent to Warsaw; the rest were transported the next day. Some people of means paid large sums to hire trucks to move some of their remaining belongings. The Judenrat also secured a few trucks,

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by bribery, to move food supplies into the Warsaw ghetto. Since the Judenrat did receive some advance warning of the transfer, a number of Jews were able to flee to nearby towns in Distrikt Radom, including Białobrzegi, Opoczno, Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą, and Klwów, where ghettos had not yet been formed.¹⁸

In Warsaw, most of the Jews from Mogielnica were accommodated in so-called refugee shelters—that is, they were placed in schools, synagogues, and prayer houses. Hundreds of people lived in each shelter. Conditions there were very bad. People slept on military beds or on the floor. Usually they received only (one cup) of soup per day. People died from starvation and disease, especially typhus.¹⁹ The Jews of Mogielnica expelled to the Warsaw ghetto shared the fate of the rest of the ghetto's population. Most were deported and killed in the first major deportation Aktion, which started in July 1942, when Jews from the refugee shelters were among the first to be sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Following the deportation of the Jews to Warsaw, a few Jews went into hiding in and around Mogielnica for at least part of the remaining period of German occupation: among them were Aisic Hirsch and Szmul Cyrkiel.²⁰ In August 1943, 3 Jews were caught near Mogielnica and shot in the Mogielnica Forest.²¹ From June 9, 1944, until the end of the occupation, Maria Kisielnicka in Mogielnica helped to conceal Jerzy Sowa on false documents (as Jerzy Kulesza), and later she also provided similar aid to Sonia Blum and Jadzia Sztikie.²² After World War II, only about 30 Jewish survivors returned to live, at least for a time, in Mogielnica.

SOURCES Articles on the Jewish community of Mogielnica can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 269–273; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 839. Additional information can be found in the yizkor book, *Sefer yizkor Mogielnica-Bledow* (Tel Aviv, 1972).

The book by Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), contains brief information on Mogielnica (pp. 213, 256, 339, 587).

Additional information on the ghetto and German crimes in Mogielnica can also be found in Tatiana Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w Dystrykcie Warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 325; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo radomskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1985), pp. 110–111.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Mogielnica under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/280 [AJDC]; Ring I/116; Ring I/881; 301/2564, 5176 [Relacje]); IPN (ASG, sygn. 43–45 and sygn.

61, k. 95; Kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177; Zb. zesp. szcz., sygn. 145); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG], reels 13 and 18, sygn. 43–45 and sygn. 61, p. 95; Acc.1996.A.0028); and VHF (# 01365, 17574).

Grzegorz Kołacz

NOTES

1. VHF, # 01365, testimony of Ben (Bieniek) Stern; # 17574, testimony of Aisic Hirsch.
2. VHF, # 17574; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 269–273.
3. VHF, # 17574; # 01365.
4. AŻIH, 210/280 (AJDC), *Sprawozdanie z pobytu w Mogielnicy k. Grójca*, June 7, 1940, p. 1 (9); USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0028, Bulletin no. 5 (September 14, 1947), pp. 6–8, a report on Jewish life in Mogielnica from September 1939 to February 1941 by Jakov Rotbart—this source includes a more extensive list of Judenrat members.
5. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0028, Bulletin no. 5, pp. 6–8.
6. AŻIH, 210/280, *Sprawozdanie*, June 7, 1940, p. 1 (9).
7. Ibid., letter of June 1, 1940, p. 6.
8. Ibid., 210/280, *Sprawozdanie*, June 7, 1940, pp. 1–6 (9–14).
9. Ibid., p. 2 (10).
10. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0028, Bulletin no. 5, pp. 6–8.
11. VHF, # 01365.
12. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, sygn. 61, p. 95; VHF, # 01365; # 17574; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 269–273.
13. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0028, Bulletin no. 5, pp. 6–8.
14. AŻIH, Ring I/881.
15. VHF, # 17574.
16. Ibid., # 01365; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 269–273.
17. VHF, # 17574.
18. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0028, Bulletin no. 5, pp. 6–8.
19. AŻIH, Ring I/116; VHF, # 17574.
20. VHF, # 17574; AŻIH, 301/2564, testimony of Szmul Cyrkiel.
21. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 13, sygn. 43–45.
22. AŻIH, 301/5176, testimony of Maria Kisielnicka.

MORDY

Pre-1939: Mordy, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Siedlce, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mordy is located 108 kilometers (67 miles) east of Warsaw and 18 kilometers (11 miles) east-northeast of Siedlce. The Jews were mainly Hasidim who were petty agricultural merchants, traders, and craftsmen. The Jewish community of about 1,750 residents comprised about half the town's residents on the eve of World War II.¹

In the first weeks of World War II, a fire, sparked by German aerial bombardment, destroyed a part of Mordy. German soldiers who occupied the town shot Mordechai Laski, a disabled World War I veteran. The Germans evacuated Mordy two days later, under the territorial provisions outlined in the secret

protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. A new Soviet-German agreement on borders and friendship, signed on September 28, 1939, returned Mordy, and all other Soviet-occupied territories west of the Bug River, to German hegemony. In Mordy, the Germans appointed a local ethnic German named Eckhart as the local police chief. Otherwise, the direct assertion of German authority remained limited through 1941.²

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Mordy, possibly in September though more likely in November 1939. In March 1940, its chair was Moszko (or Mosze) Waga. Waga was succeeded perhaps by Moshe Gershon Lewenberg, head of the pre-war kehillah. Other Judenrat members included Aaron Fajnzilber and Mordechaj (Mordko) Furman, both of whom had represented the Revisionists in the pre-war kehillah.³

Initially lightly guarded and located about 23 kilometers (14 miles) south of a Bug River crossing, Mordy served as a way station for Jewish refugees fleeing to the Soviet Union. Local Jews and Poles joined together to form smuggling networks to bring refugees to the border. Those turned away often ended up staying in Mordy until they succeeded in crossing the Bug. Some gave up and settled in the town.⁴

Mordy also became a center of forced Jewish migration, with 172 refugees, largely from Łódź, deported there by May 1940. In June, another 259 Jews from Łódź, Kalisz, and Poznań were expelled there. By July 1940, 512 deportees were living in the town.⁵ Several dozen more Jews from Mława were deported there in the summer of 1940. Two thousand Jews resided in Mordy in January 1941.⁶

Initially, the Judenrat's main tasks were to assist refugees and expellees and to respond to demands from German authorities in Siedlce. In June 1940, the Judenrat provided free daily meals in a community kitchen for 180 adult and 250 child refugees as well as 50 meals for impoverished local Jews.⁷ In the spring of 1941, it also distributed packages sent from Warsaw to 500 laborers draining swamps at a forced labor camp established on the Przebłucki estate, just outside Mordy.⁸ That same year, the Judenrat responded to German demands for a monetary "contribution," collected by representatives sent from Siedlce.⁹ From the summer of 1941, the Judenrat also filled quotas for the forced labor camp located on the Przebłucki estate.¹⁰ Beginning in the spring of 1942, Jews from Mordy were sent for similar water melioration work at another forced labor camp at Bartków Nowy, about 3 kilometers (2 miles) from Korczew. This camp conscripted between 400 and 600 Jews, with Mordy's Jews comprising a significant part of the labor force.¹¹

An open ghetto was established in Mordy shortly after Germany's June 22, 1941, invasion of the Soviet Union. Jews, particularly refugees, were concentrated in the southern part of the town in the pre-war Jewish neighborhood. In November 1941, Mordy's Jews were confined to a ghetto, located on a few streets, in the southern section of town. The ghetto was not fenced. Signs were posted there, listing punishments for Jews and non-Jews found leaving or entering the ghetto.¹² Placed in charge of the ghetto, Eckhart, the local police chief, dem-

onstrated flexibility in his interactions with the Judenrat, responding positively, for instance, to requests to exempt certain Jews from forced labor.¹³

The ghetto's population significantly increased in this period. At the end of December 1941, the Germans deported to the Mordy ghetto Jews from local villages surrounding the town, including from Królowa Niwa, Przesmyki, Stok Ruski, and Tarków. That month, 3,195 Jews were concentrated in the Mordy ghetto. In May 1942, the Germans deported 500 Jews from Sarnaki to Mordy. By August 1942, 3,817 Jews were living in the ghetto.¹⁴

In 1942, Germans exercised more direct authority over Mordy. After 15 of the town's Jews escaped from the nearby forced labor camp, a group of SS arrived in Mordy and threatened to punish collectively the ghetto's Jews if the escapees were not turned over. The Judenrat yielded to the German demand. The escapees were not seen again. A new police chief, Pulfer, more stringently enforced the restrictions that confined Mordy's Jews to the ghetto. That year, Gendarmes executed several Jews caught outside the ghetto, smuggling food.¹⁵

The extermination of Mordy's Jews began on Saturday, August 22, 1942. That day, the Germans executed as many as 100 Jews in Mordy.¹⁶ The remaining Jews, including the refugees, about 3,500 people, were marched to Siedlce's market square to join Jews from the ghettos in Siedlce and Łosice. While awaiting deportation, the Jews were subjected to increasingly random shootings by the SS guards. Deprived of water in sweltering heat, the Jews gathered in Siedlce were marched to the train station there on Monday, August 23, and then loaded into railroad wagons destined for the Treblinka extermination camp. The Germans liquidated the labor camp at Bartków Nowy on October 22, 1942. Its inmates were shot and buried in a mass grave on the grounds of the camp. The Germans liquidated the forced labor camp at Mordy in about March 1943. Its inmates also were shot at the camp.¹⁷

About 20 Jewish survivors returned to Mordy after the war. However, in May 1945, partisans, believed to have been from the anti-Communist underground, murdered between 2 and 12 of the town's Jews.¹⁸ After the murders, the remaining Jews left Mordy, moving first to Warsaw and later emigrating from Poland.

SOURCES Useful published sources include the account in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 295–297, available in two different English translations, the first by Adv. Meir Garbarz Gover, available at jewishgen.org, and the second in Arnon Rubin, ed., *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 203–204.

A number of eyewitness testimonies by Jewish survivors from Mordy can be found at AJA (e.g., Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1918–1979, series C, subseries 3, C214/3). Other relevant archival documentation on the fate of the Jews in Mordy during the Holocaust include the following: USHMM (e.g.,

Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC, 210/501]; RG-15.019M [ASG, reel 6, 17/959, and reel 15, 49/143]; and RG-15.079M [reel 14, Ring I/389]); VHF (e.g., # 01851, 4407, 9317, and 13697); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 4407, testimony of Bronia Golstadt; and # 01851, testimony of Arthur File; and Gitel Donath, *My Bones Don't Rest in Auschwitz: A Lonely Battle to Survive German Tyranny* (Montreal: Kaplan Publishing, 1999), p. 10.

2. "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 203.

3. In Polish-language documentation, Moshe Gershon Lewenberg's name appears as Moszko Gerszon Lebenberg. Mordy's Judenrat membership can be found at USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/501 (Mordy), p. 3. In the 1940 filing with AJDC, Lewenberg is listed only as a Judenrat member, although subsequently he may have become the Judenrat chair.

4. VHF, # 4407; # 27150, testimony of Leopold Zylberman; # 01851; # 20620, testimony of Rachela Malinger.

5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/501, p. 13.

6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel # 45, 211/949 (Siedlce), p. 14; "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, pp. 203–204; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 280–287, available in an English translation by Gil Levy, at jewishgen.org. Jews expelled from Mława are reported in Mordy's AJDC correspondence as early as July 15, 1940; see USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/501, p. 13. Postwar Polish court documentation claims that 4,500 Jews passed through the ghetto in total; see RG-15.019M (ASG), reel # 15, 49 (Lublin), 143 (miasto Mordy), Kwestionariusz o obozach, p. 1.

7. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/501, p. 4.

8. "Mordy," *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 23, 1941, no. 41, p. 6; USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 14, Ring I/389, Relacja Abrama Erlicha z obozu pracy przymusowej w Mordach koło Siedlec, p. 2; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel # 8, 211/127, Korespondencja Prezydium ŻSS z Gamsejem Wielikowskim—członkiem Prezydium Ż.S.S. i Doradcą przy Szeffie Dystryktu Warszawskiego, 1 IV 1941–30 V 1941, pp. 27–28.

9. "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 203.

10. Marta Janczewska, "Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów na terenie dystryktu warszawskiego," in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Provincia noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 296–297.

11. Edward Kopówka, "Obozy pracy przymusowej w Szczegłacinie i Bartkowie Nowym k. Siedlec," *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, no. 4 (2002): 518–519. The largest part of this camp's labor force came from Sokołów Podlaski's ghetto.

12. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel # 15, 49 (Lublin), 143 (miasto Mordy), p. 1.

13. "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, pp. 203–204.

14. See the document labeled no. 145, under the heading "3 marca 1942, Warszawa—Zastępca komisarza dzielnic żydowskiej w Warszawie, Grassler, do Wydziału 'Raumordnung' w dystrykcie warszawskim w sprawie koncentracji Żydów w poszczególnych powiatach," in T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach*

polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 277 (in German) and p. 279 (in Polish); and T. Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 277.

15. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel # 15, 49/143, p. 2; and "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 204.

16. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel # 6, 17 (Lublin Districts: Radzyń and Siedlce), 959 (m. Mordy), Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych, pp. 1–2; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1985), p. 173; and Edi Weinstein, *Quenched Steel. The Story of an Escape from Treblinka*, ed. Noah Lasman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002), pp. 30–31. The precise number of Jews who were killed in Mordy during the ghetto's liquidation is unknown. Postwar Polish court documentation gives the figure of 200 Jews killed, but this is probably for the entire period from 1942 to 1944.

17. VHF, # 13697, testimony of Renia Lipska-Micznik.

18. For differences in the number of Jews murdered, compare "Mordy," in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 204, with the account found under "Mordy" on the Cmentarze żydowskie w Polsce (Jewish cemeteries in Poland) Web site at kirkuty.xip.pl/mordy.htm.

MROZY

Pre-1939: Mrozy, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Mrozy is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) east of Mińsk Mazowiecki. In 1921 there were 306 Jews living in the village; the total population stood at 508.

The village and its train station were heavily bombed during the initial days of the September 1939 campaign. Thirty-two Jews, including some refugees, lost their lives in the course of these air raids. Many residents were left homeless. The Germans established a Gendarmerie post in the village.

Only a few names of the German-established Judenrat are known, including its chairman Bencjon Rozenblitt, Joel Cieszyński, and A. Sztejn (secretary). Despite accommodation shortages, 150 refugees had settled in Mrozy by January 1940. A self-help committee was established to care for the newcomers, as well as locals whose dwellings were destroyed. In July 1940, the committee comprised chairman Chaim Alter Jakubowicz of Pabianice, Chaim Mendlewicz of Pabianice, and four locals: Josek Tenenbaum, Joel Cieszyński, Bencjon Rozenblitt, and Szlama Turyn. With support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the committee managed to open a short-lived soup kitchen. Mrozy alderman Schulc transferred the building to the Polish Red Cross on August 15, 1940.¹

Although the AJDC help was completely inadequate (e.g., 25 kilograms [55 pounds] of vegetable fat rationed out between

May and September 1940), its distribution divided the community into two camps—locals and newcomers. One of Mrozy's native committee members wrote to the AJDC in August 1940: "Nowhere are there such barbarous and heartless people as in Mrozy. Those who should give assistance [because they can afford it] are crying and complaining about our committee [asking] why we put refugees before [locals]?" He requested more help for the refugees than for the locals, ending the letter: "Let the locals understand what it is to be a refugee—that he is a human that needs to live. They [locals] do not understand this."

That same month, there were 507 Jews in Mrozy, according to the committee. There were also newcomers from Kalisz, Pabianice, Ostrzeszów, and Puławy. In November 1940, out of the total of 555 Jews, 243 were refugees and 312 were locals. The committee reportedly distributed 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread daily for the needy, doubling that amount on Saturdays. The committee was dissolved by the Judenrat in January 1941 and subsequently replaced by a similar body that was affiliated with the Judenrat.²

The Germans established a number of ghettos in Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki in the autumn of 1940. Based on correspondence dated December 13, 1940, the self-help committee reported that there was no plan to establish a ghetto in Mrozy: "This week we had a terrible worry that they were going to deport us. But somehow, as it seems to us, we will succeed in prolonging the deadline for deportation."

Instead of deportation, an open ghetto was established in Mrozy one year later, in November 1941. A German report on the concentration of the Jews in Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki of March 3, 1942, states that in November 1941, "138 Jews from Cegłów were resettled to a Jewish quarter in Mrozy."³ A native Cegłów family, which included Teresa Körner (Chaja Esterstein), was among those resettled. Körner recalls Jews from the vicinity also being forced to move to Mrozy.⁴

With the resettlement of Jews from smaller settlements in the autumn of 1941, the Mrozy ghetto was closed. It was never fenced; rather, placards proclaiming the death penalty for leaving the ghetto without special permission were posted at its borders. A number of the ghetto's residents performed forced labor at the local train station, while others were assigned to drainage works.

Secondary sources report that the number of the ghetto's inhabitants rose to approximately 1,000 before its liquidation, which is dated as September 1942 or "autumn" of that year by those sources available.

The ghetto's liquidation was conducted by the local Gendarmerie. Mrozy's Jews were gathered in the ghetto and then sent by train to the Treblinka extermination camp. The Germans likely left behind a number of Jews for conscription to a small labor camp nearby. A. Kamiński—who escaped deportation from Kałuszyn—testified that some of the escapees were looking for jobs in a labor camp in Mrozy. *Rejestr miejsc* states that several dozen Jews laboring in nearby drainage works were shot in the autumn of 1943; however, this date may be inaccurate by as much as one year, as those laborers were likely shot

as soon as it was too cold to continue working (i.e., in late 1942).⁵

SOURCES The Mrozy ghetto is briefly mentioned by Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 327; and Jacek A. Młynarczyk, "Akcja Reinhard w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943," in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawn. IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 66; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 501.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/502 [AJDC]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); VHF (# 19794); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2824).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/502 (Mrozy), pp. 8, 14–15, 32, 38.

2. Ibid., pp. 10, 18–19, 25, 27, 32–33, 38.

3. Ibid., p. 37; T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), Document 145, pp. 278–279.

4. See M. Melchior, "Uciekinierzy z gett po 'stronie aryjskiej' na prowincji dystryktu warszawskiego—sposoby przetrwania," in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 328, for a summary of YVA, O-3/2824, T. Körner's testimony; VHF, # 19794, testimony of Teresa Körner (born 1929), 1996. Here Körner dates the resettlement to Mrozy in approximately the spring of 1941 and believes it was at that time most likely an open ghetto.

5. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), p. 175; summary of YVA, O-3/842, A. Kamiński's testimony, as cited by M. Janczewska, "Obozy pracy dla Żydów na terenie dystryktu warszawskiego," in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 303–304.

OKUNIEW

Pre-1939: Okuniew, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Okuniew is located about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) to the east-northeast of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population was 489 out of a total of 1,891 inhabitants. Under German occupation, there were reportedly 84 Jewish families living in Okuniew.

Okuniew fell to the Germans on September 28, 1939. Within the first days of the occupation the Germans murdered two Jews. Various decrees and restrictions were soon imposed on the Jews, especially the performance of forced labor. Jews were required to wear special armbands, and Jewish children were

forbidden to attend school. Maria Segal, however, recalls that Jewish children attended school secretly at night, to continue with their education.¹

In October 1939, a German civil administration was established, and Okuniew became part of Kreis Warschau-Land. The Kreishauptmann was Dr. Rupprecht.

Little information is available concerning the fate of the Jews of Okuniew under German occupation. For example, the yizkor book contains no survivor testimonies. According to the accounts of Zvi and Hirsh Noshevski, survivors from nearby Miłosna, the Okuniew and Miłosna Jews shared a common Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was based in Miłosna. The council was headed initially by two Jews named Fridman and Spekman, who had been recommended to the Germans by the Polish local council (gmina). These men had little aptitude or inclination for the task. Therefore, they sent an offer to a former Polish officer, Kh. Lubliner, then living in Warsaw, to return to Miłosna and become head of the Judenrat. In return for a good salary, Lubliner accepted the task and is described in the yizkor book as having been an energetic and upstanding leader who “did much to benefit the ghetto inhabitants of Miłosna and Okuniew.”²

The standard Polish reference work by Czesław Pilichowski indicates that a ghetto existed for about 500 Jews in Okuniew. This was likely established in early 1941, at the same time as that in nearby Miłosna, and was probably an open ghetto.³ According to contemporary Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) records, about 450 Jews were residing in Okuniew in mid-January 1941 under difficult conditions and in need of aid. On May 8, 1941, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) sent 250 złoty to the Jews of Okuniew for social relief, which had been received there by mid-June.⁴

According to documents preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, the Jews of Okuniew were expelled on March 25, 1942, and resettled into the Warsaw ghetto. During the expulsion, at least 15 named Jews are known to have been killed.⁵

Maria Segal, who was only six years old at the time, recalled that there was a great commotion and screams in the night on the eve of the expulsion. Her parents were very concerned about what was going to happen and tried to reassure her. They made name tags for the children to wear round their necks during the journey, lest they become separated. In the early morning hours, “rasping German voices shouted through loudspeakers for all Jews to leave their homes and congregate on the town plaza.” The Jews were then escorted to Warsaw, with most men driven on foot, while children and the elderly were put on horse-pulled carts. The Jews could only take a very limited amount of luggage with them. Maria, with her sister, was separated from her parents, being placed on a cart for the journey. She heard shots in the distance as the carts drove away. It took the whole day to reach Warsaw. Some of those marching on foot, who could not keep up, were shot by the guards on the journey. On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, everyone was forced to take communal showers.⁶

From the Warsaw ghetto, nearly all of the remaining Jews were subsequently deported to the Treblinka extermination

camp. Maria Segal was smuggled out of the Warsaw ghetto with the help of a Polish family from Okuniew, for whom she then minded cows. While living there on the Aryan side, she learned that two other Jews, who were hiding in Okuniew, had been denounced and shot at the local cemetery.⁷

SOURCES Publications regarding the fate of the Jews of Okuniew during the Holocaust include the following: Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kebilat Rembertow, Okuniew, Miłosna* (Tel Aviv: Rembertow, Okuniew and Miłosna Societies in Israel, the USA, France, Mexico City, Canada, Chile, and Brazil, 1974); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), p. 139; and Maria Segal, *Maria's Story: Childhood Memories of the Holocaust* (Santa Barbara, CA: Boehm Group, 2009). The ghetto is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 345.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/750 [JSS]; Ring I/501 and 875); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring I/501 and 875]; RG-15.084M [Relacje]; RG-50.060*0069); VHF (# 43650); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Segal, *Maria's Story*, pp. 11–12; VHF, # 43650, testimony of Maria Segal.
2. Shimon Ahronson, “Der ayfkum un umkum fun yidishn yishuv,” pp. 411–412; and Hirsh Noshevski, “Der veg fun peyn un greyl,” 435—both in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron*.
3. Regarding the establishment of the Miłosna ghetto, see Noshevski, “Der veg fun peyn un greyl,” p. 435.
4. AŻIH, 211/750.
5. Ibid., Ring I/875; Ring I/501.
6. Segal, *Maria's Story*, pp. 11–12; VHF, # 43650. Understandably, the dating in Maria's accounts is inaccurate regarding certain details.
7. Segal, *Maria's Story*, pp. 21–22.

OTWOCK

Pre-1939: Otwock, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Ottock is located about 22 kilometers (14 miles) southeast of Warsaw. By September 1, 1939, the Jewish population had reached 10,689 out of a total 19,916. In November 1941 the Jewish population was 12,634, and in 1942, 12,030.¹

The German army entered Ottock on September 14, 1939. The military administration lasted until October 25, 1939, when Ottock became part of Distrikt Warschau. Based in Ottock were units of the Gendarmerie, the Schutzpolizei, an outpost of the Kripo (Criminal Police), and the Gestapo. The pre-war mayor of the city, Jan Gadomski, was reinstated in his

position. The Polish police was reactivated, with Captain Bronisław Marchlewicz as its chief.

Immediately after entering the town, the Germans started to persecute the Jews. They forcibly cut off the beards of Jewish men, looted Jewish houses and stores, and arbitrarily arrested Jews for forced labor. The head of the Arbeitsamt (labor office), Hugo Dietz, dragged Jews from the synagogue on Aleksander Street on Saturdays. The Jews were forced to dig ditches and clean the villas of German officers. In October 1939, Germans burned down several synagogues in Otwock. Two other synagogues, one of them the Wajnberg synagogue, were destroyed later, in 1940.

The first murder took place on November 11, 1939, in the Śródborów Forest. The Germans shot three Jewish men for alleged illegal activities. In December 1939, the Kreishauptmann Warschau-Land, Dr. Hermann Rupprecht, imposed a contribution of 100,000 złoty on Otwock's Jewish community.

According to Calel Perechodnik, a Jewish policeman, the relationship between Poles and Jews, "except [for] sporadic events, was correct, although condescending."² One problem was the difficulty many Jews encountered in retrieving household goods given to Poles for safekeeping, as well as deteriorating relations in those cases where Jews had signed over their businesses to Poles. The general attitude of the German authorities towards Jews, apart from the occasional repressive actions, was initially tolerable. Gadowski, the wartime mayor of Otwock, earned a bad reputation in the Jewish community, as he signed off on all the anti-Jewish directives issued by the Kreishauptmann.

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Otwock was elected at the end of December 1939. It consisted of 24 people, including the most prominent Jews. The head was Izaak Lesman; his deputy was Mojżesz Kagan.³ Four of the members had been on the pre-war Community Council. Rabbis Rubin Zejman and Berysz Lejzor Janowski and 12 doctors also worked for the Judenrat.⁴

The Judenrat was responsible for delivering workers for forced labor, collecting valuables for the Germans, and organizing food supplies and social welfare services. Very soon the Judenrat was officiously fulfilling all German orders. The attitude of the German authorities and the local administration towards the Judenrat was initially not so stringent, but by the second half of 1942 it had become more hostile.

In July 1941, the German authorities dismissed Lesman as head of the Judenrat and dissolved the entire council for reasons that are unclear. The new head was Szymon Górewicz, and his deputy was Borys Chorażycki. Six members had also served on the first Judenrat.⁵ Guta Kac-Kucyk recalled that members of the Judenrat were unable to satisfy the increasingly cruel German demands. Emanuel Ringelblum noted in May 1941: "In Otwock, 100 employees of the Jewish community were taken to labor camps, because they did not deliver the appointed number of [workers]."⁶

The ghetto in Otwock was established in the fall of 1940. It was the second largest ghetto in Distrikt Warschau. Throughout the two years of its existence, more than 12,000 people

were incarcerated there altogether. The first steps to create the ghetto in Otwock were taken in September–October 1940, when Jews had to leave the areas of Sopliców and part of Śródborów and move to the center of town.⁷ On November 4, 1940, the Kreishauptmann established two Jewish quarters in Otwock: a health resort area and a residential area.⁸ The residential area consisted of "The Little Town" (also called "Shtetl") and the "Central ghetto," separated by the railway. From the Central ghetto to the Shtetl there was access across the railway track (near Samorządowa Street).⁹

The health resort ghetto did not have restricted borders. It contained Jewish medical institutions: hospitals, sanatoriums, and *pensions* (small hotels). The existence of these institutions and the resort character of Otwock were probably the reasons for the creation of a health resort ghetto. On the orders of the German authorities the sanatorium "Brijus" became the only place accepting Jewish tuberculosis patients in the General-gouvernement. "Zofiówka" became the only place for nervous and mentally ill Jews. CENTOS (the Central Organization for Orphan Care) maintained in the health resort ghetto a shelter for child refugees, an Educational-Therapeutic Institute, and a ward for children in Zofiówka.¹⁰

The move into the ghetto was completed on November 30, 1940. The relative freedom that persisted inside the ghetto even induced some people to come to Otwock. For example, some Jews from Karczew, who were expelled to Warsaw in 1941, moved into the Otwock ghetto. Initially the ghetto was not sealed, so it was possible to leave it. As a result, the smuggling of food was not very difficult. The craftsmen sold their products to the people of the town and the surrounding area. Some ghetto inmates received food packages from relatives in the Soviet Union. Later the ghetto was partly fenced in, and Jews could not leave the ghetto under penalty of death. The Germans sealed the ghetto on January 15, 1941. To leave the ghetto one had to have a special permit. The columns of workers were allowed to leave for work under escort. Later orders were issued for the erection of wooden or wire fences. Still, the ghetto was only poorly fenced off, and Jews often left it, especially at night. As a result, the Kreishauptmann demanded from the Polish (Blue) Police that they guard the borders on a regular basis. Six policemen were assigned to control it from July 16, 1941.

After that date, several Jews were killed almost every day for leaving the ghetto, shot by Germans on the spot and buried in the fields. When conditions in the ghetto became worse, more people tried to leave. Very often they were caught by Poles, who, after robbing them, handed them over to the Polish (Blue) Police. They were reported to the Gendarmerie in Rembertów, which sent a unit to shoot them once a few people had been collected together.¹¹

The strict closing off of the ghetto and the lack of contact between its three sections forced the Judenrat to form separate branches: members of the Judenrat and clerks working for the Judenrat lived in each section. Contact was maintained by phone or by special delegates.

In the fall of 1941 there was a typhus epidemic in Otwock, which became the official reason for fencing both sides of the

railway along the length of the Central ghetto and Shtetl ghetto.¹² There was no longer any connection between the health resort, the Central ghetto, and the Shtetl.

The Jewish Police in Otwock was organized in November 1940 to help facilitate the transfer of Jews into the ghetto. At first it consisted of the commandant Bernard Kronenberg, his deputy Efroim Rykner, and 30 policemen. Formally, but not actually, it was subordinated to the Polish (Blue) Police in the Generalgouvernement. In May 1941, there were 100 policemen and a commandant.¹³ The police were divided into different sections: patrol, administrative, hospital, and sanitary. The Jewish Police was not popular due to corruption. The police selected people for forced labor and took them to the Arbeitsamt. Those who had money bought themselves out, and the poor were sent to work.

The Judenrat was obliged to supply a specific number of workers to German units stationed in Otwock, on average some 85 to 100 workers per day. They worked cleaning the town and the ghetto. Most people tried to avoid being sent to work, and very often the Jewish Police employed force to round them up, even killing some who resisted. In the summer of 1940, the German authorities sent young men to forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin. The wealthy paid money, and the poor were sent to the camps. Some 300 Otwock Jews were sent to the labor camps in Józefów, Biała Podlaska, Bełżec, Tyszowce, and Zamość.¹⁴ In August 1940, 50 Jewish men from Otwock were sent to the Tyszowce labor camp. They worked on construction projects regulating the Huczwa River. In December the camp was liquidated, and people were released back to their ghettos.¹⁵

In April 1942, some 400 Jewish men from Otwock were sent to the labor camp in Karczew. The inmates worked on a land reclamation scheme. The close proximity to the ghetto played a key role in the life of inmates, who could receive support from their families and for the first few months the workers were even able to go to the ghetto for Shabbat.

In July 1942, the Jewish commandant of the Karczew camp, Welwel Kolkowicz, had to pay a large bribe to Inspector Frank for the camp to continue operating. Otherwise the workers were to be killed.¹⁶ The workers in the camp stayed in contact with a Polish policeman, whose sons belonged to the underground Home Army. There were plans for resistance, but these were not realized due to the lack of any arms.

In January 1942, some 150 to 200 men were sent to the Treblinka forced labor camp to work on the construction of the Treblinka extermination camp. Postwar documents indicate that 175 men were sent there in January and dozens more in February. They were among the first victims of the gas chambers.¹⁷ Three men from Otwock survived the liquidation of the camp.

Only a very small percentage of the Jews in the ghetto conducted any form of paid work. Some of these worked in the hospitals and sanatoriums. In 1941, there were 436 businesses in the ghetto: mainly engaged in trade and handicrafts or garret-craftsmen.¹⁸ Among the craftsmen were tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths.

Most people earned money selling their belongings to the Poles. Those who did not have anything left took their food to the Warsaw ghetto to sell, especially 10- to 12-year-old children. Until the closing of the Shtetl ghetto, Poles and Jews traded regularly there.

There were six communal kitchens operating in the summer of 1941. Sickness and hunger increased considerably at the end of that year after the closing of the ghetto.

At first Jewish patients were treated in the Polish hospitals, but soon they had to be moved to separate Jewish wards. Because of the typhus epidemic and dysentery, the Judenrat had to organize an isolation hospital. Starting in August 1941, death rates increased due to the spread of contagious diseases. The winter of 1941–1942 brought the highest rates of sickness due to typhus. In December 1941 the mortality rate was 3.6 percent, and over the next two months it increased to 10 percent.¹⁹

The health resort ghetto became the center of cultural life, because a lot of Jewish intellectuals were receiving treatment there. A literature group was established, and lectures on history and literature were presented. There were some forms of conspiratorial learning in the ghetto. There were underground classes and also a *cheder*. Observant Jews studied the Talmud regularly. The meat from Otwock was ritually slaughtered and smuggled into the Warsaw ghetto by young, non-Jewish-looking girls. The meat had certificates of kashruth signed by *shochtim*.

In July 1942 the commandant of the Gendarmerie in Rembertów, Lüppschau, came to Otwock. He demanded from the commandant of the Jewish Police expensive gifts and in return gave assurances that the Otwock ghetto would be spared. On August 18, 1942, Major Karl Brandt, a Gestapo officer and one of the organizers of the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto, came to Otwock with a few officers and ordered the ghetto area to be surrounded by a wall. He also dismissed the chairman of the Jewish Council in Otwock, Szymon Górewicz, appointing Bernard Kronenberg, the chief of the Jewish Police, to replace him.²⁰ According to Cael Perechodnik's memoirs, Kronenberg received a warning letter from a former commander of the Otwock Jewish Police—Efroim Rykner, who wrote about the threat of deportation. The news spread rapidly around the ghetto.

Part of the staff of Zofiówka received warnings from a Polish policeman about an upcoming Aktion, and the staff of the sanatoriums and hospitals escaped to Warsaw, using an ambulance. Some of the orderlies bleached their hair to disguise themselves as "Aryans." Many doctors committed suicide.

The liquidation Aktion began on August 19, 1942; it was carried out by Ukrainian auxiliaries and other SS troops. The Germans ordered people to leave their houses and gather in the main ghetto, and from there the Germans led them to the loading platform. The place for the final concentration of Otwock's Jews was on the site where a new workshop was planned. There, Jewish workers cut down trees and enclosed the square with a barbed-wire fence.²¹ The commandant of the Rembertów Gendarmerie, Lüppschau, the Inspector of the Karczew camp, Frank, and the chief of the Arbeitsamt, Dietz, all came

to Otwock to supervise the loading of the trains. Some 8,000 Jews were deported from Otwock during this Aktion.

The liquidation Aktion in the resort ghetto was particularly brutal. In the sanatoriums “Brijus” and “Zofiówka,” everyone who was unable to move or who was mentally ill was shot on the spot. Children from the sanatoriums were not shot, as the Germans did not want to waste bullets. Instead, they smashed children’s heads against the walls. On Reymont Street, 600 people were shot.

Abraham Willendorf, a Jewish policeman, publicly renounced his police insignia and joined his family. Two men escaped from the train—Jurek Grandowski and Berek Kejzman.

The Aktion was repeated on the following day. The Jewish policemen stayed behind to clean up the ghetto. Some of them were sent to the hospital Zofiówka to bury the corpses of the murdered Jews. In December 1942, after finishing the work, the policemen were sent to the labor camp in Karczew. From there some of the policemen and 200 workers unfit to work were sent to the Warsaw ghetto. In May 1943, the head prisoner of the Karczew camp, Welwel Kolkowicz, decided to escape and advised his fellow workers to do the same. The camp existed until at least September 1943. Some of the policemen worked in camps in Rembertów and Piekiełko.

After the ghetto’s liquidation, the hunt for hidden Jews and their murder continued for four weeks. Germans and Ukrainian auxiliaries searched houses and cellars. In the mass graves located between Reymont and Słowacki Streets, 1,500 people were buried. Similar graves were dug also in the woods surrounding the town and in air-raid shelters. About 3,000 people were captured and shot in the course of the operation.²² Some children from CENTOS remained in the woods in hiding until the spring of 1943. Poles denounced most of them. Some children had prepared hideouts in the woods. Even those children who were deliberately given to Poles by their parents were mostly abandoned or left in Catholic convents. Otwock nuns from the congregation of Saint Elizabeth, who led the orphanage “Promyk,” saved about 20 to 30 Jewish children. The chief of the Polish (Blue) Police, Captain Bronisław Marchlewicz, and Ludwik Wolski, a priest from the Wincenty à Paulo parish, forged baptismal certificates to save Jewish children. Meanwhile, ordinary Poles together with Germans busied themselves in looting Jewish goods.

Some 400 former Jewish inhabitants of Otwock returned to the town at the end of the war. Some of them had spent the war in the Soviet Union. Nobody from that group remained in Poland.

SOURCES There are two yizkor books published by the survivors: Benjamin Orenstein, ed., *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev* (Bamberg: Former Residents of Otvotsk, Falenic and Kartshev in the American Zone in Germany, 1948); and Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer Zikaron: Otvotsk-Karchev* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Otvotsk and Kartshev, 1968). One of the most important sources on the history of the Otwock ghetto and its liquidation is a memoir written by a Jewish policeman in the ghetto, Calel Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?* (Westview Press, 1996). A secondary source focused on the Otwock

ghetto is a book written by this author, *The Jewish Population of Otwock during the Second World War* (Warsaw: Jewish Historical Institute, 2002).

The main archival sources are located in the State Archive of the Capital City of Warsaw (APW), Otwock Branch, where many documents produced by the Judenrat and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) are preserved. These documents can be found in the file Records of the City of Otwock, 1939–1942 (Akta miasta Otwocka, 643, 861, 896, 898, 925, 934, 1010, 1022, 1023, 1053, 1057, 1060, 1062, 1063, 1068). Some useful documents can be found in the records of the State Archive of the Capital City of Warsaw: Kreishauptmannschaft Warschau-Land and Amt des Gouverners des Distrikts Warschau. Other materials were obtained from the Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute (e.g., AŻIH, 313/46, 87; Ring I/373). These include documents of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (210, AJDC) and the Jewish Social Self-Help (211/771 [JSS]), which give an insight into the economic situation in the Otwock ghetto. There are also several testimonies written by survivors (e.g., 301/4064, 4121, 5913 [Relacje]).

Sylwia Szymanska-Smolkin

NOTES

1. APW, Akta miasta Otwocka, 643, p. 60; 896, p. 27; 898, p. 1; 934, p. 38; 1022, p. 2.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Ibid., 1053, pp. 282–283.
4. Ibid., p. 250.
5. Ibid., 1060, p. 124.
6. Emanuel Ringelblum, *The Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto* (Warsaw, 1983), p. 284.
7. APW, 861, p. 1; Ludwik Landau, *Chronicles of the Years of War and Occupation*, vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1962), p. 744.
8. APW, 1057, p. 74.
9. Kanc, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 876; APW, 1057, p. 74.
10. APW, 1022, pp. 8–9.
11. Lucjan Chojczyk, “Komisariat przy Sienkiewicza,” in *Mówią wieki* (1996), p. 17.
12. APW, 1010, pp. 192, 195–196; Ringelblum, *The Chronicle*, p. 343.
13. APW, 925, p. 73.
14. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 28, November 23, 1940.
15. AŻIH, Ring I/373, pp. 1–10; Orenstein, *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev*, pp. 8–10.
16. Orenstein, *Khurbn Otvotsk, Falenits, Kartshev*, p. 23.
17. AŻIH, 313/87, Nissenszal; 313/46, Zygmunt Herzig’s case, p. 5; Z. Łukasiewicz, “Obóz pracy w Treblince,” *Bulletin of the Main Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland* 3 (1947): 113, 121; Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?*, p. 12.
18. APW, 1023, pp. 1–9.
19. R. Zabłotniak, “Sanatorium Towarzystwa Opieki nad Biednymi Gruźliczo Chorymi Żydami ‘Marpe’ (1907–1924–1942),” *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (165–166) (1993): 106–109; “Sanatoria żydowskie w Otwocku (1939–1942) w pięćdziesiątą rocznicę zagłady,” *Zdrowie Publiczne* 55:3–4 (1992): 551–553; *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 81, September 5, 1941.
20. Kanc, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 940; Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?*, pp. 20, 27.
21. Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?*, p. 20; AŻIH, 301/4064, p. 6.

22. AŻIH, 301/4064, pp. 7–8; 301/4326, testimony of Zalmen Cwi Golden, p. 8; T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 93.

PARYSÓW

Pre-1939: Parysów, village, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Parysow, Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Parysów, town, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Parysów is located about 53 kilometers (33 miles) southeast of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 1,906 Jews in Parysów; the village's total population stood at 3,388. By 1939, there were 300 Jewish families living in Parysów.

Unlike many other localities in the Kreis, Parysów was not damaged in the course of the September 1939 campaign and so was subsequently flooded with refugees, including many Jews from Garwolin.

The Germans established a 12-man Judenrat, chaired by the tradesman Aharon Glatstein, with another tradesman, Jankiel Cymlich (Yaakov Zimlich), as his deputy. Other members of the Judenrat included Icek Goldman, Chil Borowski, Berek Drzewnowski, Moshe Chaim Poskolinski, and Aron Chełmer as secretary.¹ The Germans soon withdrew from the village, placing Polish (Blue) Police in charge of maintaining order. A Jewish police force was also later formed to enforce German orders, including labor conscription.

On May 17, 1940, 149 Jews who had been forced out of Garwolin arrived in Parysów. Another 202 deportees from Górzno, Wola Rębkowska, and Pilawa arrived on October 20, 1940. A survey conducted that same month reported 3,115 Jews in Parysów.²

An open ghetto was established in Parysów in November 1940, consisting of three streets in the southeastern part of the village and including Borowska Street (on which the synagogue stood) and one side of Garwolin Street. Poles who owned property within the ghetto boundaries could remain there, on request. The Jews were allowed to take their belongings with them, including artisan tools, despite the lack of space to set up their workshops. Owners of horses and wagons faced the same difficulty.³

There are no reports of the ghetto being guarded or closed or its inhabitants being executed for leaving its borders; however, Gestapo agents would sometimes come to the ghetto and beat up Jews in the streets.

On December 10, 1940, about 70 deportee families from Garwolin—by then almost entirely depleted of Jews—were transferred to Parysów. The Judenrat estimated the number of Jews at 3,500. In a letter to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) office in Warsaw, it reported that the “overcrowding cannot be described.”⁴

The Germans ordered the organization of a Jewish police force with Judenrat member Moshe Chaim Poskolinski as its commander. It consisted of approximately 12 men from Parysów

and Garwolin. The jail, due to lack of space, was set up in a windowless corridor of the synagogue. An inner wall was built to separate it from the remainder of the space, where the refugees were quartered. Later a fire brigade, commanded by Tuvia Miller, was organized in the ghetto. There were many volunteers, as the work guaranteed exemption from forced labor.

A cooperative of Jewish and Polish artisans was organized in the ghetto. The Jewish craftsmen produced the goods, while Poles, who were not barred from traveling, sold them. Yet the majority of the ghetto's residents lacked any paid employment and suffered from hunger. In addition, the community was forced to pay three large “contributions” to the German authorities; jewelry and money for the last two had to be extorted by the Jewish Police.

Impoverishment within the Jewish community forced many to resort to theft. Local farmers complained to the Polish police that their produce was being stolen from the fields. The local Jews in turn accused the refugees, who then claimed that the thefts were committed by the locals. The Polish police and the Judenrat warned the Jewish Police to restore order. Despite the hunger, pious Jews maintained religious practices including eating kosher meat, Sabbath prayers, and celebrating the High Holidays.⁵

On April 26, 1941, a local branch of the JSS was established in Parysów. The merchant Abraham Lejzer Raplański of Garwolin served as the chairman, and Izak Fajgenbaum was his deputy. The committee also included Icek Goldman, Jankiel Cymlech, Lejb Rolfus, and Aron Chełmer. The JSS was able to provide very little help. In February 1942, out of 2,078 Jews applying for meals from the soup kitchen, only 105 were recipients.

In the autumn of 1941, after an outbreak of typhus, the German authorities ordered a hospital opened. Despite the epidemic, more Jews from Garwolin, which by this time had been made *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews), were to be relocated to Parysów by November 20, 1941. Tuvia Miller was the hospital's administrator. The only doctor—a woman named Warchower—was its director. The hospital inspection conducted by the Garwolin JSS in January 1942 described it as “neglected.” The inspectors recommended that “the arrival of a male Jewish doctor, who would organize the work at the hospital, is desirable.” The report summed up the situation in the ghetto: “Terrible misery prevails in Parysów in every way.”⁶

In 1942, the ghetto's Jews worked in two nearby labor camps. A 50-man labor brigade worked in Chyżyn, where they were straightening the Świder River channel. On reports that laborers were beaten while working knee deep in water, the Judenrat refused to send the Jews there the next day but later gave in, after the Germans issued a warning. Those who were assigned for labor in the Wilga camp—possibly as many as 100 Jews—demanded that the Judenrat provide transport. The 20-kilometer (12-mile) exhausting march to Wilga left the workers too weak to work, thereby resulting in severe beatings. Although a vehicle was eventually provided, the physical violence continued. Once barracks were built on the camp's grounds, the Parysów Jews refused to go to work, for fear of

being detained there. The Jewish police force was unable to compel them to go to work; as a last resort, it would lock up the designated laborers in the middle of the night and then send them off to the camp in the morning. All of Parysów's Jews were desperately trying to avoid work in both camps.

A number of Jews were also working on road construction, 3 kilometers (2 miles) from Parysów, in the village of Wilchta. "The Jewish Police drove us to labor," testified one of the ghetto's survivors, Meier Herc.⁷

In May 1942, the Germans arrested three members of the Judenrat, including the police chief Poskolinski. All were shot near the road to Garwolin. In June 1942, the Judenrat chairman, Glatstein, and his father, a slaughterer, were charged with the illegal killing of a cow. Arrested and taken to Garwolin, they never returned. Jankiel Cymlich was appointed as the new chairman. Tuvia Miller took charge of the police force.

At the beginning of September 1942, the Germans requested larger numbers of laborers to be sent to Chyżyn and for road construction. Approximately 600 Jews at that time worked to meet the deadline for the paving of the Parysów-Głusków road, including the elderly Rabbi Morgenstern. The deadline was met after some Poles with road-paving equipment helped to finish the job.⁸

Shortly before the ghetto's liquidation, the Germans changed the Judenrat chairman for the last time, replacing Cymlich with Moshe Munk, who was immediately tasked with collecting the last large contribution. In anticipation of the ghetto's liquidation, many Jews tried to save themselves by running to the Chyżyn camp.

In mid-September 1942 (possibly September 18), without notice, 3,000 Jews from the liquidated Stoczek Łukowski ghetto were brought into the Parysów ghetto. The Germans demanded that the Judenrat provide them with housing.

The destruction of the Parysów ghetto was also unannounced. The streets leading from the ghetto were blocked off on September 27, 1942, by Germans and Polish police. Residents of the ghetto were then chased to the market square. Meier Herc described the liquidation: "The Jews set off from the market square towards the train station in Pilawa, such that they had to cover 9 kilometers [5.6 miles] on foot. Recorded music was played from an automobile. Women and children were seated on wagons. The sick and weak were shot on the spot—on the square. And in this manner 150 persons were killed." From Pilawa, the community was sent to the Treblinka extermination camp by train.⁹

Thirty Jews were registered as being shot by the German Gendarmerie from October 2–4, 1942, in a hunt for ghetto survivors. Among the victims were 3 members of the Morski family and 11 of the Borucki family.¹⁰

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Parysów under German occupation can be found in the following publications: Y. Granatstein, ed., *Sefer Parisov* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Parysów in Israel, 1971); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 405–406.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/541 [AJDC]; 211/393-95, 211/784 [JSS]; 301/4104 [Relacje]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/541 (Parysów), pp. 47–48; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/ 393 (Garwolin), pp. 33, 45.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/541, pp. 24–30, 47–48.
3. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 405; Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, p. 332.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/541, pp. 47–49.
5. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 405; Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, pp. 332–333, 337, 340–341.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/394 (Garwolin), pp. 24–25, 45, 49; 211/395 (Garwolin), pp. 36–37; and 211/784 (Parysów), p. 5; Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, pp. 333, 336–337, 339.
7. Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, p. 334; USHMM, RG-15.019M (Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos), reel 18, file 55; testimony of Meier Herc, AŻIH, 301/4104 (Relacje), as quoted in Barbara Engelking "Życie codzienne w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego," in B. Engelking, J. Leociak, and D. Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 203–204.
8. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 406; Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, pp. 340–341.
9. Testimony of Meier Herc, AŻIH, 301/4104, as quoted in Engelking, "Życie codzienne," pp. 203–204; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 406; Granatstein, *Sefer Parisov*, pp. 340–342.
10. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, IPN, 1985), pp. 193–194.

PIASECZNO

Pre-1939: Piaseczno, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Piaseczno is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) south of Warsaw. In 1921, 2,256 Jews were living in Piaseczno, representing 40.2 percent of the town's total population (5,615 people). In the interwar period, numerous Jewish political organizations and professional bodies existed, which took an active part in the social and political life of the town.

German mobile forces entered Piaseczno on September 6, 1939. From the first day of the occupation, Wehrmacht soldiers executed inhabitants of Piaseczno, both Polish and Jewish. On September 9, 1939, 22 Polish prisoners of war (POWs) and

Jews were shot in Piaseczno; one day later, Wehrmacht soldiers killed 2 young Jews on Chilickowskiej Street.¹ In response, many Piaseczno Jews fled to Warsaw and to Soviet-occupied eastern Poland; at the same time though, approximately 1,000 Jewish refugees from various parts of the country arrived in the town, raising the number of Jewish inhabitants to approximately 3,500.²

On the establishment of a German civil administration on October 26, 1939, Piaseczno became part of Kreis Warschau-Land. In December 1939, the Ortskommandantur in Piaseczno ordered the Jews to wear the Star of David, marked the doors of Jewish homes and enterprises with yellow paint, and forced the Jewish community to pay a “contribution” of 30,000 złoty.³

In January 1940, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), consisting of 12 persons. The Judenrat established a welfare committee under the direction of Boruch Higier. The welfare committee was responsible both for the distribution of food provided with support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and for the collection of funds to help the poorest members of the Jewish community. In the period from February 4 to July 25, 1940, the Welfare Committee distributed 1,764 meals and 1,500 kilograms (3,307 pounds) of bread.⁴

In the spring of 1940 the Jews of Piaseczno were apparently struck by excessive violence that was perpetrated by the local Polish population with tacit approval of the German administration.⁵

The Jews of Piaseczno had to serve as unpaid workers for the German army and local farmers in the area surrounding Piaseczno. On March 15, 1940, 61 Jews resettled from Łódź and Garwolin arrived in Piaseczno, followed by another 185 deportees in June 1940.⁶

In the summer of 1940, the Kreishauptmann Warschau-Land ordered the German mayor of Piaseczno to present a proposal for the establishment of a ghetto in Piaseczno by August 1, 1940. On July 23, 1940, the Judenrat, however, forwarded a memorandum to the Kreishauptmann, trying to convince him of the impractical nature of German plans to establish a ghetto in the town.⁷ Nevertheless, in November 1940, the Jews of Piaseczno were forced to move into the ghetto, which was established in the southern part of the town, along Świętojańska, Jerozolima, Topolowa, Czajewicz, and Krótka Streets.⁸

The ghetto existed for only around three months. In two waves the Jewish community of Piaseczno was deported to the Warsaw ghetto. On December 4, 1940, approximately 1,000 Jews were expelled from Piaseczno and forced into the Warsaw ghetto. The Jews were either herded on trucks or had to walk the entire distance of 18 kilometers (11 miles) to Warsaw on foot, carrying bundles with their possessions on their backs. On their arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, some Jews were placed into quarantine facilities and the others simply dispersed.⁹ In a second wave, between January 22 and January 27, 1941, on the orders of the Department for Resettlement (Abteilung Umsiedlung) in the office of the Gouverneur of Distrikt Warschau, the remaining Jews of Piaseczno (about 1,000

people) were deported to the Warsaw ghetto. In Warsaw, these Jews were housed initially in a reception camp at 46 Grzybowska Street and were reported to be in desperate need of assistance.¹⁰ Among them was also Kelman Szapiro, who would become the last rabbi of the Warsaw ghetto. His handwritten manuscripts survived the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto as part of the Ringelblum Archive and represent a unique Orthodox response to the Holocaust.¹¹

The homes of the Jews in Piaseczno were taken over in the spring of 1941 by Polish citizens from the Bydgoszcz area, who themselves had been expelled from their homes to make way for ethnic Germans who had arrived from the Baltic states.

The Jews of Piaseczno shared the fate of the other Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. Many of them were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp and murdered there in the summer of 1942.

SOURCES Articles on the fate of the Jewish community of Piaseczno during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 346–347; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 984–985; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 583.

Additional relevant information can be found in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowinia noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Tatiana Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); and Józef Kazimierski, “Miasto Piaseczno i powiat piaseczyński w latach wojny i okupacji hitlerowskiej,” in Jerzy Antoniewicz, ed., *Studia i materiały do dziejów Piaseczna i powiatu piaseczyńskiego* (Warsaw, 1973), pp. 253–268; and on the following Polish homepages: www.sztetl.org and www.studnia.org.

Documentation on the Jewish community of Piaseczno under German occupation can be found in the following archives: APW (877, k. 9); AŻIH (210/543 [AJDC]; 211/1071; Ring II); PAPP (3325 and 3312, k. 247–248); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.079M [Ring II]).

Daniel Brewing

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1. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: województwo stołeczne warszawskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWp, 1988), pp. 227–228.

2. APW, Starostwo Powiatowe Warszawskie (SPW), 877, k. 9; Kazimierski, “Miasto Piaseczno,” p. 263.

3. APW, SPW, 877, k. 9; Kazimierski, “Miasto Piaseczno,” p. 263.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/543.

5. Tomasz Szarota, *U progu zagłady: Zajścia antyżydowskie i pogromy w okupowanej Europie: Warszawa, Paryż, Amsterdam, Antwerpia, Kowno* (Warsaw, 2000), p. 32.

6. Berenstein, "Deportacje," pp. 106–107.
7. PAPP, akta m. Piaseczna, 3325 and 3312, k. 247–248; Kazimierski, "Miasto Piaseczno," p. 263.
8. PAPP, 3213, k. 11; APW, SPW, 877, k. 9; Kazimierski, "Miasto Piaseczno," p. 263.
9. Raul Hilberg, Stanisław Staron, and Josef Kerr, eds., *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow: Prelude to Doom* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), p. 222.
10. The order is reprinted in Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Vollstrecker: Die Liquidation von 500.000 Juden im Ghetto Warschau* (Berlin, 1961), pp. 329–330; see also AŻIH, 211/1071, p. 41, undated note in German about "Aussiedlungen im Distrikt Warschau," probably about February 10, 1941.
11. USHMM, RG-15.079M, reels 58 and 61 (Ring II/431, Ring II/370, Ring II/432).

PRUSZKÓW

Pre-1939: Pruszków (Yiddish: Prushkov), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Pruszkow, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Pruszków, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Pruszków is an industrial town located about 17 kilometers (10.6 miles) southwest of Warsaw. In 1921, 971 of the town's 15,132 residents were Jews; by 1931, the Jewish community had increased to 1,288, in a total population of 23,647.

After a summer of rumors and speculation about the looming war, the Jews of Pruszków devised several plans of action, often marked by generational conflict. Following the outbreak of war, many men made their way to Warsaw, where they were caught in the three-week siege of the city. Young people with leftist or Communist leanings headed eastward towards Soviet territory. The women and the older members of the community generally stayed put.¹

The German army entered Pruszków after about one week of the German invasion of Poland and was welcomed by the local ethnic Germans (*Völkdeutsche*) with salt and flowers. Some believe this gesture saved the town from widespread damage and destruction.² Although many Jews had fled the town, thousands of others attempting to reach Warsaw did not get past Pruszków. The local Jews put them up in schools and private homes, but many slept on the streets. Soup kitchens were opened and blankets distributed. Many refugees moved on after the fall of Warsaw, whereas many local Jews who had fled to Warsaw or Soviet territory began to return. The Germans ordered the shops of Pruszków to reopen and normal routines to be resumed.³

Nevertheless, each day brought new demands and decrees from the German authorities. Jewish schools were closed. Jews could not use the trains, except for one car designated for their use.⁴ Jews over the age of 14 had to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David. In October 1939, the Judenrat was established, headed by a Jew from Łódź, Yitzhak Koenigstein. Each day, Jews up to the age of 60 had to report for forced labor, which was coordinated by the Judenrat. An exemption could be purchased by paying a fee, with unemployed youth

sent as replacements.⁵ Jews worked without pay in workshops at the rail yards, loading ammunition boxes, and cleaning trains.⁶ Ration cards were distributed, but the available supplies were less than the allotment. Sickness was curtailed by strict attention to cleanliness. The local Jewish doctors had left, and the Polish doctors would not risk the danger of treating a Jew.⁷ Others, however, mention the presence of refugee doctors in Pruszków, who helped to contain an outbreak of typhus.⁸

Even with the relative stability of the first year of occupation, Jews suffered numerous acts of oppression. On the first Yom Kippur (September 23, 1939), Polish youth, at the instigation of the Germans, attacked Jewish worshippers. Mentally ill Jews at the psychiatric hospital in Tworki were removed and murdered. During the harsh winter of 1939–1940, the townspeople dismantled the wooden synagogue for firewood. The Torah scrolls, however, were rescued and hidden on the grounds of the cemetery.⁹

In the fall of 1940, the situation worsened considerably. A fine of 50,000 złoty was imposed on the community. On October 12–13, 1940, a ghetto was established in a tiny sector of town near the paint factory of a Jew named Ehrenreich. The ghetto was packed with at least 1,000 people (other sources say 1,300 to 1,600), with several families to a room. Those moving in had to leave behind most of their property.¹⁰ Despite the overcrowding and degradation, only one case of suicide was recorded.¹¹

At first the ghetto was an open one, and Jews were allowed to leave it from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.¹² Jews earned a livelihood by petty trade and smuggling. Jewish youth established an underground elementary school and attempted to organize a library. There was a drama group, and the local branch of a Zionist youth group, "Dror," continued to meet. The young people began to build a school from the dismantled materials of a synagogue building outside the ghetto, but the project was never completed.¹³

Chiel Rajchman has described forced labor conditions in the ghetto: "Three times a week we were taken to the railroad labor camp, and we worked there without pay and we were harassed and beaten."¹⁴ A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was operating in Pruszków by early January 1941; at this time about 300 Jews were receiving assistance.¹⁵

There were increasing rumors in the winter of 1940–1941 that the Jews were being transferred from the small ghettos around Warsaw to the Warsaw ghetto. Pruszków's turn came at the end of January 1941, when the Judenrat was informed that the ghetto would be eliminated and its inhabitants moved to Warsaw. The inhabitants of the Pruszków ghetto were surrounded and closed in for 10 days before being loaded onto a train for Warsaw.¹⁶ People were allowed to take their belongings, but most were limited to 20 kilograms (44 pounds).¹⁷

According to one contemporary report, 1,200 Jews were transferred from Pruszków to Warsaw. On arrival in Warsaw the Jews were quarantined. To expedite their release, the Pruszków Jews had to pay another large fee. Once they were released, the authorities still kept their baggage, linen, and bedding

until the sum of 5,000 złoty was paid. “The collection of this sum took longer than 10 days, so the refugees of Pruszków had to go for two weeks without bedding and without underwear to change, until they managed to scrape together the ransom.”¹⁸

The fate of the Pruszków Jews was entwined with that of the Warsaw ghetto. A few young people from Pruszków participated in the April 1943 uprising of the Warsaw ghetto.¹⁹

About 180 men were left behind to continue as forced laborers in the workshops at the rail yards. They were housed in one building, which they called the “white house,”²⁰ surrounded by a high wall. A few managed to escape, but by the summer of 1942 the rest had been sent to the Warsaw ghetto. Many of them were soon deported from there to the Treblinka extermination camp.²¹

Only a few dozen Jews from Pruszków survived the war, mostly with the help of non-Jewish local acquaintances and a few sympathetic farmers.

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jews of Pruszków can be found in the following publications: D. Brodsky, ed., *Sefer Pruszkow, Nadzin ve-ha-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Pruszków in Israel, 1967); “Pruszkow,” in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 372–376; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 407.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/5563, 5630; Ring I/892; 211/827 [JSS]); IPN (ASG, sygn. 62, k. 279–280); USHMM (e.g., RG-50.030*0185; Acc.1997.0124 [JSS]); VHF (e.g., # 1829, 7464); and YVA.

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1. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 375.
2. Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 215.
3. Ibid., p. 216.
4. Ibid., p. 253.
5. Ibid., p. 217.
6. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 375.
7. Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 217.
8. Ibid., p. 251.
9. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 375.
10. Bill Tammus, *They Were Just People: Stories of Rescue in Poland during the Holocaust* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), p. 108; VHF, # 1829, testimony of Bella Elsa Thorn, 1995.
11. Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 217.
12. VHF, # 7464, testimony of Jerry Koenig, 1995.
13. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 375; Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 218.
14. USHMM, RG-50.030*0185, interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988.
15. AŻIH, 211/827 (JSS), p. 6.
16. Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 218.

17. Ibid., p. 219.

18. Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 295, 297.

19. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 376.

20. Brodsky, *Sefer Pruszkow*, p. 251.

21. USHMM, RG-50.030*0185; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, pp. 375–376.

PUSTELNIK (MARKI-PUSTELNIK OR MARKI)

Pre-1939: Pustelnik (village), Marki (village), Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Pustelnik (suburb of Marki), town, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Prior to World War II, Pustelnik was a village in the Marki gmina. At that time, Marki was a larger village nearby. The Jewish communities of Pustelnik and Marki, residing along the Radzymin-Warsaw road, about 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) north-northeast of Warsaw, considered themselves as a single community. Marki was the center of community life, as it was the older Jewish settlement and the rabbi's seat. According to the 1921 census, there were 156 Jews living in Marki (total population 2,529) and 368 in Pustelnik (total population 1,956). The Germans established a ghetto in 1940 that was constructed for all the Jews of the Marki gmina.

According to survivor Szlama Kutnowski, the Germans established a system of labor conscription following the occupation of Marki in 1939. Under this regimen, local Jews were subjected to forced labor three days a week. Berek Jarzembski, a Pustelnik native, testified that the Germans also took some men from his village for labor; otherwise, the Germans did not bother the village's Jews much. There is more information on the pre-ghetto life of the Jews in Pustelnik, as the Judenrat (chaired by Litman) and its self-help committee (established in January 1940) were both located there.

On the outbreak of war, “a large number of trading firms were liquidated and factories immobilized,” as was reported by the Pustelnik self-help committee to Warsaw when asking for help. Until June 1940, with the assistance of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the self-help committee operated a soup kitchen and provided medical assistance.¹

Pustelnik's ghetto—for which all the Jews of the Marki gmina were designated—was established at the end of 1940, most likely in December. The ghetto was located on Duża Street, approximately 2 to 4 kilometers (1.2 to 2.5 miles) north-east of Pustelnik. It was surrounded by barbed wire but unguarded. The Germans did not establish a Jewish police force, leaving the maintenance of order in the hands of the Judenrat.²

On January 7, 1941, the self-help committee described the situation: “Presently, due to the establishment of ghettos, our

material situation is catastrophic.” The initial plan to establish a ghetto where the Jews already resided, “along the Warsaw-Radzymin road and the narrow gauge station went up in smoke. Consequently we were deported from our residences to a brickyard, Henryków and Osinki . . . far away from roads and contact. [We were placed] in houses for [former] factory workers and barracks, completely secluded and isolated from the Polish population.” The committee emphasized that relocation to the ghetto caused the remainder of Jewish businesses to close. The committee estimated that by January 1941, 75 percent of the Jews in the ghetto lacked any source of income. Seven hundred people were requesting assistance.³

Initially the Jews were still allowed to leave the ghetto. The then 12-year-old Kutnowski recalls going to Marki to work. Nearby was a forest, approximately 60 meters (197 feet) from the ghetto fence, where Jews would pick blueberries or gather wood for heating. Housing conditions in the ghetto were appalling. Kutnowski described his family’s living quarters as follows: “We were living in a garage. The floor was made of bricks. There was no roof, so we made one out of planks.”⁴

By April 1941, the ghetto was declared closed. The self-help committee’s report for January–April 1941 reads: “From the moment the ghetto was closed, the local population is on the edge of destruction.” By May 1941, there were 850 Jews in the ghetto, including 598 refugees. The committee added: “Jews employed in the ceramic works and on other German details are earning 3 to 4 złoty per day, which in present conditions amounts to nothing.” It is not clear whether the aforementioned “ceramic works” refers to the Henryków and Osinki brickyard or another factory outside of the ghetto’s borders. In the same report, the committee also cited recent rumors of the resettlement of the ghetto’s population to Warsaw, which were forcing Pustelnik’s Jews to sell off their remaining belongings.⁵

The ghetto was liquidated on March 26, 1942. Its inhabitants were deported to the Warsaw ghetto. Berek Jarzembski states that the community, which was permitted only to take personal baggage, was deported on wagons and trucks. Kutnowski, who at the time of the Aktion was on one of his smuggling trips, testified: “When I returned home as usual, I did not find anyone. The barracks were razed and many people were killed.”⁶ *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that the deportees arrived in the Warsaw ghetto in the last days of March and were sent for quarantine at 109 Leszno Street.⁷

Pinkas ha-kehillot, which does not mention the ghetto’s establishment, asserts that it was liquidated on April 6, 1942. In the course of its destruction, the SS reportedly riddled Torah scrolls with bullets and threw them into a fire. The Jews who rushed to save them—170 people—were shot, including the community rabbi Mendelsohn.

SOURCES The following publications make reference to the fate of the Jewish communities of Marki and Pustelnik: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 414; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jeru-

salem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 268–269; and Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 168–169, 188, 206, 209.

Archival sources on the ghetto include AŻIH (211/846, 211/1080, 211/1083 [JSS]; 301/273, 301/4805 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]; and RG-15.084M [Relacje]); and VHF (# 27561).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/846 (Pustelnik), pp. 1, 3–5, 25; 211/1080 (Warszawa), p. 39; VHF, # 27561, testimony of Berek Jarzembski, 1997; AŻIH, 301/273, testimony of Szlama Kutnowski, 1945.

2. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 19, sygn. 62, file 260; VHF, # 27561; AŻIH, 301/273.

3. AŻIH, 301/4805, testimony of Władysława Kruszczevska (Kruszczewska), 1948; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/846, pp. 3, 5–6, 15–18, 23–24. Lists of food distribution, e.g., in April 1941, show addresses of the majority of ghetto residents as “Henryków” and a minority as “Osinki.”

4. VHF, # 27561; AŻIH, 301/4805; and 301/273.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1083 (Warszawa), p. 18; and 211/846, pp. 23–25. Secondary sources, e.g., Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, estimate 1,200 residents of the ghetto.

6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 19, sygn. 62, file 260; VHF, # 27561; AŻIH, 301/4805.

7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 19, 1942.

RADZYMIN

Pre-1939: Radzymin, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Radzymin is located about 20 kilometers (12 miles) north-northeast of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 2,209 Jews residing there, out of a total population of 4,201. In 1939, there were 3,867 Jews in Radzymin.¹

On September 3, 1939, German planes bombed Radzymin, killing 30 Jews. As the German forces drew near, many Jews fled towards the Soviet border. The German army entered the town on September 24, and assaults on the Jewish population commenced immediately—tearing off men’s beards, giving them physical beatings, and robbing them.² On October 26, a German civil administration took over from the German military: Radzymin became part of Distrikt Warschau. In November, 14 prominent members of the community were shot to death. In December, Jews were ordered to wear the Star of David, and a 7:00 P.M. curfew was imposed. Nevertheless, despite the harsh circumstances, most people maintained a relatively routine existence.³

From the start of the occupation, Germans and Poles carried out acts of robbery and looting against Jewish homes and

businesses. On three occasions over the initial few months, fines amounting to thousands of złoty were imposed on the Jewish community. Soon after their arrival the German authorities forced the officials of the Jewish community to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which had to assist with the implementation of German orders, including the collection of fines. The head of the Judenrat was initially David Israelski, succeeded at the end of 1941 by Meir Winterman. Jews were pressed into forced labor and sent off to work in the forests and peat bogs. The Judenrat had to provide about 300 men per day for forced labor.⁴

At the end of 1940, the German Kreishauptmann for Kreis Warschau-Land, Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht, ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Radzymin, which was also to include 60 Jewish families from the ghetto in Wołomin. Despite some technical difficulties, the ghetto had been set up by December 25, 1940, and was surrounded with barbed wire. It was located at the junction of Warszawa and Zjawenna [Zjawienna] Streets, including 36 houses, mostly along these two streets. The Germans placed signs at the entrance reading: "Entry to the Ghetto Strictly Forbidden for Germans and Poles!"⁵ A unit of Jewish Police was also established under the command of Bunim Radzyminski to maintain order within the ghetto. The creation of the ghetto completed the liquidation of Jewish shops located outside the ghetto, and the empty shops now gave the former flourishing commercial quarter the appearance of a deserted cemetery.⁶

In addition to the local population, the Radzymin ghetto also contained refugees from Serock, Pułtusk, Wyszaków, and Konstantynów. In March 1941, refugees poured in from towns and villages in western Poland, including Mława, Przasnysz, Rypin, and other places. By July 1941, the ghetto population had reached 3,000, of whom about 800 were refugees.⁷ The restrictions and overcrowded conditions, alongside a significant jump in the cost of food, led to severe malnutrition and disease, including an outbreak of typhus. The poor, who quickly exhausted their limited resources, were the first to die. A soup kitchen was set up to distribute one meal a day to those most in need, but before long even the more well-to-do had sold off all their possessions and become destitute. The only ones who had a source of livelihood were the tailors and shoemakers who, at great risk, could smuggle their goods to peasants in exchange for food.⁸ On July 23, 1941, a ghetto inmate sent a postcard to his brother in Brooklyn. Its brief message encapsulates the dire straits in the ghetto: "We are eating as on Yom Kippur, clothed as at Purim, and dwelling as at Sukkot."⁹

In the fall of 1941, the situation in the ghetto continued to deteriorate. The death penalty was introduced for any Jews caught outside, making it even more dangerous for children and others to smuggle in urgently needed food in exchange for clothing and other items.¹⁰ In the winter of 1941–1942, the Germans confiscated furs and warm garments from a ghetto that was already stricken by hunger and epidemics.

In March 1942 the ghetto population numbered 2,800, including 550 refugees. In the period from July 1941 to March 1942 about 200 Jews died from starvation and typhus. Follow-

ing the liquidation of the Tłuszcz ghetto on May 27, 1942, during which the Jews were sent via Radzymin to the Warsaw ghetto, some Jews from Tłuszcz found refuge in the Radzymin ghetto.¹¹ In the summer of 1942, about 100 men were taken to a work camp at Izabelin, where they put in 10 hours a day of backbreaking work in the peat bogs.¹²

The massive deportation from the Warsaw ghetto, which began in July 1942, was the start of the systematic liquidation of all the ghettos in the surrounding areas. Among the few ghettos that remained by September were those in Radzymin, Wołomin, and Legionowo.¹³ The end of the Jewish community of Radzymin came on October 3, which coincided with the holiday of Simchat Torah, celebrating the joy of Torah. All the Jews were brought to the train station. Several men danced with the Torahs at the adjoining synagogue, and quite remarkably, the German officer in command allowed them to continue. The Jews from Wołomin and Legionowo were brought to Radzymin for inclusion in the deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. Altogether some 12,000 people were sent to their deaths.¹⁴

On the previous evening, before the trains rolled, about 200 young people broke through the ghetto fence and scattered into the nearby forests. Several young men from Radzymin who participated in the Warsaw Uprising were killed in the course of the revolt. After the trains left the station the local Poles and ethnic Germans swarmed over the Jewish houses, taking whatever possessions were left.¹⁵

About 70 men working at the forced labor camp at Izabelin were excluded from the deportation. They were taken out and shot on October 24, 1942, except for a few who escaped into the forests. Only a few Jews from Radzymin survived the war. Most who had escaped the final deportation were caught and killed, often betrayed by informers.¹⁶

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jews of Radzymin and their fate during the Holocaust include the following: Gershon Hel, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Radzymin* (Tel Aviv: Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora, 1975); and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 424–427. Additional information on the ghetto in Radzymin can be found in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 422.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Radzymin under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2910; 211/881–882; and Ring II, PH/41-1-5); IPN (OK Warszawa, Ds 66/67); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 43; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; RG-15.079 [Ring]); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. Ibid., p. 264; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 426.
4. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 21.

5. Ibid., pp. 245–248. A sketch map of the ghetto can be found on these pages.

6. Michael Kossower, “La Destruction,” in *ibid.*, p. 46.

7. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 21; and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 426.

8. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 264.

9. Cited in Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy* (London: William Collins, 1986), p. 177.

10. AŻIH, 301/2910, testimony of Tomasz Lewinski. At the age of nine Tomasz participated in smuggling until he escaped from the ghetto in April 1942; Kossower, “La Destruction,” p. 48.

11. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 20–21; and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 426.

12. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 265; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 422.

13. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 264.

14. Ibid., p. 21.

15. Ibid., pp. 21, 268; Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 587.

16. Hel, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 270, 427.

REMBERTÓW

Pre-1939: Rembertów, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Rembertow, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rembertów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Rembertów is located about 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) east of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 369 Jews living in Rembertów; the total population stood at 1,375.

Upon entering, the Germans established a system of forced labor with a daily quota of 50 workers. The labor was performed at various German military installations and at the ammunition factory “Pocisk.”

Meir Tenenbaum was appointed as chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). At the end of 1939, the Judenrat established a Committee for Aid to Poor Jews, with 38-year-old Sruł Bialer as president. Other members included A. Rozen-szajn (deputy), Lejb Witkowski (secretary), and Sz. Dorn. The committee established a soup kitchen located at 6 Okuniew Street, with its offices located next door at 8 Okuniew Street.

By July 1940, there were over 230 refugees in Rembertów; this number had risen to 274 by the following December. The majority of the refugees came from Kalisz and Sieradz. The total number of Jews in October 1940 stood at 1,380, increasing again after approximately 300 Jews arrived from Łódź in March 1941.¹

A ghetto was established in Rembertów in 1940. Survivor Stanisław Rudnicki (who escaped from Warsaw after establishment of the ghetto there) described Rembertów on his arrival as “not tight.” Although the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire, it was fairly easy to leave. Irene Rubinstein, who arrived in Rembertów just days before the ghetto liquidation

recalls that only parts of the ghetto were blocked off by barbed wire.² The ghetto borders were delineated by the following streets: Okuniew, Artyleryjska, Koliewuka, Mariańska, and Kościusko.

In January 1941, the committee for Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) reported that it was caring for 750 Jews, of which 500 benefited from the soup kitchen, while the remainder received food and medical help from Dr. Artur Rajcher. The Kalisz deportees, unhappy with the level of support they were getting, desperately pleaded for help and an inspection by a representative from Warsaw’s JSS branch. The refugees reported:

Clothing and footwear, which was to be distributed primarily among deportees, had been given to Rembertów locals. Not one of us got anything. . . . They [the committee members] divide everything amongst themselves and sell the rest. Our “great lords” beg and plead on our behalf to Warsaw, while we, the refugees, live in wretched conditions. We get only a thin soup for 20 groszy.³

With the emergence of the first case of typhus in February or March 1941, the ghetto was closed, initially for two weeks. When the second case of typhus was registered, the closure was extended “for an indefinite period,” as reported by Dr. Rajcher and chairman Bialer on April 24, 1941. The closure meant that the majority of the ghetto inhabitants, employed by the Germans outside of the ghetto, lost their minimal income. Food prices in the ghetto increased, and the soup kitchen was closed. The letter summed up the situation as follows: “It is difficult to imagine the depression of the population, which is simply hungry. It [the situation] threatens to further spread disease and, what’s worse, [is likely to cause] the deportation of the Jewish population from Rembertów.” There are no statistics available on the typhus outbreak or whether an epidemic followed.⁴

In the spring of 1941, the Judenrat implemented a program sowing all plots of land in the ghetto with vegetables, hoping to use the crops to feed the community. In August 1941, the Judenrat requested 1,000 złoty from the JSS in Warsaw to sow the remaining plots with rutabaga.

Relations between the Judenrat and the welfare committee (reestablished in 1941 as a branch of the JSS) deteriorated with time. In October 1941, the Warsaw JSS informed the headquarters in Kraków of “the fierce conflict between Tenenbaum and Bialer,” after Tenenbaum intercepted money the JSS had sent for its branch in Rembertów. “Because the JSS encounters various obstacles [from the Judenrat] it is unable to continue its activity,” concluded the Warsaw office.⁵

In May 1942, the JSS reported that several hundred of Rembertów’s Jews (including women) were performing labor for the military at the following sites: “Sortierbetrieb [at ‘Pocisk’], Munitionslager [‘Pocisk’], Ostbahn, and Durchgangslager.” The laborers would leave the ghetto and come back from work under an escort assigned by the German authorities,

assisted by the Jewish Police; the latter also “assisted the laborers during work.” The hourly rate of pay was between 26 and 48 groszy. At some work posts, laborers were also receiving a bowl of soup.⁶

The ghetto was liquidated on August 20, 1942.⁷ Survivor Stanisław Rudnicki recalls being woken up by screams and the sounds of shots. Tadeusz Łomankiewicz, who had permission to enter the ghetto as an employee of the local power station, testified that the Pocisk workers were not allowed to leave the ghetto for work that day. All the Jews were collected in front of the Judenrat building. Those who did not leave their dwellings were shot inside by the German Gendarmerie. The same day the Germans ordered the burial of their bodies in a ditch near the Judenrat.

The remainder of the ghetto inmates was then driven to Falenica. From there, the community was deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁸

On October 28, 1942, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the SS and Police Leader in the Generalgouvernement, ordered the establishment of six remnant ghettos in Distrikt Warsaw. Rembertów was announced as one of the locations. According to Rembertów native Łomankiewicz, as early as mid-September the Germans began fencing off parts of the former ghetto. “The fence was tight, and one could not compare it to the fence of the first ghetto. At the end of September—or in early October—approximately 300 Jews from Warsaw arrived in cars,” testified Łomankiewicz. He also estimated that “90 percent of them were members of the intelligentsia—doctors, dentists, lawyers and merchants.”

The ghetto laborers were escorted daily to the Pocisk factory by two or three soldiers stationed at the airfield. The ghetto’s sole gate was guarded by two Germans. The Jewish Police still functioned. Łomankiewicz estimates that this (remnant) ghetto (or forced labor camp) was liquidated at the end of May or the beginning of June 1943, when its residents were suddenly deported by railway cars to Treblinka.⁹

Some secondary sources do not mention the remnant ghetto (e.g., *Pinkas ha-kehillot*), or they state that although ordered, it was never actually established (e.g., Ruta Sakowska). Both report that two labor camps were established after the August 1942 liquidation. The Ringelblum Archives also include evidence on the existence of a labor camp located at 6 Kościuszko Street. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, in June 1943 the Gestapo murdered about 1,000 inmates. The last 50 Jews in Rembertów were murdered in August 1943.¹⁰

SOURCES For references on the fate of the Jewish community of Rembertów, see the following: Jacek A. Młynarczyk, “Akcja Reinhard w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943,” p. 69; Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” pp. 206, 209; and Marta Janczewska, “Aneks,” pp. 318—all in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informa-*

tor encyklopedyczny (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 255–256; Ruta Sakowska et al., eds., *Archiwum Ringelbluma: Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 3 (Warsaw: PWN, 1997), p. 279; and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 433–434.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/594 [AJDC]; 211/904, 211/1081-1084 [JSS]; 301/5636, 301/4742, 301/4817 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [Ring II/270/4, 5, and 7]; and RG-15.084M [Relacje]); and VHF (# 43738).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/594 (Rembertów), pp. 21, 24, 27–28, 38; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/901 (Rembertów), p. 6; 211/1082 (Warszawa), p. 19; and 211/1084 (Warszawa), p. 63.
2. VHF, # 43738, testimony of Irene Rubinstein, 1998; AŻIH, 301/5636 (Relacje), testimony of Stanisław Rudnicki, 1959.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/901, pp. 1–2, 4–5.
4. Ibid., 211/1081 (Warszawa), p. 34.
5. Ibid., 211/1083 (Warszawa), p. 44; and 211/1084, pp. 49, 69–70, 86.
6. Ibid., 211/901, p. 14; AŻIH, 301/5636.
7. AŻIH, 301/4742, testimony of Adolf Fingrut, 1950.
8. Ibid., 301/4817, testimony of Tadeusz Łomankiewicz, 1950; and 301/5636.
9. Ibid., 301/4817.
10. Ibid., Ring II/270/4, 5, and 7.

SARNAKI

Pre-1939: Sarnaki, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Siedlce, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sarnaki is located about 130 kilometers (81 miles) east of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population was 1,198 out of a total population of 1,588. Estimates of the Jewish population in 1939 range from 1,400 to 2,000.

Following the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, the Bug River became the new border between the Generalgouvernement and the Soviet Union, according to the secret Soviet-German agreement that divided the country. Sarnaki is located just a few miles to the west of the river. Many of Sarnaki’s Jewish residents had relatives residing in Siemiatycze, on the other side of the Bug. Therefore, about half of the Jewish population escaped Sarnaki to the Soviet-administered area. Some Jews escaped after the Germans entered the town and started harassing the Jews. On one occasion, Rabbi Abraham Kac and other Jews were forced to remove horse excrement from a stable with their bare hands.

The German authorities expelled thousands of Jews from the Reichsgau Wartheland (part of Poland that Germany an-

nexed) at the end of 1939. As a result, in the winter of 1939–1940, more than 800 Jewish deportees from Błaszki, near Kalisz, arrived in Sarnaki. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established to take care of the many issues that arose because of the presence of so many refugees. In March 1941, the chairman of the Jewish Council, Zajf, sent a letter to the headquarters of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Kraków, asking for assistance. In his letter he described the efforts of the local Jewish population to help the new arrivals. The number of refugees in need of help exceeded the size of the indigenous Jewish population.¹

The Jewish Council received financial help from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), which enabled them to purchase bread and distribute it among the poor. A few slices of bread a day per person was all that could be distributed. A newly established soup kitchen distributed approximately 5,500 portions in May 1941.²

In early 1941, the Germans used Jewish forced laborers from Sarnaki for building strategic roads in preparation for the June invasion of the Soviet Union. The wall surrounding the Jewish cemetery was taken apart, and the stones were used for road construction. That same winter, the forced laborers were used to install a phone line between Sarnaki and Zabuzé. The local peasants provided horse-drawn carts to transport the laborers.³ Many Jewish women had to work on Polish farms; this was considered a fortunate assignment, as it allowed them to obtain additional food for their families.

The Germans destroyed the great synagogue in Sarnaki soon after the invasion in September 1939. In the winter of 1940–1941, the wooden boards disappeared into the ovens of Polish deportees, who had arrived from Pomerania. The remains of the synagogue burned down as a result of a Soviet air raid on June 22, 1941, the first day of the German invasion of the USSR.

In the fall of 1941, the German authorities established a “separate Jewish quarter,” or open ghetto, in Sarnaki, although the announcement that it would be set up was probably made some time in advance.⁴ Jews from several nearby villages, including Górki, Łysów, and Kornica, were brought into the Sarnaki ghetto in November 1941, bringing the total population up to 1,180.⁵ These Jews were compressed within a small area, so that at least 10 or 15 people had to share a single room. Those moving into the ghetto were only permitted to take with them what they could carry in their arms. The ghetto was located near the marketplace between the streets of May 3rd, Szkolna, Berek Joselewicz, and Kolejowa. Many of the houses within the ghetto had been burned down in September 1939.

In December 1941, the Germans declared that soon the ghetto would be sealed to prevent the spread of disease. The deadline for sealing the ghetto was January 1, 1942. The authorities posted signs on the streets leading to the ghetto, proclaiming that anyone leaving or entering it without permission faced the death penalty. The ghetto remained unfenced, however, and only loosely guarded by the Polish (Blue) Police.

Initially, the Sarnaki Jews did not take the warning about the death penalty too seriously. Some Jews still left the ghetto at night to barter items for food, and Poles also came to the ghetto to order work from Jewish tailors and shoemakers.⁶

Jews working outside the ghetto received permits to go to their workplaces, which included the railway station and cutting wood in the forest. The Jewish Police escorted them every day. This work provided the main connection with the outside world. The new, more stringent restrictions caused hunger to intensify among the Jews, and according to Pesach Perlman, about 100 Jews died in the winter of 1941–1942. No Jews were shot for leaving the ghetto in January 1942, but in February, a Jewish woman and her one-year-old infant were arrested by the Polish (Blue) Police in a neighboring village. Despite appeals for their release, an official of the German police arrived and shot them at the Jewish cemetery.⁷

The Germans allowed a Polish man, Władysław Panczerski, to take out the dead from the ghetto and bury them at the Jewish cemetery. This was against the Jewish tradition, and Rabbi Kac received permission for one Jew to accompany Panczerski and be present during the burials.

The most powerful man on the Sarnaki Jewish Council was Gabriel Zucker, who reportedly took advantage of his position. He and his family did not suffer from hunger like the other Jews in the ghetto and ignored appeals from the poor for assistance.⁸

On May 15, 1942, the Germans ordered the transfer of most of the Jews in the Sarnaki ghetto to the ghettos in Łosice and Mordy, with probably around 500 going to each. The Jews had to hire local Poles with their carts to transfer them to their destination. The Judenrat paid for the transfer of the poorer Jews to the Mordy ghetto.

Eighty young men were selected to stay behind and clear out the ghetto. Their families were taken to the Łosice ghetto, and they were able to visit them once a week.⁹ The Sarnaki ghetto was turned into a labor camp, which existed for a few more months. Accounts as to the fate of the group of Jewish workers in Sarnaki differ. According to one source, officers of the Gestapo and the German police shot most of the laborers, although a few young men escaped and survived in hiding. Another source reports that the men were transferred to Plateków and were then deported by train to the Treblinka extermination camp from there.¹⁰

On August 19–20, 1942, the Jews from the Łosice and Mordy ghettos were marched to the marketplace in Siedlce. On Saturday, August 22, 1942, almost all the Jews were deported from the Siedlce railroad station to Treblinka.

According to the account of Jakub Chaszkieś, about 50 or 60 Jews escaped to the surrounding villages and forests at the time of the final roundups in August. The German and Polish (Blue) Police conducted intensive searches for them over the ensuing weeks and months. Local Poles were reluctant to assist Jews, as the Germans also threatened them with the death penalty. Nevertheless, about 20 Jews managed to survive until July 1944, when the Red Army drove the

Germans from the area. These Jews left Poland for Israel and other countries after the war.¹¹

SOURCES The main published source on the Sarnaki ghetto is the yizkor book, edited by Dov Shuval, *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Sarnaki* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Sarnaki be-Yisrael, 1968). Secondary sources containing information on the ghetto in Sarnaki include Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 691; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 445; and T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952). In addition, there is a short article by Rafał Zubkiewicz, “Okupacyjne losy Żydów w Sarnakach,” available at www.nawschodzie.pl.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/942, 211/619, 211/942, 301/2591 and 301/2271); IPN (ASG, sygn. 49, p. 147); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); VHF (# 41835); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 211/942.
2. Ibid., 210/619.
3. Testimony of Wincenty Cybulski, as cited in Zubkiewicz, “Okupacyjne losy Żydów w Sarnakach.”
4. AŻIH, 301/2591, testimony of Jakub Chaszkieś, dates it in the fall of 1941. Miron, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, p. 691, dates it in September 1941.
5. T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), Document 145, p. 277.
6. Testimony of Pesach Perlman, in Shuval, *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Sarnaki*, pp. 147–169; VHF, # 41835, testimony of Leon Rosenberg.
7. Testimony of Pesach Perlman, in Shuval, *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Sarnaki*, pp. 147–169.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. The respective sources are Miron, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, p. 691; and Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhard’ w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 39–74, here pp. 58–59.
11. AŻIH, 301/2591.

SIEDLCE

Pre-1939: Siedlce (Yiddish: Shedlits), city, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Siedlce, Distrikt Warschau, General-gouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Siedlce lies 90 kilometers (56 miles) east of Warsaw. On the eve of World War II, its 17,000 Jewish residents formed about half the population.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945



A unit of German soldiers views the burning of the synagogue in Siedlce, December 24, 1939.

USHMM WS #09534, COURTESY OF IPN

In 1939, from September 1 to September 9, German air attacks and attendant fires devastated Siedlce. Jews lived in 80 percent of homes destroyed, constituted 75 percent of the 2,000 city residents made homeless, and comprised the majority of the 600 civilians who died.¹ The Germans occupied Siedlce on September 11. On September 15, they rounded up more than 1,000 men (Christians and Jews). They shot dead 56 of them during a forced march to a prison in Węgrów and a labor camp in Ostrołęka. At the labor camp, Siedlce's Jews were beaten, starved, and humiliated by having their beards torn off.²

On September 29, 1939, the Germans evacuated Siedlce to make way for a brief Soviet occupation. When the Red Army withdrew behind the Bug River in early October, as many as 2,000 Jews accompanied them.

Upon reoccupying Siedlce on October 9, 1939, German soldiers broke into the synagogue, beat Jews praying there, and fired at those attempting escape. On Christmas Eve, the Germans set the synagogue on fire. They also plundered Jewish homes and stores and rounded up Jews for forced labor. In November, the Germans arrested the most prominent Jewish intellectuals, professionals, and businessmen and demanded 100,000 złoty for their release.³

After receiving the ransom, the Germans ordered a Jewish Council established. The 25-person body officially was led by Icchak Nachem Weintraub, head of the Zionist movement and religious community since 1926. Owing to Weintraub's advanced age, its acting leader was physician Henryk Loebel, chair of the Jewish Council's health division. Avraham Bressler commanded the 50-person unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst).

The Jewish Council's Social Welfare Division struggled to care for the impoverished. Aid from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) was insufficient to support 3,500 of the neediest Jews and about 1,000 refugees, many from nearby localities, including Kosów Lacki, Łosice, Mordy, Sokołów Podlaski, and Węgrów. A kitchen opened in October 1940 to feed the hungry closed by December.

The Jewish Council's labor department, led by Izrael Friedman, organized compulsory forced labor conscription. From January 1940, about 500 Siedlce Jews unloaded shipments of food at the military base outside town. From the spring of 1940, another 1,500 reported daily to reclaim land on the Liwiec River. Siedlce Jews also filled labor quotas at the Reckman Construction Company, which from January 1941 used 500 to 1,000 Jewish laborers to improve rail lines; at Kiesgrube, a labor camp established in the fall of 1941 near a gravel pit on the Siedlce-Łuków rail line; at the Gęsi Borek glassworks; and at the Wolfe and Goebel Construction Company. From early 1941, this last firm conscripted 2,000 local Jews to improve the Trakt Brzeski. Women worked mainly in agricultural labor.

In response to German demands, the Jewish Council paid 20,000 złoty in December 1939 and 100,000 złoty in November 1940. It offered money to ameliorate violence, as occurred on March 23, 1941, after the Germans avenged a soldier's death. In what became known as Siedlce's "German pogrom," they ransacked Jewish houses, murdered at least 6 Jews, injured more than 100, and arrested countless others. When the Germans threatened to shoot the arrested Jews, the Jewish Council bought their freedom for 100,000 złoty.⁴

Small, underground self-defense groups formed. Before the Germans expropriated their printing business, the Goldberg family shared German military and administrative orders they published, with a pre-war Polish friend, the head of the Peasant Battalion for Independence, a populist wing of the underground Polish Armed Organization. The Goldbergs also printed falsified documents for the organization. More violent forms of protest included the November 1939 murder of a Pole for collaborating with two German soldiers in expropriating goods from the Goldstein brothers' tailoring shops. In November 1940, some Jewish blacksmiths led by Chaim Mejer, working with Polish Socialist Party (PPS) activist Władysław Makarek, planted charges along the rail lines. In the winter of 1941–1942, acting Jewish Council chair Henryk Loebel asked Zionist youth to form an underground opposition group. This effort collapsed when the Polish contact, "Tadeusz" Żelazowski, was killed by the Gestapo.⁵

Following the April 1940 registration of all Jewish men aged 16 to 60 for labor conscription and a street-by-street census that November, the Germans moved, on August 2, 1941, to create a ghetto. The plan involved crowding 13,000 Jews into an area where 3,589 Jews and 369 Christians had lived. The ghetto was bordered in the east by Błonie Street and in the south by Piłsudski Street. Its southwesternmost tip was on Kochanowski Avenue. It followed an irregular pattern everywhere else. The neighborhood included portions of 11 streets, including parts of Jatkowa, Asłanowicz, Browarna, and May 1 Streets. On October 1, the ghetto was surrounded with barbed wire. Those without special permission were forbidden from entering or exiting the ghetto. Some 500 to 1,500 people evaded ghettoization by fleeing to other towns without ghettos, such as Międzyrzec Podlaski.⁶

In November 1941, the Germans ordered all the Jews from nearby villages to report to the ghetto. Among the villages

covered in the order were those in the following pre-war gminy: Czuryły, Domanice, Krześlin, Niwiski, Skórzec, Skupie, Stara Wieś, Suchożebry, Wiśniew, Wodynie, Zbuczyn, and Żeliszew. Late that year, Roma (Gypsies) and Sinti from Cologne and its environs, including Hürth, were deported to the ghetto. On May 23, 1942, Roma from Kreis Siedlce were given until June 15 to report to the ghetto.⁷

Such crowding provoked disease and starvation. Rooms of 10 square meters (108 square feet) housed as many as 15 people. Residents spilled into hallways, and some camped outside. In the winter of 1941–1942, a typhus epidemic daily claimed 18 to 25 lives.⁸

At first, many ghetto residents, particularly craftsmen, were able to sneak from the ghetto to take orders from their former Polish customers. Poles also entered the ghetto to trade, putting on armbands with the Jewish Star, required of all Siedlce Jews from December 1940. In January 1942, the Germans cracked down by executing 10 Jews they caught outside the ghetto.⁹

With the ghetto's enclosure, the Jewish administration appeared increasingly complicit in German policies. Jewish Police and sanitation forces violently enforced orders, encouraged by German promises that such compliance would save their members' lives. Sanitation force members beat women for not adequately clearing snow and assaulted others for refusing to accept more boarders in overcrowded homes.¹⁰ When, on March 3, 1942, 10 Jews, accused of shirking work obligations, were executed, the Jewish Council, under pressure from German authorities, issued a statement supporting the authorities' actions.¹¹

Survivors' accounts uniformly describe the moral deterioration of ghetto residents. To escape forced labor, the rich bribed officials or paid poorer Jews to fill their places. Residents fought over limited material resources. Notable exceptions were the Hassidic followers of the tzaddik of Radzyń who maintained their religious faith, devoted hours to collecting and organizing Jewish religious works, and assisted anyone who asked. "They formed an island in a sea of inhuman behavior, where it was considered normal to strip a corpse of everything that might be useful," one survivor later recalled.¹²

Under these conditions, self-defense proved difficult and came mainly from those with outside connections. Jan Emil Karpiński (Emanuel Alberg), a pre-war law student at Wilno University, received passes from the Jewish Council chair to teach illicitly non-Jewish children outside the ghetto. Through connections with one of his student's fathers, he met pharmacist Olszakowski, an underground PPS leader in Siedlce. Olszakowski provided Karpiński with underground newspapers to distribute in the ghetto. Abram Halber worked at the garage of the Criminal Police, where Junuszkiewicz (pseudonym Kornaga), a member of the underground Polish Home Army (AK), provided him with news of planned German arrests, forced labor roundups, and executions. Halber then warned the ghetto residents. Halber also distributed newspapers, arms, and ammunition to AK members.¹³

Jewish Council members clung to the hope the German need for laborers would save the Siedlce Jews. The Germans

fostered this misconception by portraying the liquidation of the nearby Mińsk Mazowiecki ghetto as retribution for the refusal of its residents to meet their labor obligations.¹⁴ Other Jews feared the worst, particularly from August 20, 1942, the day on which members of a Jewish work brigade reported they had unloaded a stalled freight car (en route to the Treblinka killing center). The workers found the wagon filled with the bodies of more than 100 Jews from Radom who had suffocated when a fire engulfed their train's locomotive. No one believed the Germans' claim that the dead were prisoners being moved to another jail, particularly after someone recognized family members among the victims.¹⁵

At dawn, on Saturday, August 22, 1942, Germans, mainly from the local offices of the SS and Sonderdienst, assisted by the Polish (Blue) Police, surrounded the ghetto. Also participating in the four-day liquidation were a detachment of Border Police (Grenzpolizei) from Platerów and a force of Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, probably part of Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) Warsaw or Sonderkommando Höfle. SS-Obersturmführer Erhard Schulz directed the Aktion. Schulz gave the 10,000 ghetto residents until 10:00 A.M. to report to the square by the Jewish cemetery. Ukrainian auxiliaries and Sonderdienst patrols drove Jews from the ghetto, shooting dead those who refused to leave or were too infirm to comply. At the square, the doomed were forced to sit in a crouched position for at least 30 hours in unbearable heat. The German head of the local Labor Office pleaded with Schulz to spare craftsmen and laborers from expulsion. At about 2:00 P.M., Schulz ordered Jewish men, aged 15 to 40, to line up at the Jewish cemetery. Over the next 5 hours, he chose 600 men to retain for labor.

As the heat in the square grew intense, the Germans resorted to violence to enforce order. When Jewish Council member Furman rose to his feet around 11:00 A.M., to ask for a delivery of water, he was shot dead. The Germans then deployed machine guns, aiming at those who defied the orders to remain crouched. By midafternoon, as the Germans began quenching their thirst with beer, the violence became more random, with intoxicated policemen, led by KdS commander Julius Dube, indiscriminately firing into the crowd. When the Polish fire department finally sprayed water on the assembled Jews in the evening, more than 2,000 had been killed by gunshots. Shots also rang from the cemetery, where the Germans were executing those found hiding in the ghetto as well as Jews from some work details.¹⁶

Violence continued on Sunday, August 23, 1942. During the late-afternoon march to the train station, of approximately 17,000 Jews, including around 8,000 newly arrived from the ghettos of Mordy and Łosice (among them the Jews from Sarnaki, resettled in May in Mordy and Łosice), the Germans shot dead those who fled the march. At the station, several German soldiers sprayed bullets into the crowd and into already loaded railway wagons. In the ghetto, the Germans and Ukrainian auxiliaries continued to uncover and shoot Jews in hiding. On this day, about 200 to 300 Jews perished. In addition, on August 24, a group of local SS, led by Albert Fabisch,

the Stadtkommissar of Siedlce, murdered at the Jewish hospital 60 patients and 40 personnel, including Jewish Council chair Loebel.¹⁷

The 600 men retained for labor were ordered to the northwestern part of the old ghetto. Within a week, an additional 1,500 to 2,000 survivors from Siedlce, including many Roma, as well as Jewish women and children, filled this "small" or "triangular" ghetto bounded by Sokołowski, Asłanowicz, and November 11 Streets. An October 28, 1942, order by Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, head of the SS and Police (Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer, HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, further increased the population in the reconstituted ghetto. The order announced that Siedlce would be one of six remaining "Jewish residential areas" in Distrikt Warschau and promised safety to Jews there. The order drew another 1,500 to 2,500 Jews to the ghetto, including fugitives from ghetto liquidations in Łosice, Węgrów, Kałuszyn, Sokołów Podlaski, Międzyrzec Podlaski, and Łuków.¹⁸

The final liquidation of the Siedlce ghetto began on November 25, 1942. That day, the Germans moved the residents of the triangular ghetto to the Gęsi Borek encampment, about 3 kilometers (2 miles) away. The transfer was allegedly to control a typhus outbreak in the small ghetto. The Germans gave the appearance that Gęsi Borek would be its residents' permanent and peaceful home by issuing Jewish Council members three-month residence passes, looking aside as ghetto inhabitants violated orders to bring in only what they could carry, and allowing the Jews and Roma to barter freely with Polish peasants.

Some remember that the final liquidation of the Gęsi Borek ghetto occurred three days later, on November 28, when the Germans, assisted by Polish (Blue) Police, rounded up the residents, including some Roma, and marched them to the Niwiski railway station (in Brzozzków village). The elderly Icchak Nachem Weintraub, titular head of the Jewish Council, led the procession.¹⁹ Another account places the ghetto liquidation on December 3. It holds that when no railway cars were waiting at Niwiski, the procession was marched back to Gęsi Borek. There, the Jews and Roma were packed into a closely guarded building. German Gendarmes then called people out by name, including all those with Jewish Council connections, and executed them. The Polish (Blue) Police commander shot Avraham Bressler, chief of the Jewish Police. The next morning, on December 4, the remaining Jews and Roma were marched again to the railway station.²⁰

Although a number of those in the procession donned prayer garments, a larger group, including craftsmen and members of the Jewish Police, resisted deportation. Master locksmith Symcha Wilk, Meloch Halber, and several other men smuggled tools onto the transport and forced open the doors to their wagons, permitting a large number of individuals, including Rabbi Aria Nejman, to jump from the train. The guards on the train murdered those who remained behind. When the train arrived at the Treblinka extermination camp, Jewish prisoners unloading the transport discovered the wagons full of thousands of naked, beaten, bullet-ridden corpses.²¹

As many as 200 to 300 people survived the German extermination of the Jewish and Roma communities of Siedlce. Emil Karpiński, Dawid and Ida Tenenbojm, and a few others arranged for false identity papers, enabling them to pass as Poles. Others, such as Herzel Kave, joined by friends Kiwerant and Nelkienbojm, stowed away on trains they believed to be taking men or materials beyond the borders of the Generalgouvernement or the Reich. Another group of agricultural laborers, originally from Siedlce, assigned to an estate in Drupia, fled to the woods in November 1942 after the Polish overseer warned them he had received orders to turn them over to the Gestapo. The laborers formed a 30-person armed partisan unit, which conducted operations around Łuków.²²

A number of Poles sheltered Jews. Four pre-war friends of Cypora Jabłoń-Zonszajn took care of her one-year-old daughter Rachela.²³ The family of postal worker Witold Kozłowski found hiding places for another 8 Jews, including former neighbors Rachel and Izrael Halberstadt and Rabbi Aria Neiman.²⁴ In (Stare) Opole-Sabinka, the family of Czesław Osiński, a pre-war secondary school director and PPS leader, hid 17 Jews, including E. Landau, a nurse wounded during the liquidation of the Jewish hospital.²⁵

However, far fewer survived to see the war's end. Some, including Abram Halber, died of illnesses contracted in the ghetto. Twenty-one of the 30 partisans perished in combat operations. The Germans killed Jews they found hiding during routine patrols. Still others, including several Jews who jumped from the train heading towards Treblinka and 16 of the 17 Jews hidden by Osiński, are believed to have been killed by Poles.²⁶

Of the fewer than 150 Jewish survivors, only Rachel and Izrael Halberstadt remained in Siedlce after the war. At post-war trials in East Germany, Willi Richter and Edmund Langer, two former members of the Grenzpolizei detachment in Plateków, were convicted of numerous crimes, including murders committed during the Siedlce ghetto liquidations. They received life sentences.

SOURCES Coauthor Edward Kopówka has written *Żydzi Siedleccy* (Siedlce, 2001), which discusses the experiences of Jews, Roma, and Sinti in the Siedlce ghetto. The book's bibliography and detailed footnotes including references in a number of languages offer an important departure point for those interested in researching the Siedlce ghetto. The yizkor books, Elimelekh Faynzilber, ed., *Af di burves fun mayn beym: Hurbn Shedlets* (Tel Aviv: 1952) and *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Shedlets* (Buenos Aires: ha-Irgunim shel yots'e Shedlits be-Yisrael uve-Argentynah, 1956), also contain substantial secondary coverage and testimonies from survivors. The second book has been cited here in a partial, unpublished Polish translation, by Adam Bielecki, titled "Księgi pamięci," available at APSi, used by author Kopówka in his research.

Published memoirs by survivors discussing the fate of the Siedlce Jewish community include Gitel Donath, *My Bones Don't Rest in Auschwitz: A Lonely Battle to Survive German Tyranny* (Montreal: Kaplan Publishing, 1999); the testimony of Gedali Niewiadomski, in Henryk Grynberg, *Children of Zion*, trans. Jacqueline Mitchell (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998); Nelli Rotbart, *A Long Journey: A Holocaust*

Memoir and After: Poland, Soviet Union, Canada (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies, 2002); Edi Weinstein, *Quenched Steel: The Story of an Escape from Treblinka*, ed. Noah Lasman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002); Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1992); and Eta Wróbel, *My Life, My Way: The Extraordinary Memoir of a Jewish Partisan in World War II Poland* (New York: Yivo Institute for Jewish Research, 2006).

Among the more important witness statements are Noah Lasman, *Pięćdziesiąt kilometrów od Treblinka* (Warsaw: Borgin, 1994), available in an earlier Hebrew-language edition; Emil Karpiński, "Wspomnienia z okresu okupacji," *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1989): 65–89; and Agata Dąbrowska, ed., "Pamiętnik Cypory Jabłoń-Zonszajn ur. w 1915 r. i zamieszkałej w Siedlcach do 1942 r.," in *Szkice podlaskie*, no. 9 (2000): 228–244, with the last available in a partial English translation, "Siedlce Memoirs," at the Aktion Reinhard Death Camps Web site. The USHMM is the repository for the original manuscripts of Karpiński and Jabłoń-Zonszajn and in the latter case additional materials from Zofia (Olszakowska) Glazer and Irena Zawadzka, two of the aid givers of Rachela Jabłoń-Zonszajn. For this reason, the memoirs are cited in the entry as USHMM, 2003.84.1, and USHMM, 1.2002.3, respectively.

Secondary accounts in Polish considered important include for the March 1941 "German pogrom" Wanda Więchtchorzewska, "Zróżdła do dziejów okupacji hitlerowskiej na Podlasiu południowo-zachodnim," in Władysław Ważniewski, ed., *Podlasie w czasie II wojny światowej* (Siedlce: Wyższa Szkoła Rolniczo-Pedagogiczna w Siedlcach, 1997); and the unpublished manuscript, held at the Ossolineum (i.e., ZNiO), by Lucjan Koć, "Pomoc i współpraca z ludnością żydowską ludności wiejskiej powiatu siedleckiego z uwzględnieniem sytuacji zagadnień żydowskich innych powiatów Podlasia—w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej w Polsce," also covering Jewish self-defense before, during, and after the ghetto's establishment, discussing efforts to develop and maintain communication between Jewish Socialists in Warsaw and Siedlce, and describing Polish-Christian assistance. In addition to Koć, Jewish resistance is covered by Emil Karpiński, Eta Wróbel, and Stanisława Lewandowska, *Ruch oporu na Podlasiu* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, 1976).

Also considered of primary importance are the testimonies and historical materials collected by Jontel (Jankiel) Goldman for the Siedlce branch of the State Commission for Historical Preservation (Państwowa Służba Ochrony Zabytków, Województwo mazowieckie, Oddział terenowy w Siedlcach) in conjunction with plans (only some realized) to establish several monuments to commemorate the Jewish community, available in an unpublished manuscript, W. Sobczyk, ed., "Cmentarz-pomnik męczeństwa narodu żydowskiego w Siedlcach" (Unpub. MMS, Siedlce, 1961), at the organization's Siedlce archives. Contemporary press coverage includes "Siedlce," *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 1, January 3, 1941, p. 5.

Coverage of the Roma and Sinti in the Siedlce ghetto can be found in the aforementioned memoirs of Jewish survivors Weinstein and Karpiński and in the more scholarly Michael Zimmerman, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische Lösung der Zigeunerfrage* (Hamburg, 1996), pp. 278–283; and Karola Fings and Frank Sparing, *Rassismus-Lager-Völkermord: Die nationalsozialistische Zigeunerverfolgung in Köln* (Cologne: Emons, 2005), pp. 219–222.

German orders pertaining to the Siedlce ghetto and documentation related to the efforts of Leon Feiner, Jan Karski, and the Polish London government-in-exile to make known its liquidation in the West appear in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw, 1957), pp. 277–279, 310–314. Also important is *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKB-ZHwP, 1985); and *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), Lfd. Nr. 1035 and Lfd. Nr. 1038, respectively, for the postwar trials of Willi Richter and Edmund Langer.

Photographs taken for the Karski report are available at APSi; the visual iconography and diary of Hubert Pfoch, a German soldier, are discussed in Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness: From Mercy Killing to Mass Murder, a Study of Franz Stangl* (London, 1974), p. 158–159.

A large amount of documentation exists on the Poles who aided Jewish fugitives, with the most significant in English Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 87–88, 166, 326, 390, 568, 789, 862, 927–928. An important testimony by Zofia Olszakowska-Glazer is located on the Web site of the Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej at www.ceo.org.pl/portal/b_wiadomosci_doc?docId=37891.

Unpublished documentation relating to the Siedlce ghetto can be found in the following archives: AAN; APSi (e.g., 36 [2362, 2364, 2368], 62 [334/2], 334/2, 1290); AŻIH (e.g., 210/621–622; 211 [126, p. 9; 949–950]; 301 [5758, 5867, 6307, 6383, 6436, 6517]; 313/41); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6873 and 6878); FVA; IPN (e.g., ASG, GKBZHwP [OKBZH-Si, 26/30]); USHMM (Acc.1996.A.0223 [AŻIH 313]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-10.114; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG] [49/151–159]; RG-50.488*0171); VHF (e.g., # 2828, 24291, 30396, 35649, 39119, 42698, 42918); and YVA (e.g., O-16 [1589, 2555, 3303, 4178]). The Muzeum Walki i Męczeństwa w Treblince (Museum of Struggle and Martyrdom in Treblinka), directed by Edward Kopówka, also has unique holdings pertaining to the Siedlce ghetto.

Edward Kopówka and Laura Crago

NOTES

1. IPN, GKBZHwP, OKBZH-Si, 26/30; USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/622, p. 18.
2. Testimony of Herzel Kawe (Kawe), in “Księga pamięci,” p. 635.
3. Donath, *My Bones*, pp. 8–9, 19–20.
4. BA-L, B 162/6873, pp. 322–323; ZNiO, Koć, “Pomoc i współpraca,” p. 120; “Księga pamięci,” pp. 706–707; Donath, *My Bones*, pp. 56–57.
5. USHMM, 2003.84.1, pp. 5–6.
6. APSi, 36 (Akta miasta Siedlce), 2362 (Wykaz ludności getta siedleckiego 7.11.1941), 2364 (Zniszczenia wojenne 1939), 2368 (Stan ludności 1940), and 1290 (Zbiór afiszy okupacyjnych powiatu siedleckiego), Ogłoszenie # 1 (August 2, 1941); Donath, *My Bones*, pp. 67–69.
7. APSi, 1290, Zarządzenia, # 1 (November 25, 1941), # A67/42 (May 23, 1942).

8. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0223, 313/41, p. 80.
9. Ibid., p. 95; RG-50.488*0171, interview with Henryk Maliszewski; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów*, p. 236.
10. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0223, 313/41, pp. 40–45, 80–81, 85–90, 94.
11. Ibid., 2003.84.1, pp. 3, 7; VHF, # 24291, testimony of Aria Leib (Nejman) Newman.
12. Lasman, *Pięćdziesiąt kilometrów*, pp. 7–9.
13. USHMM, 2003.84.1, pp. 8–9; AŻIH, 301/6307, testimony of Izaak Halber, pp. 1–3.
14. USHMM, 1.2002.3, “Pamiętnik,” p. 1, 2003.84.1, p. 9.
15. Ida Jomtov-Tenenbojm testimony, in “Księga pamięci,” p. 650; Faynzilber, *Hurbn Sheddlets*, pp. 34–35.
16. USHMM, 2003.84.1, pp. 12–13; Kawe, in “Księga pamięci,” pp. 635–636.
17. Weinstein, *Quenched Steel*, pp. 29–35; BA-L, B 162/6873, p. 323; USHMM, 2003.84.1, pp. 7–15, 1.2002.3, pp. 1–4, 7; Lasman, *Pięćdziesiąt kilometrów*, pp. 22–24.
18. USHMM, 1.2002.3, pp. 5–6, 2003.84.1, pp. 12–18; Weinstein, *Quenched Steel*, p. 110.
19. Goldman, “Materiał historyczny,” in Sobczyk, “Cmentarz-pomnik,” p. 23; Jomtov-Tenenbojm, in “Księga pamięci,” pp. 670–671.
20. Weinstein, *Quenched Steel*, pp. 110–113.
21. USHMM, RG-10.114; VHF, # 24291; Willenberg, *Revolt*, pp. 46–47.
22. AŻIH, 301/6383, testimony of Ela Gorzeliński.
23. USHMM, 1.2002.3, Szymon Jabłoń and Rachel Zonszajn letters.
24. AŻIH, 301/5758, testimony of Witold Kowalski, pp. 1–2; 301/6436, Rachel and Israel Halberstadt declaration, pp. 1–4; VHF, # 24291; # 35649, testimony of Janusz Kowalski.
25. VHF, # 39119, testimony of Bogdan Osiński.
26. Weinstein, *Quenched Steel*, p. 113; VHF, # 24291; # 39119.

SIENNICA

Pre-1939: Siennica, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Siennica is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) east-southeast of Warsaw and 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Mińsk Mazowiecki. In 1921, 560 Jews were living in Siennica, comprising 56.7 percent of the town's total population. In September 1939, there were 704 Jewish inhabitants in Siennica.

German soldiers occupied the town on September 13, 1939. All inhabitants of Siennica, Jews and Poles, were rounded up and held in the church of the local monastery. According to one testimony, a German officer ordered the priest to send one man with a message for the Polish army, which had established a defense line 3 kilometers (2 miles) from Siennica. The man had to present the Polish officer with an ultimatum—that if they did not retreat or surrender, the Germans would burn alive all the hostages in the church. The Polish forces soon retreated, and the Germans released the hostages.¹

The same day, the Germans set fire to the town. Around 80 percent of the buildings in Siennica were burned to the ground, including 43 of the 46 Jewish homes.² On that day, Wehrmacht soldiers killed 24 people, Poles and Jews from Siennica and the surrounding area. These murders were probably a reprisal Aktion, following the killing of a German soldier in the vicinity.³

From the first months of the occupation, the Jews were required to perform forced labor. In October 1939, the German authorities sent to Garwolin a group of Jewish men, all aged over 13 years, where they lived in barracks and worked. After one month there they returned.⁴ Jews from Siennica also worked on the construction of roads for the German firm of Schmidt.⁵ A group of Jewish men from Siennica was taken to the labor camp in Jozefów and worked on the regulation of the Vistula River and on the irrigation of the fields.⁶

There were not any German soldiers or German police based directly in Siennica, but German Gendarmes visited Siennica regularly from Mińsk Mazowiecki, once or twice per day.⁷

The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), a Jewish police force, and later a Jewish Social-Self Help (JSS) organization in Siennica. The Judenrat and the Jewish police force each had 12 members.⁸ Lejb Kózka was appointed as the chairman of the Judenrat in Siennica. Aron Lubelski was the secretary of the Judenrat. Also among the members of the Judenrat were L. Goldsztejn, Sz. Jablonka, and A. Stokfisz (their signatures can be found on Judenrat documentation from 1941).⁹

The JSS and its aid committee provided assistance to more than 200 people.¹⁰ Among them there were mostly inhabitants of Siennica, whose houses and property had been burned (296 Jews in January 1941), and refugees from other localities (48 people in January 1941).¹¹

The aid committee was able to provide assistance, thanks to donations from members of the Jewish community in Siennica, which provided about 25 percent of the necessary funds.¹² Additional funds for social assistance came from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and the central offices of the JSS in Kraków. These funds were mainly used to buy food and fuel (wood and coal). The support received from the AJDC in February, March, and April 1940 enabled the aid committee to open a public soup kitchen.¹³

The JSS organization in Siennica received between 400 and 600 złoty of support from the AJDC and the JSS every two months in 1941. Half of this came from the AJDC and half from the JSS. All of these donations were applied to the provision of material support (mainly food).¹⁴

The German authorities established a ghetto in Siennica in November 1941. Throughout November, the Judenrat in Siennica tried to convince the Germans to permit the Jews to remain in Siennica and not to resettle them into a ghetto in another town. On November 23, the Germans decided that the Jews could stay in Siennica and that a ghetto would be set up there. In addition, all Jewish families from the nearby villages had to move into the ghetto. As a result of this decision,

around 30 Jewish families were moved into the Siennica ghetto, leading to a deterioration of living conditions in the ghetto.¹⁵

The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence or a wall or even any barbed wire. There were only signs posted that Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto area.¹⁶

According to some testimonies, a major event in the Siennica ghetto was the short visit of a rabbi from Otwock in 1942. He went into hiding during the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto and was then denounced. When the Germans caught him, he told them that he would give them a large amount of gold if they would let him go to a camp where Jews were still living. Apparently the Germans agreed to this. On his way to the camp, he stopped in Siennica to pray in the synagogue. All of the town's Jews were waiting for him and the message he would give them. After the prayer, he told them: "If you are still staying in the town, it means that God has chosen you to stay and that you will go back to work and you will survive."¹⁷

The Siennica ghetto was liquidated on October 18, 1942. According to the testimonies of survivors, four German soldiers arrived in the town on the day prior to the liquidation. They ordered the Judenrat members to assemble in the pharmacy. The Germans told them that at 8:00 A.M. on the following day all the Jews of Siennica would have to go to the town of Mrozy and no Jews would be permitted to stay in Siennica. According to survivor testimony, the Judenrat was given the choice that either the Jews themselves could organize the resettlement to Mrozy or the Germans would send armed units to implement it. The members of the Judenrat were aware that the deployment of German forces would doubtless entail considerable brutality and the killing of Jews on the spot. Therefore, the Judenrat decided to organize and implement the transfer itself.¹⁸

On the following day, October 18, 1942, at 5:00 A.M.,¹⁹ the column of Jews with horse wagons carrying the old and the sick traveled the 16 kilometers (10 miles) to the town of Mrozy, where the railway station was located. The column was escorted by the Jewish Police, and survivors maintain that they did not see any German or Polish police involved. After several hours, at 4:00 P.M., the column arrived at the Mrozy railway station, and from here they were sent on to the extermination camp at Treblinka.²⁰

Some of the Jews from Siennica, after arriving in Mrozy, organized themselves and escaped to the village of Mienia, where there was a farm on which the Germans had created a labor camp for Jews. Some of these Jews managed to survive the war.²¹

SOURCES Articles on the Jewish community of Siennica can be found in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), p. 437; and in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1180.

The book by Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007)

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contains brief information on the Siennica ghetto, pp. 168, 169, 216.

Additional information on the ghetto and German crimes in Siennica can also be found in *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952), 120; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 451; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1985), p. 347.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Siennica under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/624 [AJDC Siennica]; 211/953 [JSS Siennica]); IPN (AGK, Kolekcja “Ob,” sygn. 177); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 13); and VHF (# 398, 3813, 39094).

Grzegorz Kołacz

NOTES

1. VHF, # 3813, testimony of George Shedletzky.
2. AŻIH, 210/624 (AJDC Siennica), p. 3, report of February 13, 1941.
3. USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 13); *Rejestr miejsc . . . : Województwo siedleckie*, p. 347.
4. VHF, # 3813.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. AŻIH, 210/624, pp. 1–3; 211/953 (JSS Siennica, 1941–1942), pp. 1–29.
10. Ibid., 210/28 (AJDC), p. 6, report of June 1, 1940.
11. Ibid., 210/624, p. 1.
12. Ibid.; 211/953.
13. Ibid., 210/624, p. 3.
14. Ibid., 211/953.
15. Ibid.
16. VHF, # 3813.
17. Ibid., # 398, testimony of Ben Shedletzky.
18. Ibid.
19. The ghetto was liquidated on October 18, 1942, but Ben Shedletzky, who provides this description, dates it in July 1942.
20. VHF, # 398; and # 3813.
21. Ibid., # 398; and # 3813.

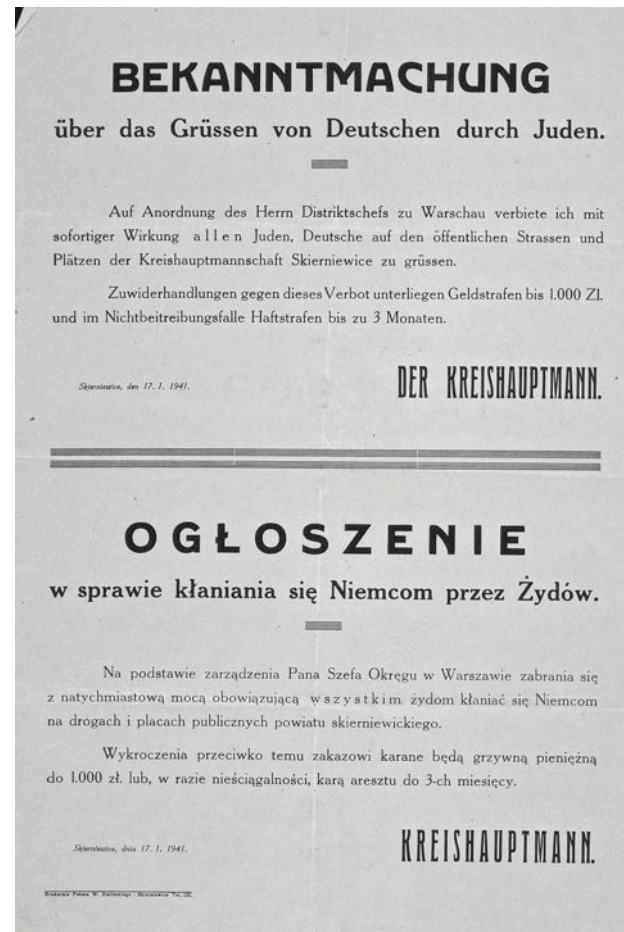
SKIERNIEWICE

Pre-1939: Skierniewice (Yiddish: Skerneyevits), town, Łódź województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: center of Kreis Skierniewice, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łódź województwo, Poland

Skierniewice is located 66 kilometers (41 miles) southwest of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 4,333 Jews living in the town. A similar number of Jews were residing there on the eve of World War II.

Following the capture of the town on September 9, 1939, the Germans seized Jews and humiliated them at the market square, violently plucking out their beards. Jewish property was plundered during the first days of the occupation.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945



Announcement in German and Polish issued by the Kreishauptmann of Skierniewice on January 17, 1941, proclaiming a new regulation that prohibits Jews from greeting Germans on the streets or in public places. The announcement reads: "Announcement about the greeting of Germans by Jews.

By the command of the District Chief of Warsaw, I prohibit all Jews from greeting Germans on the streets and public places in the city of Skierniewice. This is effective immediately.

Resistance to this prohibition will result in a fine of up to 1,000 złoty. If the person cannot afford to pay this fine, he will be punished with a jail sentence no longer than 3 months.

Skierniewice, January 17, 1941.

The Kreishauptmann"

USHMM WS #N64834, COURTESY OF MUZEUM NIEPODLEGŁOŚCI

At the end of October 1939, the Kreishauptmann in Skierniewice, Regierungsrat Dr. Rupe, ordered Jews to wear arm-bands bearing the Star of David and established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by the teacher Herman Guzik. His deputy was Alter Lewkowicz. The Judenrat was required to deliver a specific number of Jewish forced laborers aged 12 to 60 each day. Soon the Judenrat permitted better-off Jews to pay for substitutes, who received 5 złoty per day. The Jews worked at the military barracks, at the train station, and for the town authority. At the end of 1939, the Germans burned down the main synagogue and also desecrated the Torah scrolls in the shtetlekh (prayer house) of the Ger Hasidim.¹

In the last months of 1939 and in 1940, some 2,500 Jewish refugees arrived in Skierniewice, almost all of them after fleeing or being expelled from those parts of Poland that had been annexed to the Reich, including from Łódź, Zgierz, Aleksandrów Łódzki, Brzeziny, and Włocławek. They arrived in a weary and impoverished condition, and the Jews of Skierniewice appealed to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) for financial assistance. The Judenrat used the money they received to supply beds and heating stoves for the refugees; it also opened an infirmary and a public kitchen for them. Subsequently these welfare services came to benefit the native Jews of Skierniewice as well, when conditions in the town deteriorated further.² By the fall of 1940, at least 1,300 Jews in Skierniewice were receiving welfare support.³

On September 9, 1940, the Skierniewice Kreishauptmann reported to Generalgouverneur Hans Frank in Kraków that 200 Jews from his Kreis had been sent to the collection point in Warsaw, for transfer to labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.⁴

On October 15, 1940, the Kreishauptmann published an announcement (*Bekanntmachung*) about the establishment of a special residential area for Jews in the town of Skierniewice. The announcement included a map, which marked the area of the ghetto. The Jews were given until November 15 to move into the ghetto, and all non-Jews also had to be evacuated by this date. The chairman of the Jewish Council was made responsible for the allocation of apartments within the ghetto. The ghetto was to be surrounded with walls, but only fences were to block those streets that formed part of the ghetto boundary.⁵

The ghetto was located in the most dilapidated neighborhood of the town. Its streets included Batory (Piotrków), Stryków, Raweska, Jawia, the alley of the rabbi's house, and the alley of the *mikveh*. Soon it was enclosed by a high fence with just one gate to either exit or enter, on Raweska Street. Piotrków Street, which passed through the ghetto, was out of bounds for the Jews; they had to cross it on a wooden bridge.⁶

Living conditions in the ghetto were very overcrowded, with three or four families sharing a house. Some houses had no heating or indoor plumbing. One survivor recalls that the outhouses were overflowing due to the lack of a proper sewage system, but the human excrement was then sold to the local farmers as fertilizer.⁷ In the ghetto there was also a unit of Jewish Police, a post office, and a Jewish hospital directed by Dr. Rosenthal.

In January or February 1941, the more than 6,000 Jews in the Skierniewice ghetto were informed that they would have to transfer to the Warsaw ghetto by March. This was part of a large-scale plan to clear all the Jews from the Kreise of Distrikt Warschau to the west of the city. Some Jews were able to transport some of their possessions with them to Warsaw on wagons rented from non-Jews. The departure took place in an orderly fashion without aggressive intervention by the German police.

On March 4, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Skierniewice reported that in view of the planned expulsion of all the Jews of the Kreis to the Warsaw ghetto by mid-March, most of the

Jews in the Jewish residential areas (ghettos) in Skierniewice, in Jeżów, and at the Rogów railway station had voluntarily moved to Warsaw. In Skierniewice, there were now only about 180 Jews. The same report noted that in the course of the departure of the Jews in February, 6,252 people had been deloused and 6,845 had been bathed. The sanitary facilities, which had been established for the Jews, remained operational and were to be used in the future for the Aryan population. The houses abandoned by the Jews were being cleaned and disinfected by work columns supervised by the disinfection staff. The removal of the Jews had resulted in a shortage both of agricultural laborers and of craftsmen.⁸

At the time of the Jews' departure from the town, Zenon Drzewiecki, a Pole, who worked for the town's welfare administration but also had links to the Polish underground, gave temporary shelter in an Old People's Home to a number of Jews who had gone into hiding. However, it was too dangerous for them to stay there for long, and they had to be moved to safer locations.⁹

On arrival in the Warsaw ghetto, most of the Jews from Skierniewice were put into improvised hostels designated for refugees. It appears that not all of the Jews from Skierniewice were registered in the group hostels, and some are known to have gone to other towns in the Generalgouvernement, such as Rawa Mazowiecka, Biała Rawska, and Przygłów, where they had relatives or contacts. A JSS report dated March 21, 1940, noted that 3,300 Jews from Skierniewice were among the more than 40,000 Jews recently arrived in the Warsaw ghetto as part of organized groups.¹⁰

A large number of the refugees from Skierniewice died of starvation and contagious diseases in the Warsaw ghetto. Some left for other places in the Generalgouvernement, and a few even returned to Skierniewice to live on the Aryan side. Many of the Skierniewice Jews in the Warsaw ghetto who survived until the summer of 1942 were among those deported to the Treblinka extermination camp at that time.

Only 43 Jews are known to have returned to Skierniewice in 1945.

SOURCES Publications concerning the fate of the Jews of Skierniewice during the Holocaust include the following: Yitshak Perlov, ed., *Seyfer Skernyevits: Le-zykber der fartilktter kebileh kdosheh* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Skernivits be-Yisrael, 1955); Danuta Dabrowska and Abraham Wein, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 166–171; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 720–722.

The ghetto in Skierniewice is mentioned also in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 113; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 212.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/633; 211/967, 1075; 301/2063; 302/213; Ring I/908); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-14.052 [BA-BL, R 52];

RG-15.079 [Ring]); VHF (e.g., # 214, 10031, 32285); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2933, O-3/3186; O-6/21).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2063, testimony of Zenon Drzewiecki; 302/213, testimony of Zenon Drzewiecki; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/967, p. 2; Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 166–171.

2. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 166–171.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/967, p. 8. Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, p. 212, give the figure of 1,500.

4. USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/23, p. 18, Kreishauptmann Skierniewice, monthly report, September 9, 1941.

5. See Erster Bekanntmachung über die Errichtung eines besonderen Wohngebiet für Juden in der Stadt Skierniewice, October 15, 1940 (YVA, O-6/21), published in Miron, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, p. 721. The accompanying text, however, states only that the ghetto was established in October 1940.

6. Dabrowska and Wein, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 1, *Lodz and Its Region*, pp. 166–171. VHF, # 214, testimony of Anna Fischer, 1994, also mentions the bridge. See also Perlov, *Seyfer Skernyevits*, pp. 456–457.

7. VHF, # 214; and # 32285, testimony of Adam Sulkowicz, 1997.

8. See USHMM, RG-14.052 (BA-BL), R 52III/29, pp. 88, 96, Kreishauptmann Skierniewice, monthly report, March 4, 1941.

9. AŻIH, 301/2063; 302/213.

10. Perlov, *Seyfer Skernyevits*, p. 431; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1075, pp. 28–29.

SOBIENIE JEZIORY

Pre-1939: Sobienie Jeziory, village, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sobienie Jeziory is located 42 kilometers (26 miles) south-east of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 1,439 Jews in Sobienie Jeziory. They comprised just over 76 percent of the village's population.

The Germans established a ghetto in the village in September 1941, 11 months after Distrikt Warschau chief Ludwig Fischer's October 2, 1940, order to establish ghettos for the region's Jews.¹ The ghetto, which spanned about 75 percent of the town, covered the territory bordered by Warszawska, Piwońska, and Garwolińska Streets. Little is known about the ghetto's subsequent administration. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by A. Friedsohn, a metal goods store owner and political activist in the interwar period. The date of its establishment is unclear. Friedsohn also headed the town's Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee.² The existence of a Jewish police force is not mentioned in known accounts of ghetto life.

The ghetto experienced population growth, as the Germans used it as a regional concentration point for Jews from neighboring towns and villages en route to extermination camps. In February 1941, 2,250 Jews were living in the village. By October 1941, a month after the ghetto's establishment, the population had expanded to 3,680. Some accounts claim the ghetto's population in the fall of 1941 was much greater, with some 6,000 residents. Greater consensus exists over the ghetto's overall population peaking at the beginning of September 1942, though here, too, population statistics differ. According to some estimates, at the end of that month, on the eve of the ghetto's liquidation, more than 8,000 people were confined there, but these figures are likely too high. Other evidence suggests that by then Sobienie Jeziory's ghetto population may have been reduced considerably, with a part of the village's Jews deported earlier. Although Sobienie Jeziory's ghetto contained escapees from larger ghettos, including the Warsaw ghetto, the overwhelming majority of its population came from the surrounding area, especially nearby villages and towns. In January 1941, Jewish residents of Sobienie Jeziory included deportees and refugees from Falenica, Wilga, Osieck, Piaseczno, Karczew, Górzno, Pilawa, Otwock, Góra Kalwaria, Garwolin, and Huta Dąbrowa.³

The 17 German policemen assigned to the local Gendarmerie post, under the leadership of Kreis commander Roechel, engaged in antisemitic acts and violence against the Jewish population and limited the access of ghetto residents to illicit food supplies. Local police officials desecrated the Jewish cemetery, ordering the removal of its headstones for the construction of a walkway and a patio at the Gendarmerie post in the pre-war Catholic parish rectory. Some eyewitnesses later attested that the local Gendarmes gathered daily "to hunt Jews on the ghetto's streets." Officers Gatzke, an ethnic German from Silesia, and Lentz gained reputations as "notorious Jew hunters," who "competed over the number they killed."⁴ As the German police unleashed random violence, they also curtailed efforts by some local Christians to supplement the ghetto's food resources. On June 15, 1942, the Germans halted the most regular of these actions, biweekly deliveries of carts of potatoes from Sobienie Szlacheckie, the estate of Sobienie Jeziory's original founder. They arrested the estate's owner, widow Countess Zofia Jezierska, and her fiancé Michał Jaczyński.⁵

Under these conditions, starvation and illness became widespread among the Jews by the summer of 1942. A young Christian observer, who crossed regularly into the ghetto to play with a Jewish school friend, reported that by mid-1942 the ghetto's streets were "littered with living corpses of bone," dying of starvation and typhus. In his opinion, hunger and disease claimed the lives of between 15 and 20 ghetto residents daily. Official post-World War II court documentation sets the figure a bit lower, claiming that between 4 and 15 residents perished each day in the ghetto.⁶

The Judenrat responded by organizing social relief. It established a hospital to accommodate the sick. It also distributed free daily dinners in a small community kitchen. The

Judenrat, though, appears to have been unable to raise levies or even secure some form of loan from the town's Jews to finance an expansion of social services. At the end of March 1941, for instance, the community kitchen could provide meals for no more than 700 residents, whereas the Judenrat saw a need to offer 1,000 such meals. In a funding request that month to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) for an expanded kitchen facility, Friedsohn explained that his village's poverty made it impossible to consider taxing the town's Jewish inhabitants. The transfer of some of the Jews to the Wilga forced labor camp, on the outskirts of Sobienie Jeziory, did reduce the number of hungry mouths in the town. But when 8 men perished there from beatings at the end of April 1941, the Judenrat communicated with an underground commission of doctors from the Warsaw ghetto, investigating conditions in forced labor camps in the region.⁷

An unknown, though relatively large, number of Jews responded to starvation either by moving to other ghettos or by leaving temporarily in search for food. In mid-1941, Jacob Epstein, an arrival from the Warsaw ghetto, quickly realized that conditions in Sobienie Jeziory—with its vigilant police force seemingly oblivious to bribes and its starving population—could not sustain the illicit activities had helped him survive in Warsaw. After just two days in the town, he arranged a pass, through his uncle, chair of the Judenrat, to stay with an aunt in Garwolin, about 22 kilometers (14 miles) east of Sobienie Jeziory.⁸ A larger portion of Sobienie Jeziory's residents who left the ghetto appear to have done so temporarily and more illicitly, usually at night, with some risking denunciation by knocking on the doors of the town's Christians to ask for food.⁹

Efforts to seek food outside the ghetto sparked violent German police reprisals and ultimately had consequences for the treatment of Jews found living outside of ghettos in the Warsaw region as a whole. In a December 22, 1941, letter to Dr. Jan Wielikowski, Warsaw-based adviser for the JSS, Friedsohn explained that "day after day" in Sobienie Jeziory "the Germans shoot Jews for having left the ghetto." Friedsohn inquired about whether the JSS could intervene with the local police in Sobienie Jeziory so that in the future the Germans would notify the town's Judenrat of the names of the Jews they had killed and where they had buried them.¹⁰ German officials apparently exploited Friedsohn's letter to escalate violence against Jews living outside ghettos throughout the Warsaw region. On January 9, 1942, Heinz Auerswald, from April 1941 to November 1942, the commissioner for "Jewish residential districts" (ghettos) in Distrikt Warschau, circulated Friedsohn's letter as part of a longer memo in which he demanded police officials throughout the Distrikt take "effective action" against Jews found outside the ghettos.¹¹

As Friedsohn's note indicates, in Sobienie Jeziory local police rigidly enforced the shoot-to-kill orders that applied to Jews found outside of ghettos from the end of 1941. Although the list is far from complete, Poland's Institute of National Memory has documented more than 110 cases in which German police in Sobienie Jeziory murdered Jews for being out-

side the ghetto. In the largest single incident, village police officials executed more than 25 Jews from the ghetto in Otwock, 22.5 kilometers (14 miles) to the north, found hidden in underbrush outside of Sobienie Jeziory. The remaining documented executions tend to be of individuals caught searching for food beyond the ghetto's confines. Police from the local Gendarmerie, for instance, executed 4 men and 3 women in the Jewish cemetery at the end of 1941. They killed another 5 Jews—2 of them women—in the first half of 1942. In August 1942, the Germans shot 50 more Jews, including a pregnant woman, for being outside the ghetto without permission.¹²

The liquidation of Sobienie Jeziory's ghetto occurred on Sunday, September 27, 1942. At dawn, German SS surrounded the town. Police from the Gendarmerie, again supported by the SS, ordered the entire ghetto population to the main square at 9:00 A.M. Those who refused to comply were shot in their homes. At the square, one of the policemen explained that the town's Jews were to be sent to Ukraine "to work the land." The police next collected the Jews' money and valuables. The old and infirm were then placed on wagons. From the town square, the Jews were marched to the train station in Pilawa. Guards brutally beat them along the way. Those who were unable to keep up with the column were shot, "with the entire path of the march strewn with corpses." At the Pilawa railway station, the Germans shot Judenrat chair Friedsohn in the midst of a farewell speech "full of dramatic overtones." Sobienie Jeziory's Jews were then loaded into trains and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹³

After the ghetto's liquidation, members of the police searched for and killed Jews they found remaining in the town. In the first week, they executed at least 25 more Jews, including 11 members of the family of Wigdor Kleiman, a pre-war store owner, and 4 abandoned children. As late as January 1943, the police were still uncovering survivors in fields adjoining the village. In November 1943, a fire of suspicious origins destroyed the former ghetto. Still unknown is whether the fire was set by German police trying to root out Jewish escapees, by Poles looting the empty ghetto, or accidentally by Jews still in hiding.¹⁴

No more than 20 of Sobienie Jeziory's Jews are thought to have survived the war. Jacob Epstein, who had come from Garwolin, survived the liquidation of the region's ghettos at the home of an ethnic German on a nearby farm. Bolesław Wójcik, another Jew from Sobienie Jeziory, hid with the Polish Legat family, residents of Pilawa.¹⁵ Abram and Felicia Gwiazda, a married couple, survived the war in Sobienie Jeziory hidden by the Grzędas, local Polish farmers. In 1941, Felicia gave birth to another survivor, their daughter, who was rescued by the family of her Polish midwife. Monko's son Mieczysław also interceded after the war to reunite the child with her parents.¹⁶ A sixth survivor, also an infant when she was surrendered by her mother to a local Polish woman, was not reunited with her family until almost 60 years after the war's conclusion. Because her parents had both perished in the Holocaust, the Polish family who had rescued the child refused to return her to a surviving aunt, Aliza Kuperman-Nachmany.

Inspired by her mother's determination to find the girl, Kuperman-Nachmany's daughter Emmunah ultimately reunited the family.¹⁷

SOURCES The largest number of eyewitness testimonies remain in the private possession of Father Jerzy Marion Cygan, who recorded them for his book *Dzieje parafii Sobienie Jeziory* (Biała Podlaska, 2001).

Documentation on Sobienie Jeziory's ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/641, 211/978, 301/5490); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 47, 211/978; RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 18, 61 [Warsaw woj.], 59, pp. 1–2; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH, AJDC], 210/641; and RG-15.079M, reel 3, Ring I/25, reel 14, I/409, and reel 22, Ring I/546); VHF (# 14342, 18718, 30190, and 43653); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. See T. Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), pp. 100–102 (in German) and p. 106 (in Polish trans.).

2. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 461; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47, 211/978, “Korespondencja Prezydium ŻSS z Delegaturą ŻSS w Sobieniach Jeziorach,” pp. 1–4.

3. See T. Berenstein, “Deportacja i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskich,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 118–119. The high figure of 9,380 people comes from the 1945 questionnaire on ghettos filled out by regional administrators in Poland. This questionnaire lists the “average” number of ghetto residents in Sobienie Jeziory as 4,453 people; see USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, 61 (Warsaw woj.), 59 (Sobienie Jeziory), pp. 1–2. The 3,680 population figure is cited in Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 392.

4. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, 61/59, p. 1; Maja Jaszewska, “Trzecie pokolenie sprawiedliwych,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, July 27, 2003; Cygan, *Dzieje parafii*, p. 231.

5. Anna Poray, “Polish Righteous” (unpub. MSS, PALC).

6. H. Kowalczyk, “Wspomnienia” (unpub. MSS, PAEK), pp. 4–5; and USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, 61/59, p. 1.

7. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, 61/59, p. 1; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/641 (Sobienie Jeziory), pp. 1–5; RG-15.079M, reel 14, Ring I/409, “A barikht fun a lager in Sobin,” and reel 3, Ring I/26, “Relacja—wyciągi z protokołów oględzin lekarskich i zeznań w sprawie bicia i rozstrzeliwania więźniów w obozach pracy przymusowej: Piekło, Nakło, Wilga, Garwolin, Mordy, Łąki, Stok Ruski, Drewnica, Sobienie Jeziory, Kałuszyn, Roztok,” p. 14.

8. VHF, # 14342, testimony of Jacob Epstein. See also USHMM, RG-15.079M, reel 22, Ring I/546.

9. Examples of individual Christian material aid to Jews who sought food outside the ghetto can be found in A. Mońka-Staniakowa, “Tajne nauczanie w Sobieniach Jeziorach,” *Szkice podlaskie* (1996): 102; and Cygan, *Dzieje parafii*, pp. 231–233.

10. The document can be found under the heading “Komisarz dzielnic żydowskiej w Warszawie, Auerswald, do sta-

rostów powiatowych o sankcjach karnych wobec Żydów za opuszczanie gett,” in Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów*, pp. 124–125.

11. Ibid., p. 124 (in Polish) and p. 125 (in German).

12. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1943: województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), pp. 250–254. The execution of the Otwock escapees is covered also in J. Lempkowski, “Ród (wspomnienia)” (unpub. MSS, PAEK), pp. 219–220.

13. Kowalczyk, “Wspomnienia,” p. 5; Cygan, *Dzieje parafii*, p. 233; Mońka-Staniakowa, “Tajne nauczanie,” p. 102; B. Wójcik, “Wspomnienia lat wojny i konspiracji” (unpub. MSS, PAEK, 1973), pp. 12–13; Lempkowski, “Ród,” pp. 219–220; AŻIH, 301/5490, testimony of Drożdżasz Sura, p. 1; and USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 18, 61/59, p. 1.

14. *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 251, 254; Lempkowski, “Ród,” pp. 219–220; Cygan, *Dzieje parafii*, p. 233; and Mońka-Staniakowa, “Tajne nauczanie,” p. 103.

15. VHF, # 14342; and testimony of Mrs. Przychalska (Sobienie Jeziory: unpub. testimonies in the possession of Jerzy Marion Cygan). According to Przychalska, Wójcik assumed the surname of his Polish rescuers and served as head of Wilga powiat after the war.

16. Mieczysław Monko identifies the village in which he, his wife, and his mother saved the child as Sobienie Jeziory, in VHF, # 43653, testimony of Mieczysław Monko. The town is not specified in the entry in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, p. 526.

17. Kuperman-Nachmany immigrated to Israel after the war but returned regularly to Poland, with her daughter, in an unsuccessful search for her niece. The Nachmanys' story is retold in Aleksander Klugman, “Podwójna ofiara polskich Sprawiedliwych,” *Więź*, no. 7 (July 2007): 58–59; and presented in a larger historical context of the war and immediate post-war periods by Emmunah Nachmany-Gafney, *Levavot hat-suyim: Hotsaat yeladim Yehudim mi-bate Notsrim be-Folan le-ahar ba-Sho'ah* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005).

SOBOLEW

Pre-1939: Sobolew, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sobolew is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) south of Garwolin and 71 kilometers (44 miles) southeast of Warsaw. At the start of World War II, approximately 840 Jews were living in Sobolew, making up more than half of the village's population.

Sobolew was occupied by the Germans on September 17, 1939. Very early on in the occupation of the town, the Jews of Sobolew were summoned to the train station to hear an address from the local SS commandant in which he insulted and threatened them and stated that all of Sobolew's Jews would be dead before the Soviets would arrive to save them.¹ Following the speech, the Germans humiliated 3 esteemed Jews by chasing them through town and keeping them locked up for 10 days



A young woman wears an armband in the Sobolew ghetto, December 1942.

USHMM WS #23230, COURTESY OF KALMAN HOROWITZ

in a stable. Soon afterwards, a curfew was imposed on the Jewish residents of Sobolew, who were forbidden to be on the street after 6:00 P.M. Near the end of 1939, a 12-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established under the leadership of Yisrael Farber, which was responsible mainly for providing the Germans with laborers. The laborers broke stones on the road between Lublin and Warsaw and cleared away snow, among other activities.² The Judenrat included 5 Jewish policemen.

During the war, Sobolew's Jewish population grew to roughly 1,600 people, approximately 600 of whom were refugees from other towns.³ A group of over 100 Jewish families deported from Maciejowice to Sobolew on October 23, 1940,⁴ formed the largest group of refugees in the village. A letter from November 4, 1940, described the difficult conditions facing the new arrivals: "Their situation is simply desperate. They're being accommodated in attics, they're living five to six families per room. We're at a loss since all of our local aid sources have been exhausted. We remain without clothing, without shoes, and without any possibility of getting even a small piece of bread."⁵ An aid committee operated in Sobolew under the auspices of the Jewish Council and was responsible

for the care of approximately 500 individuals.⁶ The committee ran a soup kitchen and a clinic.

A ghetto was created in Sobolew in the course of 1941⁷ and may have been preceded by an open ghetto established in the fall of 1940. The ghetto housed approximately 2,000 individuals, including many Jews from nearby towns, and saw at least one outbreak of typhus.⁸ Pesakh Kuperman reports that he was able to leave the ghetto at night to sell his possessions to local Poles and to buy potatoes, flour, and bread.⁹ Moyshe Grinkorn relates that Poles smuggled bread and other food into the ghetto to sell to Jews who could afford to buy such items.¹⁰ In the summer of 1942, 17 Jews were caught while trying to cross the border of the ghetto. On the orders of Dr. Freudenthal, the head of Kreis Garwolin, the 17 fugitives were executed.¹¹ During the German occupation, an estimated 150 Jews and Poles from Sobolew and surrounding localities were executed in Sobolew and their corpses buried in a mass grave in a nearby forest.¹²

The deportation of Jews from Kreis Garwolin began in September 1942, at which time Sobolew, as the only town in the immediate area with a railway link, became a collection and transportation center. Jews from ghettos in the vicinity were brought to Sobolew and then loaded onto trains headed for the Treblinka extermination camp. Halina Cymbrowicz (née Gedanken) relates that Jews from her hometown of Żelechów were either taken by cart or, if they were able, forced to travel by foot to Sobolew.¹³ Between September 27 and 30, Jews who had been brought to Sobolew from the ghettos in Parysów, Łaskarzew, Stoczek Łukowski, and Żelechów were herded into freight cars and taken to the Treblinka extermination camp. The deportees were ordered to hand over their gold, money, and other valuables and were informed through an interpreter that noncompliance would be punished by death. As they were being loaded into the cars, "they were bludgeoned and beaten with sticks for so long that the last four didn't make it in. The doors were then closed from the outside. Barbed wire had been affixed to the upper windows beforehand."¹⁴ The liquidation of the Sobolew ghetto itself followed in October 1942, with its inhabitants likewise sent to Treblinka. It was approximately at this time as well that Jewish labor units in and around Sobolew were liquidated. Some of the prisoners who made up the labor units were killed on the spot; some were sent to Treblinka.¹⁵

In October–November 1942, following the liquidation of the ghetto, a separate remnant ghetto was established in Sobolew as a "collection point" in a German attempt to coax the remaining Jews in the area out of their hiding places. The German authorities announced that Jews who came to the ghetto would be able to live and work as normal. Estera Borensztain, a native of Sobolew hiding in the countryside at the time, returned with her mother and two younger brothers to the re-established ghetto, where they lived together with two other families in a single room: "[T]his did not, however, last very long."¹⁶ The second ghetto was liquidated in January 1943, at which time a "selection" was made: the elderly were killed immediately, while the young and able-bodied were loaded onto railcars and transported to Treblinka.

SOURCES Extensive information on Sobolew and its inhabitants before and during World War II can be found in the personal testimonies of Sobolew natives in the yizkor book, Mosheh Levani, ed., *Sefer Laskazshev un Sobolev* (Paris: Di Gezelshaft Laskazshev-Sobolev in Frankraykh, 1960).

The book by Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), contains information on Sobolew, pp. 52–53, 59–60, 68–69, 168, 206, 214.

Further information on Sobolew can also be found in Tatiana Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009), pp. 732–733.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Sobolew under German occupation can be found in the following archival collections: AŻIH (210/28, 30 [AJDC]; 211/980 [JSS]; 301/2989, 5820 [Relacje]; 310/A; Ring I/851); BA-L (B 162/6820, 6822, 6876); and IPN (163/18 sygn. 42 and sygn. 61 [ASG]).

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NOTES

1. See multiple accounts in Levani, *Sefer Laskazshev un Sobolev*.
2. IPN, 163/18, sygn. 61, Kwestionariusz o obozach.
3. AŻIH, 210/28 (AJDC), Wykaz miejscowości Komitetów Pomocy, sprawozdanie z działalności V–XII 1940 r.
4. Ibid., 210/30 (AJDC), Dystrykt warszawski, różne wykazy, b.d.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. The date named in various sources ranges from February to December 1941.
8. IPN, 163/18, sygn. 61, Kwestionariusz o obozach.
9. Pesakh Kuperman, “Mayne iberlebungen in di gehenem-tsaytn,” in Levani, *Sefer Laskazshev un Sobolev*, pp. 563–569.
10. Moyshe Grinkorn, “A sobolever yid ratevet zikh,” in Levani, *Sefer Laskazshev un Sobolev*, pp. 574–598.
11. BA-L, B 162/6820, p. 62.
12. IPN, 163/18 sygn. 42, Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych.
13. AŻIH, 301/5820, testimony of Halina Cymbrowicz.
14. BA-L, B 162/6822, pp. 10 ff, testimony of Stanisław W., November 13, 1967.
15. Ibid., B 162/6876, p. 562.
16. AŻIH, 301/2989, testimony of Estera Borensztain.

SOCHACZEW

Pre-1939: Sochaczew (Yiddish: Sokhatshev), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: center of Kreis Sochaczew Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sochaczew is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) west of Warsaw. The Jewish population of the town was 2,419 (48 percent) in 1921. On the eve of World War II, the Jewish population numbered about 4,000.

As awareness of the impending invasion and German occupation increased, local Poles affixed crosses and icons to their houses. During the first week of the war, before the German army reached Sochaczew, many Jews fled eastward towards Warsaw and beyond. About 200 made it into areas occupied by the Soviets after September 17, 1939, enabling many of them to survive the war. Sochaczew was the center of bitter fighting from September 9 to 17, 1939, in the Battle of the Bzura, as the Germans encountered stiffening resistance near Warsaw. Once the town was secured, the first victims of the occupation were elderly and sick Jews, pulled from their houses by German soldiers and murdered in cold blood. About 100 houses belonging to Jews who had fled were set on fire. At the end of September, during the festival of the Sukkot holiday, several hundred Hasidic Jews were forced onto the streets, harassed, beaten, and made to dance to the music of a band. Their beards and side locks were cut off. As the battles subsided, many who had fled returned to Sochaczew. They found their homes occupied by Poles or burned to the ground. They were forced to find shelter in cellars, attics, and storage sheds. In January 1940, 400 refugees from other towns arrived and were taken in by the Jews of Sochaczew.¹

A local ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*), Julian Prouze, was appointed mayor of the town. An auxiliary police force (*Sonderdienst*) was recruited to assist him. Jews were kidnapped for forced labor on a daily basis. They were put to work rebuilding the damaged bridge over the Bzura River, digging canals, draining marshes, and clearing the rubble of bombed buildings (including the 700-year-old church). Some were sent to fortify an airfield at Bielice, using gravestones stolen from the Jewish cemetery. Mayor Prouze also made a profit by selling the bricks from damaged Jewish houses.² In January 1940, Prouze announced the creation of an 18-member Judenrat, drawn from a list of prominent local figures. The chairman was a merchant, Yaakov Biederman. A Jewish police unit was also established, headed by Menashe Knott.³ The Judenrat was ordered to organize the daily work assignments, but anyone who could pay 1 złoty a day to the Judenrat was left off the work roster. Tensions within the Judenrat led Biederman to resign and be replaced by Yitzhak Gelbstein, a tailor who had ingratiated himself with the Germans. Under his leadership the Judenrat extorted valuables from the Jews, supposedly to bribe the authorities, but allegedly much ended up in their own pockets.⁴

One night in January 1941, the Sonderdienst conducted a search of Jewish houses. They took whatever they wanted and beat the Jews brutally. They also arrested two Jews, Aharon Zelig Marienfeld and Aryeh Szmec. According to one account, Szmec and Marienfeld had worked together with local ethnic Germans in trading on the black market. The German police now tortured and murdered them, as they knew too much. At dawn, the German authorities ordered the Judenrat to bury their mutilated corpses in the Jewish cemetery.⁵

By mid-January 1941, plans were made to establish a ghetto in Sochaczew, following the establishment of a ghetto in Żyrardów in mid-December 1940. Since it would be too small for

the entire population, about 900 Jews were rounded up and, on January 18, 1941, sent to the Żyrardów ghetto.⁶ The Jews living in the villages of Kreis Sochaczew were also instructed by Kreishauptmann Pott to move to the ghetto in Żyrardów at this time.⁷ In Sochaczew, those who could pay the Judenrat were allowed to remain. On the next day they were resettled into the ghetto. Each person was permitted to bring along only 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of personal possessions.⁸ Jewish houses outside the ghetto area were burned. On January 24, the ghetto area was slightly enlarged and then enclosed with a high barbed-wire fence. It was guarded by German police on the outside and by Jewish Police within. Poles were also strictly forbidden to enter the ghetto, which covered the areas of Staszic, Toruńska, and Farnej Streets, as well as Kościuszko Square. The narrow confines of the ghetto caused overcrowding, with five people to a room and every available space put to use—storage sheds, attics, and cellars. Food was scarce and hunger widespread. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) operated a free kitchen, which provided one warm meal a day to about half of the ghetto inhabitants. The AJDC also distributed packages of clothing, food, and money.⁹

On January 31, 1941, the German authorities informed the remaining Jews that soon the ghetto would be liquidated and that they were forbidden to leave the ghetto area. The date scheduled for the expulsion from the Sochaczew ghetto was February 15–16, 1941.¹⁰ At that time, the Germans instructed all the remaining Jews in Sochaczew, about 1,800 people, to move to the Warsaw ghetto. They were permitted to take with them 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of luggage and food for two days. A few, including the Judenrat leaders and their families, were transported on wagons. The rest went on foot. In the ensuing confusion the captain of the Jewish Police, Menashe Knott, was shot by Priwer, the Gestapo commander, after a quarrel about boots that were ordered but not delivered.¹¹ In his report for February 1941, Kreishauptmann Pott noted that the Jewish real estate properties were being registered.¹²

Julian Prouze demanded that 150 Jews be brought back from Warsaw as laborers. All but 21 were sent back when the work was finished. Those who stayed worked a little longer and then were taken to the nearby forest and murdered. A number of Jews who escaped during the expulsions tried to hide in smaller towns or in the countryside. Many were children who wandered about in search of food and shelter. A bounty of liquor or sugar was offered to anyone who caught or turned in a Jew. Pits were dug in the Jewish cemetery, where they threw the bodies of those who were caught and killed. Only very few survived.¹³ The fate of the Jews sent from Sochaczew to Warsaw was the same as the others in the capital city.

The accounts in the yizkor book mention two non-Jews who sought to protect the Jews during the early months of the occupation. They were a pharmacist, Jan Silwa, who helped some to hide, and the daughter of the butcher, Balcarska, who used her influence with the German commander, Blashchik, to ease some of the restrictive conditions.¹⁴

A handful of survivors returned to Sochaczew after the war to erect a memorial on the grounds of the cemetery.

SOURCES The yizkor book, edited by A.S. Stein and Gavriel Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew* (Jerusalem: Former Residents of Sochaczew in Israel, 1962) in Hebrew and Yiddish, contains a number of personal accounts by survivors from the town. There is also a short article on the Jewish community of Sochaczew in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 311–318. The book by Paweł Fijałkowski, *Żydzi sochaczewscy* (Sochaczew: Muzeum Ziemi Sochaczewskiej i Pola Bitwy nad Bzurą, 1989), has information on the ghetto on pages 22–23 and also contains a very brief summary in English. Additional information on the ghetto can also be found in the *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); 85, 115–116; and in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 462.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Sochaczew under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., Ring I/352, 914); BA-BL (R 52III/29); IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-14.025M; RG-15.019M; RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-50.120*0140); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, p. 729.
2. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/914.
3. Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, p. 730.
4. Ibid., p. 478.
5. Ibid., p. 414; USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/914.
6. Mardechai V. Bernshteyn, ed., *Pinkes Zshirardov, Amshinov un Viskit: Yizker-bukh tsu der gesbikhte fun di kebiles . . .* (Buenos Aires: Dilandlayt-faraynen in Amerike, Yisroel, Frankraykh, Argentine, 1961), p. 454, mentions the arrival of 900 Jewish refugees from Sochaczew at this time.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 11, February 7, 1941.
8. Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, p. 730. According to another account by Chaim Weisz, “Dates to Remember,” from the same book, pp. 450–451, an “open ghetto” was established on November 1, 1941, and the Jews were expelled to Żyrardów on November 15, 1941. Most sources, however, seem to support the dating of these events in January and February 1941.
9. Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, p. 731.
10. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/352, Kreishauptmann Sochaczew-Blonie, order concerning the clearing of the Kreis of Jews, January 31, 1941; RG-50.120*0140, Oral History interview with Zeev Sheinvald, May 20, 1993, tape IV, confirms the deportation took place on February 15, 1941.
11. Ibid., RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/352; Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, pp. 732, 744.
12. USHMM, RG-14.025M (BA-BL), R 52III/29, p. 95, Kreishauptmann Sochaczew-Blonie, monthly report for February 1941.
13. Stein and Weisman, *Pinkas Sochaczew*, p. 733.
14. Ibid., p. 730.

SOKOŁÓW PODLASKI

Pre-1939: Sokołów Podlaski, town, initially Lublin województwo (later Warsaw województwo) Poland; 1939–1944: Sokolow, Kreis center, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sokołów Podlaski, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sokołów Podlaski is located 102 kilometers (about 63 miles) east-northeast of Warsaw. The town was home to nearly 6,000 Jews on the eve of World War II.¹

In the first weeks of World War II, German military operations inflicted significant damage on the town, particularly on its Jewish community. On September 7, 1939, German airplanes bombarded Długa Street, killing seven or eight people. On Thursday, September 7, a larger German attack destroyed part of the town's center, killing many people, primarily Jews living on Mały Rynek, Rogowski, and Piękna Streets.

The Germans retreated from the town in the third week of September, and the Red Army briefly took over Sokołów Podlaski on September 27. A new Soviet-German agreement, however, soon returned Sokołów to German hegemony. About

1,000 of the town's Jews evacuated with the Red Army. Throughout 1940, Jews continued to cross the Bug River illegally.²

The German military returned to Sokołów on October 11, 1939, and embarked on a series of antisemitic attacks. German soldiers harassed Jews, cutting off their beards with knives. When groups of Polish youth also beat several Jews, the Germans arrested the offenders and sentenced them to six months in jail.³ German soldiers conducted numerous seizures of property in Jewish stores in November 1939, forcing many to close down.⁴ German soldiers also arbitrarily conscripted Jews for labor.⁵

German civil administrators continued in the footsteps of their military predecessors. Landrat Friedrich Schultz was appointed Kreishauptmann for Kreis Sokolow on November 11, 1939. A week later, he ordered Sokołów's mayor to arrest 15 prominent Jews and demanded the Jewish community pay a ransom of 15,000 złoty. After succeeding Schultz on June 10, 1940, the new Kreishauptmann, Reichslandwirtschaftsrat Ernst Grams, ordered city officials to dismantle the town's largest Jewish cemetery.⁶

At the end of November 1939, the town's mayor ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its first chairman, Chaim Jakob Szpadel, died soon after being nominated. Nuchym Lewin then became the Judenrat's chair. The Judenrat's labor office was headed by Icko Szlachme and Kalman Rosen. The Judenrat also created a Jewish police force, composed of about 30 officers. It was headed first by Josel Rozenswaig and later by Schwartzbard. The police also established a Jewish jail in the Bet Midrash, mainly to incarcerate those who did not pay dues demanded by the Judenrat.⁷

With the formation of the Judenrat, the Germans demanded a series of payments from Sokołów Podlaski's Jewish community. These included another contribution of 80,000 złoty in December 1939 and a third payment in January 1940 of 100,000 złoty. To secure money for these payments, the Judenrat ordered that men pay monthly dues, ranging from 700 up to 1,200 złoty.⁸

From mid-1940, the Germans undertook a series of measures that gradually established an open ghetto in Sokołów Podlaski. In the fall of 1940, to create a separate Christian neighborhood for German officials, Grams ordered the expulsion of Jews from pre-war Christian neighborhoods. Jews who lived and worked there were moved onto two streets surrounding the main synagogue, in the center of town, where most Jews had lived before the war. The order initiated the period of the so-called open ghetto. Jews were still allowed to move freely about the town, but they could not live or operate stores in Sokołów Podlaski's Christian neighborhoods. Christians who lived in the so-called Jewish neighborhood were not expelled from it.⁹

In the last days of July 1941, or perhaps on August 1, the Germans created a closed ghetto in Sokołów Podlaski. Because the town's pre-war Jewish neighborhood contained Długa Street, a major northwest-to-southeast thoroughfare connecting the town's two main non-Jewish neighborhoods, German plans might have called originally for the expulsion of Jews



Jewish survivors watch as Poles exhume a mass grave in Sokołów Podlaski, 1945.

USHMM WS #15077, COURTESY OF HYMAN KAWER

from a large part of the pre-war Jewish neighborhood and their concentration in only one of the neighborhoods divided by the street. Negotiations between the Judenrat and German officials and another round of bribes supposedly forestalled these German plans.¹⁰ Instead, to make Długa Street accessible to non-Jewish traffic, the Germans created two ghettos in Sokołów Podlaski, one of which ran east of Długa Street and the other west of the same street to the Cetynia River. The houses on both sides of Długa Street were enclosed behind barbed wire. Jews who resided in homes there were ordered to brick over windows and doors facing that street. In both ghettos, roads that formerly had intersected with Długa Street were blocked off by 3-meter-high (almost 10-foot-high) brick walls, topped with shards of broken glass.

The first ghetto, located on a large part of the western side of the pre-war Jewish neighborhood, formed a rough diamond-like shape territorially. Its extreme eastern edge was bounded by Długa Street and one side of Siedlecka Street. Its western edge was at the intersection of Bóźnicza Street and the eastern side of Winnice Street. This ghetto contained five additional streets: Szeroka, Nowa, Niecała, Szkolna, and Próżna Streets. The entrance to this first ghetto was on Bóźnicza Street. The town's second, or eastern ghetto, roughly followed the streets found within it. These included Długa, Szewski Rynek, a part of Wilczyński, Krótka, Piękna, and Przechodnia Streets. It also included Mały Rynek Street. The entrance to this second ghetto was at the intersection of Szewski Rynek and Wilczyński Streets. This ghetto was surrounded mostly by barbed wire, with a wooden fence erected around its southernmost tip. Residents could cross between the two ghettos through a passageway in the Bet Midrash, which also housed the ghetto's jail.

Jews could leave the two ghettos only with special permission. A few Poles who continued to live in the ghetto were issued special passes. Otherwise, Poles also were forbidden from entering the ghetto. Under the control of Dr. Hermann, from the Kreishauptmann's office, the ghetto was heavily guarded. Barriers were erected in front of the entrances to both ghettos. Polish (Blue) Police and German Gendarmes guarded the exterior of the ghettos' gates. Jewish policemen guarded the ghetto internally, including the passage between the two ghettos.¹¹

In September 1941, 5,080 Jews were confined to the ghetto.¹² These numbers included 684 Jews who had settled in Sokołów Podlaski by December 29, 1939, and an additional 915 Jews who had arrived there before June 1, 1940. The majority of these new arrivals had been forcibly expelled by the Germans from Kalisz, Pułtusk, Kałuszyn, and Aleksandrów Łódzki.¹³ In November 1941, the Germans also began ordering 316 Jews from villages and agricultural settlements located east and south of Sokołów Podlaski, including from Kudelczyn, Korczew, Repki, Wyrozęby, and Kowiesy, to move to the ghetto. This transfer was to be completed by December 15, 1941.¹⁴

The Judenrat faced great difficulties in finding homes for these expellees. By September 1941, rooms in the ghetto housed an average of six people.¹⁵ As the ghetto was established

around the Jewish neighborhood, most Jewish businesses continued to operate, with only a handful, including a bakery, being forced to close preexisting facilities and reopen in the ghetto. Children were sent to illicit schools, some with classes in Hebrew, others in Polish.¹⁶

Forced labor became more structured with the ghetto's closure. Six hundred residents left the ghetto daily to work at a number of Luftwaffe facilities. Another 200 Jews, employed as craftsmen at these facilities, lived there.¹⁷ In the summer and fall of 1941, town officials also conscripted 50 Jewish workers to construct walkways in the town using headstones from the Jewish cemetery on Bóźnicza Street. Another team of conscripts worked to level the cemetery.¹⁸

From the fall of 1941, an increasing number of ghetto residents, ultimately several hundred, were assigned to water irrigation work at two forced labor camps near Korczew, the first located in Szczeglacin and the second in Bartków Nowy. Initially the workers reported only for monthlong stints, receiving 10 złoty per day for their families. A supplementary bread ration was also paid for by the Judenrat from fees paid by people to be exempted from forced labor.¹⁹

The ghetto's closure nonetheless provoked unemployment, particularly among craftsmen. Two hundred tailors and 400 shoemakers lost their former Polish clientele. In September 1941, these craftsmen sought permission to establish cooperative workshops in the ghetto to fill orders from German firms and the Luftwaffe. However, the central authorities in Distrikt Warschau denied their request, and no workshops were ever established inside the ghetto.²⁰

Draconian food distribution and rationing policies pursued by Kreishauptmann Grams provoked hunger within weeks of the ghetto's closure. Because Grams had constricted deliveries of vegetables to the ghetto to 10 cartloads daily, the Judenrat could not supply ghetto residents with their full rations. Equally disconcerting was Grams's refusal in September 1941 to make available winter food rations to either Jews or Poles. Nor were the Judenrat's charity institutions able to respond to the crisis. Unable to afford to purchase food at market rates, the Judenrat's community kitchen did not reopen. Charity assistance to orphans and children continued but was circumscribed, with only orphans being fed daily. Grams did agree in late September 1941 to allow the Judenrat to bring 30 carts of vegetables daily into the ghetto and also authorized the release of food to Jewish charity organizations. But these promises were too little, too late. Large parts of the promised food remained in government and Judenrat storehouses as the onset of winter made roads impassible, preventing deliveries to the ghetto.²¹

As these policies combined to provoke hunger and a typhus epidemic in the fall and winter of 1941, scores of Jews began leaving the ghetto illicitly in search of food. A few Poles threw food items over the ghetto fence. Others agreed to receive packages sent by Jewish family members living abroad.²² Far more frequently, store owners and traders sneaked out with light industrial goods to trade for food to stock the ghetto's stores. They relied on bribes and payments—to Jewish, Pol-

ish, and German police—to get out and back into the ghetto safely. Unable to afford bribes, Jewish craftsmen took more risks when engaging in barter, as the penalty for leaving the ghetto was death. In the fall of 1941, for instance, Gendarme Edward Poppe shot a Jewish shoemaker for being outside the ghetto.²³

The Judenrat's inability to provide basic social services, its increasing corruption, and its insistence on filling forced labor quotas made it appear increasingly complicit to many ghetto residents. In the spring of 1942, Jews called up for work in the Szczegłacin labor camp discovered that the Judenrat had cut supplemental bread rations to 200 grams (7 ounces) and had opened a special store only for Judenrat employees. Feeling betrayed, the conscripts assigned to the camp refused to assemble. The Jewish Police went from house to house, beating those participating in the protest.²⁴ In December 1941, moreover, the Judenrat had assigned 15 young workers to labor duties at the Treblinka labor camp, located just 34 kilometers (21 miles) north of Sokołów Podlaski. About half of them perished at the camp. When most of the survivors returned home as invalids, wounded by frostbite, it seemed unthinkable that the Judenrat would continue to draft workers for labor assignments there. Then, in early June, workers from Sokołów Podlaski were called up to construct the Treblinka extermination camp. The men sent there failed to return home.²⁵

By the summer of 1942, the ghetto's Jews, fearing a larger roundup, began formulating strategies to avoid deportation to Treblinka. A number started building hiding places in their homes. Others either paid the Judenrat premiums to secure agricultural work or voluntarily signed up for work at Szczegłacin, believing it was safer than remaining in the ghetto.²⁶ On August 24, 1942, posters appeared in the ghetto containing orders, signed by Grams, limiting entry there to registered residents and voiding all Jewish travel passes.²⁷ Some ghetto residents opted to remain at the estates where they had been working, and others decided to surrender their children to Polish Christians.²⁸

The extermination of Sokołów Podlaski's Jews began early on September 22. That day, local German police and security forces (Gestapo and Kripo), an auxiliary SS Ukrainian detachment, and Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the ghetto. As elsewhere in Kreis Sokolow, the roundup of the ghetto's Jews was bloody, because many residents—about 2,000 out of 6,000 people—did not assemble at the market square, choosing instead to hide. In the searches that followed, between 1,500 and 2,000 Jews found in hiding places were shot. The Germans selected between 100 and 120 Jews from those at the square to form a postliquidation labor force. The remainder of the town's Jews, between 4,000 and 5,000 people, were marched to the train station and deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.²⁹

The Germans exterminated the surviving remnants of Sokołów Podlaski's Jewish community over the next two months. Six days after the ghetto's liquidation, German officers rounded up Jews who worked and lived at the town's military facilities, with only those who labored at the military

hospital escaping death. That same evening, on September 26, 1942, the head of the Distrikt Warschau Sonderkommando shot 4 members of the Judenrat, including its chair, Lewin.³⁰ The Germans liquidated the two forced labor camps in Szczegłacin and at Bartków Nowy on October 22, 1942. The Jews conscripted there at the time of the liquidation were shot and buried in a mass grave.³¹ Those Jews who worked at Sokołów's German military hospital were shot on November 7.³² Before the end of November, the Germans assembled the about 100 Jews from the ghetto's postliquidation labor force and shot almost all of them. A few surviving members of the Judenrat and of the Jewish Police are thought to have been sent to the Treblinka labor camp. The last remaining groups of Jewish forced laborers from Sokołów were murdered in March 1943.³³ In March 1944, a Sonderkommando 1005 unit exhumed the bodies of the Jews killed in Sokołów Podlaski during the ghetto's liquidation. They were transported to Węgrów and burned there in a makeshift crematorium.³⁴

Not more than 50 of the ghetto's residents are thought to have survived the ghetto's liquidation. Two of them, Reuven Rozenberg and Anszel (Antshel) Fabiarz, had joined the partisans operating in the forests outside of Sokołów.³⁵ Hersch Biderman, his young son, and two sisters were hidden by the Jaworski family, Biderman's pre-war friends.³⁶ The Pietraszko family, overseers of the Czekanów estate in Jabłonna Lacka civil parish, hid 16 Jews from the Sokołów ghetto, many of whom had been working in agriculture during the ghetto's liquidation.³⁷ Shaindla Lender, Golda Hochberg, and Perl Morgenshtern, who had survived the liquidation of the Szczegłacin forced labor camp, secured Polish work papers from Kazimierz Miłobędzki.³⁸

Sokołów Podlaski's Jewish community was not reconstituted. After several postwar incidents during the Polish Home Army's insurgency against the postwar Communist government, including the deaths of 10 Jews in Kosów Lacki, survivors began leaving the country, immigrating to France, Israel, Argentina, Nicaragua, and the United States.

SOURCES Published primary sources include memoirs by Marian Pietrzak, *Sokołów Podlaski dawniej i dziś* (Sokołów Podlaski: Czar-Media, 2002); and Zdzisław Rozbici, "To widziały oczy moje," in Wiktoria Liwowska, ed., *Czarny rok . . . czarne lata* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Dzieci Holocaustu w Polsce, 1996). A number of yizkor books commemorate the town's Jewish past: *Yoyvl-bukh: Gevidmet dem ondenken fun di kdoysbim un martirer fun Sokolov* (New York: Di Sosayeti, 1946); *Mayn borev shtetl Sokolov: Schilderungen, bilder un portretn fun a shtot umgekumene Yidn* (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-Farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentine, 1946); *In shotn fun Treblinka (kburbn Sokolov-Podliaski)* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots'e Sokolov-Podliaski be-Yisrael, 1957); *Sefer ha-zikaron. Sokolov-Podliask* (Tel Aviv: Yots'e Sokolov-Podliask be-Yisrael, Sokolover Landsmanshaft in Amerike, 1962); as well as the account in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 339–342, available in two different English translations in Arnon Rubin, ed., *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics*

Today, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 260–264; and a second version online on the Jewishgen Web site at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol7_00339.html.

Documentation on the Jewish community of Sokołów Podlaski during the Holocaust can be found at APSi; AŻIH (e.g., 301/1186, 301/2505, 301/3079, 301/3979, 301/4085, 301/4507); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6843); FVA (e.g., # HVT-2318); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/646; Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS], reel 8, 211/129, pp. 40–47; RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 19, 45 [Warsaw woj.], 244 [Sokołów Podlaski]; Acc.1998.A.0017 [e.g., Aaron Elster Memoir]; and RG-50.488*0171 [e.g., Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project—Kazimierz Miłobędzki interview]); and VHF (e.g., # 08257, 10131, 23494).

Edward Kopówka and Laura Crago

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3979, testimony of Szepsel Grynberg, p. 1 (typescript).
2. Ibid. See also VHF, # 08527, testimony of Aaron Elster; # 23494, testimony of Pearl (Morgenstern) Newman; and # 10131, testimony of Fay (Rothstein) Kief.
3. AŻIH, 301/4085, testimony of Josek (also Josef or Józef) Kopytko, pp. 10–12.
4. Ibid., 301/3979, p. 3.
5. Ibid., 301/4085, pp. 6–7.
6. Ibid., 301/3979, pp. 2–3; and Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 34–35.
7. “Sokołów Podlaski,” in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 263; and AŻIH, 301/3979, pp. 2–5; and 301/4085, pp. 1–2.
8. AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 7–8; 301/3979, p. 5; and VHF, # 10131.
9. The period of the so-called open ghetto is covered in “Sokołów Podlaski,” in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 263; and Edward Kopówka, “Getto w Sokołowie Podlaskim,” *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, no. 3 (2005): 376–377.
10. AŻIH, 301/3979, pp. 3–4. This source states that the Germans later decreased the ghetto’s size several times.
11. Physical descriptions of the shape of the ghetto can be found in VHF, # 10131; AŻIH, 301/3979, pp. 3–4; 301/4085, pp. 50–51; Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 20–23; and Kopówka, “Getto,” pp. 376–377. Regarding the date of the ghetto’s enclosure, see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, p. 40.
12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, p. 40.
13. T. Berenstein, “Deportacja i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952): 124–125. See also USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/646 (Sokołów Podlaski), pp. 1–13.
14. For the local deportations, see Tatiana Berenstein, et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej*. Zbiór dokumentów (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 278 (in German) and p. 279 (in Polish); and APSi, Akta Miasta Węgrów, 46, Korespondencja ogólna. Rok 1941, Okólnik nr. 50 z dn. 9 grudnia 1941, signed by Dr. Hermann, p. 45.
15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, p. 41.
16. VHF, # 10131; and Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 22–23.
17. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, pp. 40–41.
18. Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 34–35. See also AŻIH, 301/3979, p. 3.

19. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, p. 43. See also, for example, Edward Kopówka, “Obozy pracy przymusowej w Szczegłacinie i Bartkowie Nowym k. Siedlec,” *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, no. 4 (2002): 515–519.

20. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, pp. 41–44, 46.

21. Ibid., pp. 41–42, and reel # 45, 211/950 (Siedlce), pp. 13, 30–46.

22. On the typhus epidemic, see K. Witt, “Sokołów Podlaski w latach 1939–1950,” in Józef Kazimierski, ed., *Dzieje Sokołowa Podlaskiego i jego regionu* (Warsaw: PWN, 1982), p. 219. Christian assistance to Jews is covered in the eyewitness account by Zdzisław Rozbici, “To widziały oczy moje,” in Wiktoria Liwowska, ed., *Czarny rok . . . czarne lata* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Dzieci Holocaustu w Polsce, 1996), p. 392.

23. Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 19–20; VHF, # 08257, and FVA, # HVT-2318, Irene B. Holocaust testimony.

24. AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 13–14.

25. Ibid., pp. 4, 50; and 301/1186, testimony of Szmul Miedziński, pp. 1–3.

26. VHF, # 08257; # 23494; and FVA, # HVT-2318. See also AŻIH, 301/2505, testimony of Józef Kopytko, p. 1 (Polish typescript).

27. APSi, 48, Zbiór afiszów okupacyjnych pow. Sokołów Podlaski.

28. VHF, # 08257; FVA, # HVT-2318; and AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 22–23.

29. Eyewitness accounts of the liquidation of Sokołów Podlaski’s ghetto include AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 22–49, 53; 301/3979, p. 5; 301/4507, testimony of Alek Hamburger, pp. 1–4; USHMM, Acc.1998.A.0017, Aaron Elster memoir, pp. 2–3; VHF, # 08257; # 10131; BA-L, B 162/6843, Deposition of Smicha P., March 13, 1962, p. 24, and Deposition of Szabtaj G., March 28, 1962, p. 32; and Rozbici, “To widziały,” pp. 393–394. See, as well, USHMM, RG-15.019M, (ASG), reel 19, 45/244, pp. 1–2.

30. AŻIH, 301/3979, p. 4; VHF, # 10131; and the controversial memoir, parts of which have been republished in Józef Górski, “Na przełomie dziejów,” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, no. 2 (2006): 288–291.

31. AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 39–40; and VHF, # 23494.

32. AŻIH, 301/4507, p. 2.

33. For brief discussions of the fates of Jews in the postliquidation ghetto, see VHF, # 08257; # 23494; USHMM, Acc.1998.A.0017, p. 4; and FVA, # HVT-2318.

34. Pietrzak, *Sokołów*, pp. 42–43, 45–46.

35. “Sokołów Podlaski,” in Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 264; and AŻIH, 301/3079, testimony of Abraham (or Antshel) Fabiarz, pp. 6–8 (typescript).

36. VHF, # 08257; USHMM, Acc.1998.A.0017, pp. 3–4; and Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 309–310. See also VHF, # 10131.

37. AŻIH, 301/4085, pp. 75–114.

38. For Miłobędzki, see USHMM, RG-50.488*0171, Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project, testimony of Kazimierz Miłobędzki; VHF, # 23494; Joanna Lenart, “Sprawiedliwy z Sokołowa,” *Przegląd*, no. 48 (102) (November 26, 2001): 30–31; and Gutman and Bender, *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 518–519, and pp. 83–84, for Bednarz.

STANISŁAWÓW (MAZOWIECKI)

Pre-1939: Stanisławów, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Stanisławów, Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Stanisławów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Stanisławów is located 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) north of Mińsk Mazowiecki. According to the 1921 census, there were 495 Jews living in Stanisławów, representing approximately one quarter of the village population.

In May 1940, the self-help committee, which was affiliated with the Jewish Council (Judenrat), reported the arrival of several refugee families from Tłuszcz and Warsaw. The committee opened a soup kitchen, which, due to financial problems, closed soon afterwards.

That same month, the Judenrat dismissed three non-Judenrat members of the committee (A. Miodowski, I. Żółty, and M. Berger), “due to misunderstandings existing between members of the committee.” The trio was replaced by Benjamin Kaufman, Rafał Stokowski, and Chaim Płatkiewicz, all of whom were members of the Judenrat. Menachem Gelbard chaired the committee. Other members of the committee included Jankiel Warszawski (deputy), Pejsach Jakubowski, and Szlama Zylbernagel. The last four committee members were likely Judenrat members as well; Gelbard was possibly the Judenrat chairman.¹

The existence of a ghetto in Stanisławów is mentioned for the first time in a German report of March 3, 1942, on the concentration of Jews in Kreis Minsk Mazowiecki, which states that in November 1941, 32 Jews from Glinianki and 33 from Dęby Wielkie “were resettled to a Jewish quarter in Stanisławów.”² Secondary sources report that there were either 400 or 700 Jews assembled in the Stanisławów ghetto.

There are no details available about life in the ghetto. Its survivors do not mention any physical enclosure or penalty for leaving it—for example, the memoir of Brandla Bronka Siekierkowa (Siekierka). Three members of the Siekierka family, who reached Stanisławów at the beginning of September 1942, never refer to it as a ghetto but describe it as a place where Jews were concentrated after the liquidation of the ghettos in Mińsk Mazowiecki and other nearby towns: “The Germans announced to all corners that in Stanisławów the Jews will remain alive, [and therefore] they should come out of their hiding places, that they will get a job, and will be able to live.”³

In the first part of September 1942, approximately 500 Jews from the nearby Dobre ghetto were ordered to be transferred to Stanisławów. Sonia Powronzek described the living conditions there upon her arrival: “There was a terrible crush in Stanisławów because the Jews from surrounding towns and villages were deported there. Several families shared two rooms.”⁴ A number of the ghetto residents were selected for labor at the Rokman (or Rekman) Company in Siedlce, where they worked on the railway tracks.⁵

The liquidation of the Stanisławów ghetto was unannounced; nonetheless, as Mojsze Siekierka testified, the Jews sensed it

coming after laborers were released by the Rokman Company. The town was surrounded at night by the German Gendarmerie and Polish (Blue) Police. The Siekierka family, whose house bordered the Aryan side, managed to flee after being warned by a Pole.⁶

A number of the ghetto survivors (e.g., Brandla Siekierkowa, Fala Róża, and Berek Róża) date the liquidation on the first day of the Sukkot holiday, September 25, 1942. It was on that day that the community was deported to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁷

SOURCES The fate of the Jews of Stanisławów during the Holocaust is mentioned briefly in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 467; and Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 215–216.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/651 [AJDC]; 211/987 [JSS]; 301/3338, 301/3681, 301/4098, 301/4380, 301/5108 [Relacje]; 302/123 [Pamiętniki]); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH, AJDC]; RG-02.208 [AŻIH, Pamiętniki]; RG-15.084 [AŻIH, Relacje]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/651 (Stanisławów), pp. 1, 3–4.
2. T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, and A. Rutkowski, eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), Document 145, pp. 278–279.
3. AŻIH, 302/123 (Pamiętniki), Brandla Bronka Siekierkowa (Siekierka), III zeszyt, pp. 47–56; 301/4098 (Relacje), testimony of Mojsze Siekierka, 1949; 301/3681 (Relacje), Władysław Siekierka, 1948.
4. Ibid., 301/3338 (Relacje), testimony of Stanisław Słomkowski aka Dawid Słoń, 1948; and 301/4380 (Relacje), testimony of Sonia Powronzek, 1949 (note that Powronzek testified that there was no ghetto in Dobre).
5. Ibid., 301/4098.
6. Ibid.; 301/3338; 301/3681; 302/123; and 301/4158, testimony of Brandla Siekierka, 1949.
7. Ibid., 301/5108 (Relacje), testimony of Fala Róża and Berek Róża, undated; 302/123; 301/4158.

STERDYŃ

Pre-1939: Sterdyń (Yiddish: Sterdin or Esterdin), village, initially Lublin województwo (later Warsaw województwo) Poland; 1939–1944: Sterdyn, Kreis Sokolow, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sterdyń, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Sterdyń (or Sterdyń-Osada, as it was formally known) is located 21 kilometers (13 miles) north of Sokołów Podlaski and

9.7 kilometers (6 miles) east of Kosów Lacki. On the eve of World War II, 686 Jews lived in Sterdyń. They comprised 87.5 percent of the village population.¹

The Germans occupied Sterdyń on September 14, 1939, the evening of Rosh Hashanah. They immediately began breaking into the town's Jewish stores to rob them of their merchandise. German military authorities also closed the village's synagogue. The German occupation left the village without its rabbi. In Otwock at a sanitarium caring for his dying father when the war broke out, Rabbi Morgenstern did not return to Sterdyń after the Germans closed its synagogue. Instead, he moved to Warsaw, probably to attend to his father's burial. In November 1939, the Germans ordered Sterdyń's Jews to nominate a Judenrat. The six- to eight-person Judenrat, composed of the Jewish community's elders, included Shaja Winograd. The Judenrat created a 10- to 12-member Jewish police force, led by Trębacz.²

During the war, voluntary and forced Jewish migration doubled Sterdyń's Jewish community. In September and November 1939, many families with ties to Sterdyń flocked there from larger cities, including Warsaw, believing it would be easier in wartime to find food in a small agricultural village. During the winter of 1939–1940, the Germans forcibly deported to Sterdyń about 800 Jews, mostly from Kalisz.³ In December 1941 and January 1942, the Germans expelled to Sterdyń another 103 Jews from the nearby civil parish of Jabłonna Lacka and from the settlement at Chruszczewka.⁴ The Judenrat found housing for the refugees. In January 1940, it also provided more than 300 subsidized meals and organized a shoe drive for them.⁵

The Germans also ordered the Judenrat to fill regular forced labor quotas. The village's Jews were conscripted for agricultural labor at several nearby estates expropriated by the Germans. Some also worked draining swamps in Łęki.⁶

Appointed Kreishauptmann Sokolow, Reichslandwirtschaftsrat Ernst Grams, on June 10, 1940, created an open ghetto in Sterdyń. From January 1941, Jews living there were forbidden to leave the village without special permission. Grams appears to have intended for the ghetto to be enclosed. In a February 1, 1941, report, he stated that Sterdyń was one of six places in his county in which Jews had been concentrated and promised to close the ghettos in all of these places as soon as weather permitted.⁷ Grams never implemented this plan fully. In Sterdyń, the ghetto remained unfenced, with Jews there confined to the village.⁸

Forewarned by local Poles several days before Yom Kippur 1942 about German plans to liquidate Sterdyń's ghetto, the Judenrat announced the impending liquidation of their community on September 22. About 700 of the village's 1,200 Jews found hiding places in forests, villages, and estates surrounding Sterdyń. When the Germans arrived the next morning to liquidate the ghetto, they found only 500 of the village's Jews there. Those who did not seek shelter were marched, on foot by some accounts, to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp, located 26.3 kilometers (16 miles) northwest of Sterdyń. Over the next two days, the Germans extricated

between 270 and 300 Jews from hiding places. These Jews were shot in Sterdyń and buried in a mass grave there.⁹

Beginning in the winter of 1942–1943, the Germans embarked on a series of measures to find Jews from Sterdyń still in hiding. To discern where Jews were sheltered, the Germans planted at least one agent in the forest surrounding part of the town. Based on his information, the Germans began rounding up and executing Jews who had survived the ghetto's liquidation. In March and April 1943, for instance, the Germans murdered 1 Jewish woman and 3 Jewish children. In the autumn, German Gendarmes executed 40 Jewish men, women, and children.¹⁰ The Germans simultaneously took punitive measures against Poles known to be hiding Jews from Sterdyń. The best documented of these reprisal Aktions was on February 24, 1943, at the Paulinów estate just south of Sterdyń. There the Germans shot 10 Poles suspected of providing food and shelter to Jews from Sterdyń.¹¹ From March 25 to April 23, 1943, the Germans executed as many as 47 other Poles and may have arrested 140 others suspected of rendering assistance to Sterdyń's Jews.¹² These reprisals, coupled as they were with similar punitive actions in Sądowne, near the Łochów and Stoczek Węgrowski ghettos, provoked many Polish villagers to renege on promises of assistance they had extended to Sterdyń's Jews. Following the reprisals, some Poles purportedly murdered Jews they had agreed initially to protect.¹³

Under these conditions, fewer than 30 of Sterdyń's Jews survived the war. These included Regina "Rivka" Rosenberg, born in Wyszaków, whose family had moved in with the family of her uncle and aunt in Sterdyń at the end of September 1939. Also counted among the survivors are 5 members of Zila Fuchs's family, escapees of the ghetto at Kosów Lacki, who sought shelter in their pre-war village of Nowe Mersy, 2.5 kilometers (1.5 miles) northwest of Sterdyń, with the family of Erazm "Razek" Augustyniak, a former employee of Zila's father.¹⁴ Twenty partisans led by Pinchas Lerman, from Sterdyń, survived the war in the nearby forest. This group also included escapees from the August 1943 Treblinka uprising.¹⁵

Sterdyń's Jewish community was not reconstituted after the war. About 20 survivors gathered initially in the home of Rosenberg's uncle in Sterdyń. They dispersed within a month of liberation in August 1944, moving to other towns, before leaving Poland mainly for Israel and the United States.

SOURCES A number of important published sources are available, including "Sterdyń Sokołowski," *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 14, February 18, 1941, p. 7; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 350, available in English translation in Arnon Rubin, ed., *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 264–265; and Zila Fuks, *Ze'akot lelo kol* (Tel Aviv: I.L. Peretz Publishing, 1988), a chapter of which appears in English translation as "Life in Hiding: Razek's Barn. An Excerpt from *Silent Screams*," in Esther Fuchs, ed., *Women and the Holocaust: Narrative and Representa-*

tion (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1999), pp. 127–134.

Documentary evidence for the Jewish community of Sterdyń during the Holocaust can be found at AŻIH (e.g., 301/4174 and 4771); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [ASG, reel 13, vol. 44, pp. 736–737]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); and VHF (e.g., # 33494, 41841).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4174, testimony of Abraham Sukno, pp. 1–2.
2. Ibid.; VHF, # 33494, testimony of Perl (Morgenstern) Newman; # 41841, testimony of Regina “Rivka” Rosenberg.
3. AŻIH, 301/4174, pp. 2–3, 6; and VHF, # 41841.
4. See T. Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 278 (in German) and p. 279 (in Polish).
5. “Sterdyń Sokołowski,” p. 7.
6. AŻIH, 301/4174, pp. 3–4; and VHF, # 41841.
7. On the creation of six regional concentration points for the Jews in Kreis Sokolow, see Document # 45 in Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów*, p. 108. This report also includes mention of the provisions that prohibited Jews from leaving the towns to which they had been confined.
8. VHF, # 41841.
9. Ibid.; AŻIH, 301/4174, pp. 8–9; and USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel # 13, vol. 44 (Warsaw woj.), pp. 736–737 (Sterdyń-Osada). The postwar Polish court documentation for Sterdyń claims that between September 23 and 24, 1942, the Germans murdered 393 Jews, Poles, and Soviet POWs in and around Sterdyń-Osada. However, some of the Poles and Soviet POWs probably were murdered in subsequent German punitive actions. The figure cited here for the number of Jews killed in Sterdyń during the ghetto liquidation comes from AŻIH documentation.
10. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWp, 1985), p. 268.
11. More information on the Paulinów pacification is provided in Waclaw Piekarski, *Obwód Armii Krajowej Sokółów Podlaski ‘Sęp’ Proso, 1930–1944* (Warsaw, 1991), pp. 26–27; the article in the nationalist *Głos Pracy*, May 13, 1943 (no. 20), reprinted in Paweł Szapiro, ed., *Wojna żydowsko-niemiecka. Polska prasa konspiracyjna 1943–1944 o powstaniu w getcie Warszawy* (London: Aneks, 1992), p. 163; Waclaw Zajaczkowski, *Martyrs of Charity*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: St. Maximilian Kolbe Foundation, 1987), pp. 199–200, 228; and The Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation, IPN, and the Polish Society for the Righteous Among Nations, *Those Who Helped. Polish Rescuers during the Holocaust*, 2 pts. (Warsaw, 1996), pt. 2, pp. 79, 102, 124–125.
12. The figure of 47 is from Mariusz Bechta, *Rewolucja—mit-bandytyzm* (Warsaw and Biała Podlaska, 2000), p. 83; and Piekarski, *Obwód*, p. 37. See also Zajaczkowski, *Martyrs of Charity*, p. 228.
13. VHF, # 41841.
14. Fuks, “Life in Hiding: Rzek’s Barn,” pp. 127–134; and Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*,

vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 61–62. Also useful is the account by Fuchs’s daughter Esther Fuchs, “Exile, Daughterhood, and Writing. Representing the Shoah as a Personal Memory,” in Ronit Lentin, ed., *Re-presenting the Shoah for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 253–268.

15. AŻIH, 301/4771, testimony of Pinchas Lerman, pp. 1–3. See also Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed. Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1984), p. 244.

STOCZEK ŁUKOWSKI

Pre-1939: Stoczek Łukowski, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Stoczek Łukowski, Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Stoczek Łukowski, Lublin województwo, Poland

Stoczek Łukowski is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) southeast of Warsaw, on the Świder River. In 1939, the population figure was 4,118, with around 60 percent being Jews.

Stoczek felt the first effects of the war as early as September 10, 1939, when the Germans began bombing the town. With the arrival of the Wehrmacht two days later, a catastrophic fire broke out in which 80 percent of the predominantly wooden buildings, including the synagogue, burned to the ground. In the following two years, these structures were replaced by barrackslike buildings.¹

One of the first steps taken by the new holders of power was to change the administrative affiliation of the town; previously part of the Lublin województwo, it now was assigned to Kreis Garwolin within Distrikt Warschau.² Until April 1941, the Kreishauptmann—and therefore the person with local responsibility for Jewish policy in the first years of the war—was Dr. Hans Klein. He was succeeded by Dr. Carl Freudenthal, who was notable for his especially radical policy regarding the local inhabitants.³



The burned-out Jewish quarter in Stoczek Łukowski, after September 12, 1939.

USHMM WS #49699, COURTESY OF TOM SALMON

In the very first months of the occupation, the Jews were subjected to persecution by the National Socialists, including not only registration but also seizure of assets and robbery. In addition, a curfew was introduced.⁴ In 1939, there were about 2,200 Jews living in Stoczek, and by November 1940 that number had declined to 1,956, as many took flight, mainly heading eastward towards the Soviet-occupied regions of Poland. At the same time, there were already 225 Jewish expellees living in the town, most of whom had been forced out of the neighboring village of Prawda and were compelled to resettle resulting from an Aktion that took place on December 13, 1940.⁵ Even in late January 1941, the figure of approximately 2,000 Jews in Stoczek still remained valid.⁶ Because the Nazi holders of power sought to concentrate the Jewish population still further, however, new refugees from other places in Kreis Garwolin soon arrived. By July 1941, the number of Jews in Stoczek had risen to 2,450, and in April 1942, it reached 2,950⁷ (by other estimates, 3,300), around 15 percent of all the Jews in Kreis Garwolin.⁸

In the fall of 1940, the Jews in Stoczek were moved into an open, unfenced ghetto; they were not allowed to leave this area, however.⁹ More precise information regarding the date on which the ghetto was established is not available, as is quite frequently the case in Distrikt Warschau.¹⁰ Nonetheless, certain particulars of Jewish life under the occupation can be provided. For example, it is known that the Judenrat, which was created by the Germans in late 1939 or early 1940, soon set up a Jewish social welfare relief committee, which organized distributions of goods to 600 needy people, thanks to support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), and also issued 500 daily food rations through a distribution office.¹¹

The relief committee was headed by Aron Heller, the chairman of the Judenrat, a 60-year-old businessman who had played a role in Stoczek's public life as a juror before the war.¹² Heller also represented Stoczek as the official Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) delegate in Kreis Garwolin, where he was assisted by Wolf Tykociński. At the municipal level, the JSS committee, which also organized special collections in winter, included other Judenrat members as well: Heller's deputy, Szmuel Nachtlaifer, who was a shoemaker, and the trader Lejb Perkal and baker Majer Szulim Goldschmidt, who had been town councilmen in Stoczek before the war and thus were among the local notables.¹³

Stoczek Łukowski was the first ghetto in Kreis Garwolin to be liquidated in the course of Aktion Reinhard. Around September 18, 1942, the Jews, in a brutal Aktion, were driven on foot by German, Ukrainian, and Polish policemen and SS units towards the ghetto of Parysów, a good 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) to the west. Around 200 of them were shot before leaving Stoczek or along the route of their march. From Parysów, a few days later, the Germans deported the Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹⁴

SOURCES Relevant facts and sparse details on Stoczek can be found in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz

Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), and T. Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk Żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," *BŻIH*, no. 3 (1952): 83–125. Further information, based on survivor testimonies at Yad Vashem, is available in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007). A book on the town's history widely ignores its Jewish inhabitants: Adam Budzyński and Józef Filipczuk, *Stoczek Łukowski. Z dziejów miasta* (Stoczek Łukowski: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Stoczka, 1996), but it is useful for a general assessment.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Stoczek can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/28, 211/399); BA-L (B 162/6816); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and YVA (O-3 and O-93; O-4/334).

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NOTES

1. See Budzyński and Filipczuk, *Stoczek*, p. 119 ff.
2. See Berenstein, "Deportacje," p. 84.
3. See Markus Roth, *Herrenmenschen. Die deutschen Kreisbauptleute im besetzten Polen—Karrierewege, Herrschaftspraxis und Nachgeschichte* (Göttingen, 2009), pp. 146, 442.
4. See Rubin, *Rise*, p. 266.
5. See Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, "'Akcja Reinhard' w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943," in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 39–74, here p. 59.
6. AŻIH, 211/399, letter from the Stoczek Judenrat to JSS Kraków, January 26, 1941.
7. See Berenstein, "Deportacje," p. 118.
8. See Barbara Engelking, "Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego," in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Prowincja noc*, pp. 119–221, here p. 214. On the total number in the Kreis, see AŻIH, 211/399, Letter from the Stoczek Judenrat to JSS Kraków, January 26, 1941.
9. Engelking, "Życie codzienne Żydów," p. 214.
10. Ibid., pp. 168–169.
11. AŻIH, 210/28, AJDC index of places for Distrikt Warschau, May–December 1940.
12. Ibid., 211/399, Correspondence between the JSS Kraków and the Judenrat in Stoczek Łukowski from October 1940 to February 15, 1941.
13. Ibid., List of candidates for the JSS elections in Garwolin, February 1941.
14. BA-L, B 162/6816, p. 21, statement of Jakob F., May 30, 1962, as cited in Młynarczyk, "'Akcja Reinhard,'" p. 60; Berenstein, "Deportacje," p. 118.

STOCZEK WĘGROWSKI

Pre-1939: Stoczek Węgrowski (Yiddish: Stok bey Vengrov), village, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Stoczek-Węgrowski, Kreis Sokolow, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Stoczek, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Stoczek Węgrowski is located about 70 kilometers (44 miles) northeast of Warsaw. In 1921, there were 1,221 Jews living there out of a total population of 1,636.

On September 10, 1939, German forces bombarded the town, setting on fire the synagogue and destroying most of the houses. Many Jews fled into the fields in panic and on their return discovered that their homes and possessions were lost. The Germans first entered Stoczek a few days later but soon retreated under the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact; then the town was briefly occupied by the Red Army in the second half of September. A number of young Jewish men exploited this opportunity and escaped across the Soviet border, before the Germans returned again about two weeks later, after the Nazi-Soviet agreement had been revised. Subsequently, Jewish refugees from all over Poland also came to the region, with the aim of crossing into the Soviet Union. However, border security was considerably tightened by 1940, causing some of the refugees to settle in Stoczek.¹

In the first weeks of the occupation, Germans, assisted by some local hooligans, looted what remained in Jewish homes and stores. By early in 1940, the German authorities had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force to assist with the enforcement of anti-Jewish decrees and demands. At least one account in the yizkor book speaks bitterly of the behavior of the members of these institutions, as they sometimes arrested fellow Jews and also extracted onerous taxes from them. The account's author refuses to mention their names.²

In a February 1, 1941, report, the Kreishauptmann Sokolow, Reichslandwirtschaftsrat Ernst Grams, stated that Stoczek was one of six concentration points for Jews (*Judenwohnbezirke*) in the Kreis. He intended to enclose these ghettos as soon as the weather permitted. Any Jews remaining in the villages were to be moved to one of these six concentration points. From February 1941, the Germans forbade Jews from leaving the towns' boundaries.³ It seems, however, that Grams never implemented this plan fully. In Stoczek, as was the case also, for example, in Węgrów and Kosów Lacki, the ghetto remained open up until September 1942.

The testimony of Jewish survivors is fairly consistent on this point. Chaim Kwiatek maintains that no ghetto was established in Stoczek ("keyn geto is in shtot nit gewen"). At the same time he notes that Jews from surrounding villages, including from Osówno, Prostyn, Korytnica, Grębków, Grochów (phonetic: Gerech), and other places, were concentrated in Stoczek, although at some point this process of concentration ceased. This resulted in three or four families residing in each home. Due to this overcrowding, an epidemic of typhus broke out in which about 20 percent of the Jews died.⁴

Heim Tshekhanovietski recalls that when the Germans set up the ghettos in the towns, they said that Stoczek was too small to have a ghetto. The result was that the Jews of Stoczek had to pay a large sum of money to the relevant German officials to be allowed to remain in place. A condition of their re-

maining in Stoczek was that they were not allowed to leave the town. Any Jew caught outside Stoczek was shot.⁵

Finally, Ali Yankl Teytelbaym notes that no closed or sealed ghetto existed in Stoczek, but Jews who left the town were shot without warning. However, Poles were still able to come into town, and they traded with the Jews, although under these conditions, they were able to dictate the prices, as the Jews still hoped somehow to survive.⁶

In November 1941, the Germans ordered that 302 additional Jews relocate to the open ghetto in Stoczek, including those from the villages of Prostyn, Stara Wieś, and Miedzna. At the same time, another 269 Jews from Korytnica, Ossówno, Sinołęka, and Borze were concentrated in the open ghetto in Grębków.⁷ If Kwiatek's testimony is correct, it is possible that the Jews concentrated in Grębków were subsequently consolidated, in 1942, in Stoczek. (Unfortunately, no detailed information could be found concerning the ghetto in Grębków, and therefore no separate entry for it has been included in this volume.) According to Czesław Pilichowski and others, some 2,000 Jews were collected in the Stoczek ghetto altogether.⁸

On May 15, 1942, the Judenrat in Stoczek was ordered to provide 35 (according to one source, 135) men for forced labor construction work at the Treblinka extermination camp. The families of these men remained behind in Stoczek. Some contact remained with the Jews of Stoczek for several more weeks, as the Germans permitted deliveries of food and washed clothes to the laborers, which also enabled messages to be passed between the two groups. In this way quite detailed information about the killings in Treblinka became known to the Jews of Stoczek, which was also confirmed by Jews who had jumped from the trains or escaped from Treblinka and sought refuge in Stoczek.⁹

Among the last communications from Stoczek Węgrowski is a short letter dated September 4, 1942, which was sent to the Warsaw ghetto and has been preserved in the Ringelblum Archive.¹⁰ According to one survivor account, most of the remaining men from Stoczek were deported on or around September 11, either to Treblinka or to labor camps in the region, leaving behind mostly women and children.¹¹

The Germans liquidated the Stoczek ghetto on September 24–25, 1942. According to Pilichowski and colleagues, 188 Jews were shot in and around the town, and the remainder were sent to the Sadowne train station.¹² On September 25, 1942, a train, which was carrying Jews from the ghettos of Baczki and Łopianka (near Łochów), stopped at 3:30 P.M. in Sadowne to load Jews assembled there from Stoczek's ghetto. Once the train departed there at 4:48 P.M., several Jews opened one of the train wagons, about 10 minutes later. Scores were mowed down by armed guards as the Jews jumped from the train. At 5:37 P.M., the train carrying the remainder of the Jews of Łochów and Stoczek arrived at the Treblinka extermination camp. Stoczek Jews working at Treblinka learned of the murder of their women and children just a few hours after their arrival in the camp, as some last messages of farewell were passed on by other prisoners.¹³

As they were aware of their likely fate, a number of Jews from Stoczek avoided the final roundups by hiding in prepared bunkers in and around the town. However, intensive searches for Jews continued in the region for many more months, and some Jews were betrayed by local peasants, who were rewarded by the Germans with material goods for denouncing Jews in hiding. Only a few Jews from the Stoczek ghetto survived until the Germans were driven from the region by the Red Army in the summer of 1944.

SOURCES The yizkor book *Pinkas Stok (bey Vengrov)* (Buenos Aires: Residentes de Stok en la Argentina, 1974) contains several accounts concerning the wartime period. The existence of a ghetto in Stoczek Węgrowski is mentioned in the following secondary sources: Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 759–760; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 473; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 266–268.

Published documents making reference to the ghetto or Jewish residential area in Stoczek include T. Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), pp. 106, 278, 279.

Documentary sources on the Jews of Stoczek during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/668; Ring II/275 and 295); BA-BL (R 52III/29); USHMM (RG-14.052 [BA-BL, R 52]; RG-15.079M [Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF, #14739; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Ch. Frabish-Vardi, “Shnot ha’milchamah 1939–1945 bestock,” in *Pinkas Stok*, pp. 402–411; Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, *District Lublin*, pp. 266–268.

2. Ali Yankl Teytelbaym, “Epes fun di natsishe tseitn in Stok bes der milhomah,” in *Pinkas Stok*, pp. 436–437.

3. USHMM, RG-14.025M (BA-BL), R 52III/29, Lagebericht des Kreises Sokolow für den Monat Februar 1941, published in Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów*, pp. 106–108.

4. AŻIH, 301/668, testimony of Chaim Kwiatek.

5. Heim Tshekhanovietski, “Fun Stok keyn Treblinke un di dervartete bafreyung,” in *Pinkas Stok*, p. 423.

6. Teytelbaym, “Epes fun di natsishe tseitn,” p. 437.

7. Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów*, p. 278 (in German) and p. 279 (in Polish).

8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 473.

9. Tshekhanovietski, “Fun Stok keyn Treblinke,” pp. 423–425. See also *Pinkas Stok*, pp. 432, 438, which both give the figure of 35 Jews; and AŻIH, Ring II/295, published in translation in Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 710–716.

10. AŻIH, Ring II/275.

11. *Pinkas Stok*, p. 438.

12. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 473.

13. See AŻIH, 301/4238, pp. 4–5; and VHF, # 14739. The train schedule for the Łochów and Stoczek deportations appears as Document # 46, under the heading “Rozkład jazdy z dnia 21.9.1942 r. pociągów transportowych do Treblinki,” in the document collection “Zagłada Żydów w obozach na ziemiach polskich,” *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce* 13 (1960): 105–106 (Polish translation) and p. 65 F (photograph of original German document); see also *Pinkas Stok*, p. 426.

TARCZYN

Pre-1939: Tarczyn (Yiddish: Tartchin), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Grojec, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Tarczyn is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) south-southwest of Warsaw. According to the 1921 census, there were 1,457 Jews living in the town, comprising 56.5 percent of the total population.

As the German army approached Tarczyn, many Jews escaped to the east. Tarczyn was occupied in mid-September 1939. According to reports in the Ringelblum Archive, there was a major fire in Tarczyn in September 1939 at the time of the German occupation. In addition, there was a temporary expulsion of male Poles and Jews from Tarczyn at this time.¹ When the Generalgouvernement was set up by the Germans in late October 1939, Tarczyn became a part of Kreis Grojec. The Kreishauptmann was initially Regierungsrat Dr. Klein; in March 1940, he was replaced by Landrat Werner Zimmermann.

From the period 1939 to 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Tarczyn. They confiscated Jewish property, ordered the Jews to wear distinguishing armbands, and registered the population. The Jews were also required to perform forced labor. The Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which assisted with the provision of forced laborers. Hundreds of Jews were requisitioned daily for building roads and cutting down trees.

In early 1940, there were 1,540 Jews residing in Tarczyn, including refugees. The Jewish community established an aid committee, which included L. Najberg and P. Higer, who ran the public kitchen. It received financial support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). These funds were used to provide aid to at least 400 needy Jews in the town, including the operation of the soup kitchen. The kitchen was temporarily closed in the summer of 1940; it reopened again on August 18 but was closed again in mid-October.² There were about 60 refugees from other towns living in Tarczyn.

On December 6, 1940, the aid committee in Tarczyn reported to the AJDC in Kraków that currently “we were busy with establishing a Jewish quarter [open ghetto] in Tarczyn.”³ The ghetto was guarded by the Polish (Blue) Police. According to survivor Sylvia Kolski, her family exchanged their apartment with a Christian family who lived within the designated

ghetto area. There was no wall or fence around the ghetto, but the Jews were not permitted to go to the Catholic side.⁴ Nonetheless, illegal trade continued with the local Polish population who supplied food to the ghetto in exchange for valuables and personal belongings.

On January 21, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Grójec, Landrat Zimmermann, issued the following order: "All Jews living outside of the towns of Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec are to transfer immediately to the closest of these towns, all of which were to be considered as ghettos. The heads of the respective settlements were made personally responsible for ensuring that by January 27, 1941, no Jews still were residing on their territory." The order also stipulated that any Jew caught outside these ghettos after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.⁵

The Tarczyn ghetto was liquidated on February 28, 1941, when all the Jews—around 1,600 people—were resettled into the Warsaw ghetto.⁶ According to Henry Leshno, who was 15 years old at the time, the Germans announced beforehand that all the Jews were to move to Warsaw. They were able to take with them only their own personal belongings.⁷ From the ghetto in Warsaw, most of the Tarczyn Jews were deported in July through September 1942 to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Only a handful of Jews from Tarczyn managed to survive the German occupation, some of them being hidden in the homes of local Polish inhabitants. In the village of Stefanówka, near Tarczyn, there was a man who was engaged in tracking down Jews in hiding. He uncovered two sisters, who were hiding in Stefanówka, but they managed to bribe him to avoid being denounced.⁸

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jews of Tarczyn during the Holocaust include Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 229–230. The Tarczyn ghetto is mentioned also in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 514; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowinia noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 213; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 807.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/680 [AJDC]; 301/2493 and 5340 [Relacje]; Ring I/809, 881, 920, 921, 1175); BA-L (Ord. Vers. XXI); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.079M [Ring I]; RG-15.084M [Relacje]; RG-50.030*0114); VHF (e.g., # 26012, 49983); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. AŻIH, Ring I/920 and 921.
2. Ibid., 210/680 (AJDC).
3. Ibid.; Ring I/920, however, dates the ghetto's establishment in January 1941.

4. VHF, # 49983, testimony of Sylvia Kolski (born 1925); USHMM, RG-50.030*0114, interview with Sylvia Kolski.

5. AŻIH, Ring I/881.

6. Ibid., Ring I/920 and 921, date the ghetto's liquidation on February 28, 1941. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 514, give the figure of 1,600 ghetto inhabitants but erroneously date its liquidation on February 28, 1942.

7. VHF, # 26012, testimony of Henry Leshno (born 1925).

8. AŻIH, 301/5340.

TŁUSZCZ

Pre-1939: Tłuszcz, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Tłuszcz, initially center of Kreis Radzymin, then Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tłuszcz, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Tłuszcz is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) northeast of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population was 437, out of a total population of 1,102.

On September 3, 1939, the Luftwaffe heavily bombarded Tłuszcz, as it lay on the main railroad from Warsaw to Białystok. Since they were constructed of wood, many Jewish houses burned down in the ensuing fire. Several Jews were killed in the bombardment, and many others fled to the surrounding villages. German forces occupied the town on September 14, 1939. When the Jews celebrated the High Holidays a few days later, many were still staying with peasant acquaintances in the surrounding villages.¹ Soon after their arrival, the Germans started to harass the Jews, impress them for forced labor, cut off their beards, and beat them. They seized Jewish property during searches and required requisitions.

In October 1939, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by Gutman Popowski. With the transfer to civilian rule on October 26, 1939, Tłuszcz initially became part of Kreis Radzymin in Distrikt Warschau; subsequently Kreis Radzymin was incorporated within Kreis Warschau-Land. In the town, the main German presence was a squad of 12 Gendarmes headed by Wachtmeister Stein. Popowski tried to ease the burden on the Jews by giving the Gendarmes gifts of boots, watches, or even silk stockings and diamond rings for their women. In the fall of 1939 and the ensuing winter, a number of Jews fled to the Soviet-occupied zone of Poland; then the Jewish population of the town, including refugees, was about 740.

In September 1940, the Germans established a ghetto in Tłuszcz. The Jews were forced to move out of their homes and were resettled into the homes of Polish peasants just outside of town. The peasants were moved into the houses vacated by the Jews. There was terrible overcrowding in the ghetto, where the Jews were packed together very tightly. There was no running water, and Jews were only permitted to go and collect water once per day.² In January 1941, 685 people living in the Tłuszcz ghetto were receiving potato rations with the aid of the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS).³

In the summer of 1941, a typhus epidemic broke out in the ghetto, causing the Germans to seal it off. The Jews were warned that they would be shot if they tried to leave. Since the Jews made a living primarily by selling clothing and other items to the Polish peasants in return for food products, some of which were resold in Warsaw, the new restrictions dealt a serious blow to the Jewish population. To overcome this, chairman Popowski paid Wachtmeister Stein 1,000 złoty per week and other bribes for the Gendarmerie to turn a blind eye and permit trading to continue. According to the deal, Jewish craftsmen (tailors, carpenters, and others) were permitted to sell their goods to the peasants. Within a short time, however, several Jews were caught and shot for being outside the ghetto. In response, the Judenrat increased the level of the bribes, but no real security existed, and the risks for smugglers were high, which also caused black market prices to rise.⁴

Since Popowski was the only Jew officially permitted to leave the ghetto, he went one day to collect a sum of money on behalf of a Jewish woman from the town's post office. When the German official refused to serve him, Popowski complained and nearly got shot for his pains. Two weeks later he was lured out to the post office on a false pretext and was arrested by the Gestapo. Having handed over the keys and accounts to the rest of the Judenrat, he was then taken to the Pawiak prison in Warsaw. From there he was transferred to the Auschwitz concentration camp, where he reportedly died after only a few weeks.⁵

Meir Taub succeeded Popowski as Judenrat chairman. Conditions in the ghetto deteriorated further during the winter of 1941–1942. Jews were dying every day from starvation and disease, and more Jews were shot for leaving the ghetto. Searches conducted inside the ghetto for illegal possession of fur, silk, or leather items resulted in hefty fines or extortionate demands from the Gendarmes. The Polish (Blue) Police also extorted money from the Jews.

By the spring of 1942 rumors spread about the imminent liquidation of the ghetto, following the expulsion of the Jews from other nearby towns, including Pustelnik and Wawer. The Jews learned that local Poles had appealed to the Landrat in Radzymin for the Jews to be driven out of Tłuszcz, merely out of spite.⁶

On Monday, May 25, 1942, a Polish policeman requested that a uniform he had ordered from a Jewish tailor be ready the same day, as all the Jews were soon to be driven out of town. This report soon spread panic among the Jews. Since an elderly Jew had just died, on May 26 Reb Yaakov Joseph Bruckman and the head of the Jewish Police, Berl Gelbard, decided themselves to take the body to be buried in the nearby town of Jadów to try to find out if there was any substance behind the rumors. They agreed in advance that if there was no danger they would both return, but if the rumor appeared to be true, Reb Bruckman would remain in Jadów.⁷

On the night of May 26, 1942, Berl Gelbard returned to Tłuszcz alone with news from the Jadów Judenrat that the liquidation of the Tłuszcz ghetto was planned for the next day. At 4:00 A.M. the next morning, German Border Police (Grenz-

polizei), Polish (Blue) Police, and Gendarmerie forces under the command of Oberleutnant Lipsch (the Gendarmerie commander in Kreis Warschau-Land) surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were instructed to assemble on the market square, and here a selection took place. The men aged between 16 and 30 were sent to labor camps, including the one at Wilanów. A group of Jews was forced to remove the furniture from the Jewish houses and put it on the square. Most other possessions, including any valuables, were taken from the Jews before their departure, supposedly in payment for their transportation costs. About 70 Jews were shot in Tłuszcz at the time of the roundup. Among those killed was a family accused of hiding some leather, many of the Jews who had worked for the Gendarmerie, and a local Jewish woman who was shot by Wachtmeister Stein personally as he thought that she was too beautiful. The Germans loaded the women and children onto carts, which drove off towards Radzymin. About one hour later the remaining men were sent after the women and children on foot with instructions to run and catch up to them. The Germans shot another 300 or so people on the road to Radzymin, as they failed to keep up with the column. The corpses were buried quickly by Polish auxiliaries wearing red armbands who followed along behind.⁸

In Radzymin, the Gendarmerie and Border Police robbed and beat the Jews again. The Germans then loaded the remaining Jews onto railway cars, and, then closer to Warsaw, the Jews were loaded onto overcrowded trams and sent to the Warsaw ghetto. On arrival they were disinfected in a quarantine section before entering the ghetto.⁹

A note preserved in the files of the JSS in Kraków, recording a message sent by a representative of the JSS for Kreis Warschau-Land, reports that of more than 800 Jews resettled from Tłuszcz on May 27, 1942, only 582 people reached the quarantine section of the Warsaw ghetto, without any personal property or money. They arrived in a terrible state, many of the men barefoot. Unofficial information revealed that 65 people were selected at Marki along the way to perform agricultural work in Wilanów. Another 65 people were reportedly deported from Tłuszcz, who never arrived in quarantine nor were redirected to Wilanów.¹⁰

On the same day that the Jews were driven out of Tłuszcz, Oberleutnant Lipsch went to Jadów and demanded that the Judenrat there hand over Reb Bruckman or he would kill several of its members. On learning of this, the rabbi decided to give himself up. The Gendarmes forced him to dance, beat him, and then shot him. His body was thrown into a deep ditch in the center of the market.¹¹

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jews of Tłuszcz and their fate during the Holocaust include Mendl Gelbart, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Tłushtsh* (Tel Aviv, 1971); Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S." ("Oneg Shabbath")* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 201–208; and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 4, Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 233–235. Additional information on the

ghetto in Tłuszcz can be found in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 519.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Tłuszcz under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/1030 [JSS]; Ring I/222); IPN (ASG, sygn. 62, p. 221); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 48; RG-15.079 [Ring I]); and YVA (e.g., O-21/4).

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NOTES

1. M. Perel, “Der anheyb fun suf fun shtetlekh Tlushtsh,” in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Tlushtsh*, pp. 134–137.
2. Dara Mozer-Shkalnik, “Meyne Melhomah Iberlebungen,” in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Tlushtsh*, p. 138.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48 (AŻIH, 211/1030), report of the JSS branch in Tłuszcz to the JSS central office in Kraków, January 31, 1941. The report also includes a list of family names and the number of persons in each family.
4. AŻIH, Ring I/222, published in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 202–203.
5. Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, p. 203.
6. Ibid., pp. 203–204.
7. Ibid., pp. 204–205.
8. Ibid., pp. 205–208. Also see Michal Kossover, “Di lkvitatsie fun Tlushtsher geto,” pp. 125–126, and Dara Mozer-Shkalnik, “Meyne Melhomah Iberlebungen,” pp. 140–141—both in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Tlushtsh*.
9. Asher Seymon, “Melhomah Iberlebungen,” in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Tlushtsh*, pp. 182–183; Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, p. 208.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 210/1085, p. 50.
11. Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 208–209; Kossover, “Di lkvitatsie fun Tlushtsher geto,” pp. 127–128. There are some discrepancies between these two accounts, but the gist is very similar.

WARKA

Pre-1939: Warka (Yiddish: Vurka), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Grojec, Distrikt Warschau, General-gouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Warka is located on the left bank of the Pilica River about 53 kilometers (33 miles) south-southeast of Warsaw. In 1921, the Jewish population was 2,176, out of a total of 4,306. On the eve of World War II, there were approximately 3,000 Jews living in Warka.

The German occupation of Warka began in September 1939. One resident of Warka recalls that the Germans “came into town on Friday night, September 8, 1939. The next morning, they began to round up people to work on clearing the highway between Warka and Góra Kalwaria. The roundups continued daily. Jews were seized to clear the highway and the streets, to carry water, and to cook for the army. While at work, they were tortured and beaten terribly.”¹ Although some Jews remained in Warka at the time of German occupation, many



A wooden synagogue in Warka, ca. 1938.
USHMM WS #07084, COURTESY OF JERZY FICOWSKI

had already fled to the east, into the area that came under Soviet occupation.

After the Germans occupied Warka, they began to search Jewish homes, seize Jewish property, and cut off the beards of Jewish men. The Germans banned the practice of kosher slaughter; however, Warka’s Jewish population continued it illegally. The Germans also appointed a new mayor of Warka—a woman called Kosmal, who was of ethnic German origin—and a new chief of police—a man called Weitknecht (also an ethnic German).²

In October 1939, after the holiday of Sukkot, the synagogue, Bet Midrash, and the *mikveh* were set on fire by the Germans and burned. Jewish residents attempted to extinguish the flames; however, a cordon of soldiers encircled the entire Jewish quarter and opened fire at the oncoming Jews, forcing them to return to their homes. Rabbi Yanovisky and his son attempted to save two Torah scrolls; however, German soldiers shot and killed them.³ The Germans also imposed monetary “contributions” on the Jewish population of Warka. In some accounts this was a ransom to release Jews taken hostage, and in others it was a punishment for failing to meet the quota of forced laborers. The Germans also threatened to increase the amount demanded if the sum was not delivered on time.⁴

In early 1940, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which took over the task of

supplying forced laborers. Members of the Warka Judenrat included Werchajzer Uszer (head), Dawid Mokotow, Moszek Chaim Lipszyc, Icek Putermilch, Berek Lander, Moszek Weber, Lejbus Blatman, Lejb Zymler, Zurek Sztajbok, Chaim Feldman, and Aaron Kohn. Subsequently Icek Putermilch became chairman of the Judenrat.⁵ The Germans ordered all Jews over the age of 12 to wear the Star of David on their right sleeve.

During 1940, an aid committee was active in Warka, providing assistance to some 700 needy Jews. The committee corresponded initially with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw and subsequently also with the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) headquarters in Kraków.⁶

The Germans established a ghetto in Warka on November 28, 1940.⁷ The ghetto area covered several streets, with Santorski Street at its center. The entire Jewish population was forced to abandon their homes and move into the congested ghetto area.⁸

On December 8, 1940, the Jewish Council reported: "A Jewish district was introduced in Warka, this district numbers 400 households along with stores, it contains 2,200 Jews, in addition to this, in the last months a great number of displaced persons came to Warka from Głowaczów, Piaseczno, and Warsaw."⁹ Therefore, in total the Warka ghetto may have contained up to 2,800 Jews, including those brought in from neighboring villages.¹⁰

The ghetto population managed to survive by bartering their remaining possessions with Polish farmers from the surrounding area in exchange for food. Initially, it was possible for Jews to leave the ghetto in the morning and return in the evening. One survivor, Jack Berman, recalls going out of the ghetto to perform forced labor chopping wood. The lack of living space, poor hygiene, and inadequate medical care resulted in a high mortality rate among the Jews.¹¹

According to one account, on December 31, 1940, soldiers surrounded the entire town and ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) were dispatched to every Jewish home. They made a careful search of each household and collected all of the Jews' belongings in one place. The next day, officials came and registered all the Jews' possessions, informing them that they would be responsible for ensuring that nothing was missing.¹² On January 21, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Grójec, Landrat Zimmermann, ordered that any Jew caught outside the ghettos in Kreis Grojec after January 27, 1941, would face the death penalty.¹³ Shortly afterwards, in early February 1941, the Kreishauptmann issued a further decree forbidding the Jews from selling their furniture to non-Jews.¹⁴ In preparation for the expulsion of the Jews from Warka, the German authorities wanted to ensure the complete confiscation of all Jewish property.

News of the liquidation of other ghettos in nearby towns and their deportation to the Warsaw ghetto had reached the Jews of Warka at this time, spreading fear among them. The liquidation of the Warka ghetto took place on February 20–21, 1941. The Jewish quarter was surrounded by armed policemen, ethnic Germans, and other auxiliary forces. The German

authorities instructed the Jews to gather in front of the municipality. Each individual was allowed to take with them only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of luggage. The assembled men, women, and children were beaten badly in front of the municipality building.¹⁵ Then the order was given to march in the direction of the railroad station, located a few kilometers outside the town. Those unable to walk and small children were loaded onto horse-driven carts. At the train station the Jews were loaded onto waiting cattle cars by SS guards. The cars were locked from the outside and then transported the Jews to the Warsaw ghetto. On arrival at the ghetto they were met by two German policemen on the outside and two Jewish policemen on the inside.¹⁶

The majority of the Jews of Warka shared the fate of most of the other Jews of the Warsaw ghetto: they were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp from the summer of 1942. Only a few Jews from Warka survived the Holocaust. Among them were several people who escaped from the Warka ghetto on the eve of its liquidation and fled to other towns in the Generalgouvernement. They then survived the remainder of the occupation on false papers, in hiding, or under harsh conditions in various camps.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Warka during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: *Vurka; sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Vurka Society in Israel, 1976); Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1987), pp. 310–313. The Warka ghetto is mentioned also in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 538; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 213; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 896.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/703 [AJDC]; 211/1066 [JSS]; 301/3003; 302/264; Ring I/809, 881, 1175); BA-L (Ord. Vers. XXI); USHMM (RG-15.084 [Relacje]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154); VHF (e.g., # 20954, 29086, 35130); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 310.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 312; David Gersht, "The Ghetto in Warka and Its Liquidation," in *Vurka; sefer zikaron*, pp. 361–379.
4. VHF, # 35130, testimony of Helen Sadik; Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 311.
5. AŻIH, 211/1066, p. 4, report to the JSS in Kraków, January 7, 1941.
6. Ibid.; 210/703.
7. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 538.
8. Gersht, "The Ghetto in Warka," pp. 361–379; VHF, # 35130.
9. AŻIH, 210/703, p. 49.

10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 538.
11. Gersht, "The Ghetto in Warka," pp. 361–379; VHF, # 20954, testimony of Jack Berman.
12. Huberland, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 313.
13. AŻIH, Ring I/881.
14. BA-L, Ordn. Vers. XXI, p. 364, Kreishauptmann Grojec an alle Bürgermeister und Gemeindevorsteher des Kreises Grojec, February 4, 1941.
15. Huberland, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 313.
16. Gersht, "The Ghetto in Warka," pp. 361–379.

WARSAW

Pre-1939: Warsaw (Polish: Warszawa), city, capital of Poland, and center; Warsaw województwo; 1939–1945: Warschau, Stadt, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Warsaw, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Warsaw is located 137 kilometers (85 miles) northeast of Łódź. In 1939, on the eve of war, the approximately 380,000 Jews living there comprised just less than one quarter of the city's total population of around 1.3 million.

Following the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, Warsaw came under siege for three weeks. The continuous bombardment of the city during the siege killed and injured many people, including large numbers of Jews. A mass exodus of inhabitants and the Polish political leadership began. Among those who fled were the leaders of Polish Jewry, such as Maurycy Meisel, head of the Warsaw Jewish Community Council. The German army entered Warsaw on September 27, 1939. Both systematic and impromptu persecution, abuse, theft, forced labor, and murder began immediately. In February 1940, there were some 394,000 Jews in Warsaw, including tens of thousands of Jewish refugees.

In October 1940, Ludwig Fischer, the Gouverneur of Distrikt Warschau, decreed the establishment of a ghetto by the end of the month.¹ The Jewish community had to pay for the ghetto wall, and Jewish forced labor built it. It was 3 meters high (9.8 feet) and 18 kilometers (11 miles) long. Hundreds of thousands of Jews, carrying their possessions, moved into the area designated as the ghetto. As the resettlement could not be completed on time, the German authorities extended the deadline for the Jews to move into the ghetto to November 15.²

The establishment of the ghetto was a precipitating factor in the economic and physical liquidation of the Jewish population; because most inhabitants could no longer work, food supplies were grossly inadequate, and diseases soon ran rampant.

The ghetto stretched over only 2.4 percent of the city's area in one of the poorest districts of northern Warsaw. The number of ghetto inhabitants actually grew after it was established. More than 50,000 additional Jews from smaller Jewish communities around Warsaw were forcibly moved into the ghetto in the first three months of 1941, and other refugees and expellees entered the ghetto subsequently. These mostly impoverished newcomers were among the first to be stricken by



Young Jewish men conduct a business transaction over the Warsaw ghetto wall, n.d.

USHMM WS #05923, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

epidemics and malnutrition, and many did not survive for long.³ By April 1941, due to the large influx, there were some 460,000 Jews living in the ghetto. Soon the population began to dwindle, however, because of overcrowding, sickness, and malnutrition. With the ghetto closed off, most of the inhabitants could no longer earn a living, a situation that accelerated the process of impoverishment and deprivation. From August 1941, about 4,000 to 5,000 people died per month, as a typhus epidemic peaked in the fall of that year. In total, more than 60,000 deaths were recorded between January 1941 and the end of July 1942.⁴

In October 1939, the Germans appointed Adam Czeraniaków to head the Jewish Council (Judenrat). From the start, the Judenrat served as the liaison between the Germans and the Jews. The Judenrat conducted population censuses, provided lists of those assigned to forced labor, and paid ransoms for people under arrest. The men Czerniaków selected to be members of the Judenrat had been, before the war, political

activists and party members. Among them were some people whose main concern was the general welfare, but others appeared to be simple collaborators. Almost from the start, the public viewed the Judenrat as corrupt because some officials accepted bribes from people seeking help or information about kidnapped or missing persons.

The Judenrat tried to cope with the Jews' day-to-day needs while also fulfilling German demands. It numbered about 25 departments and 6,000 workers. Its responsibilities were varied: provision of food and drink, prevention of the spread of disease, removal of sewerage and garbage, maintaining public order, firefighting, allocation of accommodations, and tracking and registering the inhabitants. It oversaw the establishment of hospitals and clinics, cultural activities and education, welfare and mutual-aid institutions, and orphanages.

The Jewish Police, which the Judenrat supervised, was embroiled in controversy. German orders established it at the same time as the ghetto. Józef Szeryński, a convert to Christianity who had held a senior position in the Polish police, was its chief. Most policemen were educated and members of established, often assimilated families. More than a few police assisted in smuggling food or smuggled it themselves. They also helped distribute food and provide aid to the needy. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Jewish public, the Jewish Police became the embodiment of evil and public corruption.⁵ They escorted the work details operating outside the ghetto, collected taxes, searched for absentees, and in the end, seized Jews for deportation.

Another entity in the ghetto was known as the "Thirteen," named after the address of its headquarters on Leszno Street; it was a kind of enforcement unit under the German Security Police. Its function was to keep an eye on whatever was happening in the ghetto. Abraham Gancwajch headed it. On the surface, the Thirteen ran the "Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering in the Jewish Quarter of Warsaw"; in practice, its task was to inform on all smugglers and secret economic activity to the Gestapo, frequently using this knowledge to blackmail those they uncovered.⁶

The official daily food ration in the ghetto was about 180 calories per person. Starvation led to incidents of violence and stealing food on the street. People lost their composure, women engaged in prostitution, and there were even incidents of cannibalism. Against this background, food smuggling was essential to the ghetto's survival. About 80 percent of the food that entered the ghetto was smuggled. Smuggling was done by individuals, by organized groups, and in large measure, by children. The smuggled goods kept various food programs and soup kitchens going. Many smugglers were caught, beaten, and shot, including young children. The professional smugglers became members of the ghetto elite, living it up on their profits, patronizing the more than 60 restaurants and clubs in the ghetto. By contrast, most of the population lived under conditions of terrible poverty. The Nazis exploited the appearance of prominent wealth next to abject poverty for anti-Jewish propaganda.



"Vendor of Jewish Stars," by Halina Olomucki, 1941.
USHMM WS #73574, COURTESY OF HALINA OLOMUCKI

Some goods were brought into the ghetto by means of the German Transfer Station (Transferstelle), and illegal industries and handicrafts quickly developed. Raw materials were brought into the ghetto and fashioned into various goods, such as brushes, garments, and electric products. Finished products were smuggled out of the ghetto and sold. In the spring of 1941, the Germans recognized the ghetto as a center of industry and commerce, and by summer German owners of wood, fur, and textile firms began to come in. The German industrialist Walther Többens set up a large textile firm. There was also a factory for brush manufacturing. The pay for work in these firms was poor, generally a daily food ration. Work also continued at many unofficial sites, arranged with the knowledge of the Germans or thanks to the bribery of the watchmen and the Jewish, German, or Polish police.

About a third of the ghetto population was children (about 150,000), many of whom were refugee children, who arrived in the ghetto with, or sometimes without, their parents. They

roamed about barefoot, begging for charity. Many were involved in smuggling, as errand boys, or in peddling cigarettes, bread, and matches. Some sustained themselves as street performers.

Jewish society within the ghetto tried to maintain the activity of voluntary organizations helping the weak and the needy. Aside from the Judenrat and its departments, a number of bodies functioned under the aegis of the Jewish Social Self-Help–Coordinating Commission (JSS–CC, later renamed ŻTOS in October 1940, then JSS in November 1941). Initially some financial support for Jewish welfare efforts was provided directly by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). From February 1941, the JSS received AJDC funds and supervised their distribution in consultation with the Judenrat.

From early 1941, the Judenrat strengthened its influence over the welfare organizations, preferring to extend assistance to people working on various projects, as opposed to the destitute. For example, in the summer of 1941, the Judenrat clashed with welfare activists over proposals for wealthy inhabitants to surrender their ration cards or to be taxed more to support the poor. These initiatives were blocked by the Judenrat despite Czerniaków's initial support. Therefore, the ghetto inhabitants' attitude towards the various charitable organizations was more positive than their attitude towards the Judenrat, which they saw as a tool of the Germans.

Aid continued to be extended to incapacitated people as well as to children in orphanages, refugees, and the elderly. In the summer of 1941, the number of meals served daily by public kitchens increased to 100,000, as the Germans briefly sought to increase the productivity of the ghetto. As Emanuel Ringelblum commented, however: "It is the beggars and the corpses who have won us this small concession. Besides, typhus has done its part." The number of meals served declined again in the fall, once the Germans withdrew support for the feeding program.⁷

Other welfare agencies active within the ghetto included TOZ (Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population in Poland) and CENTOS (Central Organization for Orphan Care). After the United States entered the war in December 1941, the AJDC funds from abroad largely dried up, and the welfare organizations struggled to maintain their aid programs. Even then it continued to provide assistance for illicit activity, such as funding printing presses and educational institutions.

In all the large ghettos, including Warsaw, despite the official German ban on most educational activity, there were educational and cultural networks. In the Warsaw ghetto there were elementary schools, middle schools, and vocational courses, such as a nursing school. There were university-level lectures, literary creativity in Yiddish, Polish, and Hebrew, and theater and orchestra performances. There was also scholarly research, including historical studies. One of the most important of the cultural institutions was called "Oneg Shabbath," the underground archive of the Warsaw ghetto, which the historian Emanuel Ringelblum directed. The Ringelblum Archive documented whatever transpired in the ghetto. It also acquired

written testimonies about the extermination camps and succeeded in transmitting the documents to the Polish government-in-exile in London. Eventually the archival material was hidden in metal containers and milk cans, which were buried in different places in the ghetto. Almost the entire archive team died in the Holocaust, but much of the material was recovered after the war.

The Germans quickly banned religious services, so Jews held services in secret. In the spring of 1941, the ban was lifted, and the synagogue on Tłomackie Street reopened with a festive ceremony. However, it was hard to maintain religious duties, observe holidays, and keep kosher under ghetto conditions. The Nazis were especially abusive towards observant Jews with side curls, beards, and head coverings. And inevitably, some lost their faith in the face of the suffering they experienced.⁸

Members of the Zionist and other youth movements (including Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, with about 800 members) were prominent in the social and cultural activity of the large ghettos, as well as in smuggling food. In a period when most of the communal leaders escaped to the Soviet Union and the Jews of Warsaw remained without leadership, the members of these youth movements displayed great civic responsibility. Whereas the older people struggled to cope with dislocations in social frameworks and community life, the members of the youth movements adjusted more easily to ghetto life and quickly renewed organized group activity.

The youth movements developed study groups, schools, and soup kitchens and helped feed children and adults. They also sent emissaries to youth movements in other ghettos to establish links and share information. Couriers, both male and female, maintained these contacts at great personal risk. Other young people contributed to the underground press. Information about events in Poland and in the world appeared in the newspapers, which also covered life in the ghetto. With the start of the transports to the extermination camps, the publication of newspapers was temporarily interrupted. Later, the press resumed with a more limited scope, publishing information about the true character of the transports.

By January 1942, word had arrived in Warsaw about the murder of the Jews of Wilno at Ponary and the German mass killings in the cities of eastern Poland. Accounts of the murder of Jews at the Chełmno extermination camp also began to arrive in February.⁹ Couriers who traveled in eastern Poland also reported on the transports that started in March 1942, first to Bełżec and then to other extermination camps. Persistent rumors about deportations swirled around the ghetto in July 1942. Czerniaków tried to get information from the German officers with whom he had contact. Most of them denied the rumors. On July 21, however, all the other members of the Judenrat were arrested. On the next day Czerniaków wrote these words in his diary: "We were told that all the Jews irrespective of sex and age, with certain exceptions, will be deported to the East. By 4:00 P.M. today a contingent of 6,000 people must be provided. And this (at the minimum) will be the daily quota."¹⁰ On July 23, having unsuccessfully pleaded

for the lives of orphaned children and unwilling to aid in killing his own people, Czerniaków committed suicide.

At the start of the deportations, the Germans persuaded the Jews to assemble at the Umschlagplatz, a freight yard, by promising to give everyone who reported three loaves of bread and a portion of jam. At first, most of the Jews who arrived at the Umschlagplatz did not understand that the transports to the east meant death at the Treblinka extermination camp. Later on, as they learned the truth, they hoped that their work documents from the firms operating in the ghetto would free them from the transports. But the Germans emptied streets and whole apartment buildings in the process of evacuation. The Jewish Police were forced to collect people until its size was drastically reduced, and then many of its members themselves were deported on September 21.

In the course of the first great deportation Aktion, which took place from the end of July until the middle of September 1942, more than 260,000 people were deported—almost all to be murdered at Treblinka—and the living area of the ghetto shrank. About 60,000 of the Jews who remained alive moved to dwellings in the center of the ghetto near the area of the workshops; many of these people were now living illegally.

Word of the extermination camps, which started reaching Warsaw early in 1942, convinced members of the youth groups to organize for armed self-defense. The Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB), which united members of Hechalutz, Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, Dror, and Bnai Akiva, was established in July as the transports began. At first two key leaders of the ŻOB were Józef Kaplan and Szmuel Bresław of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir. However, they were caught at the beginning of September, apparently because of informants, after they had succeeded in acquiring a few weapons. The underground collapsed but began to reorganize in October. At that time members of the Bund and representatives of Zionist organizations and parties joined the ŻOB. In the meantime, members of Betar formed an additional military structure in the ghetto, the Jewish Military Organization (ŻZW, known after January 1943 as

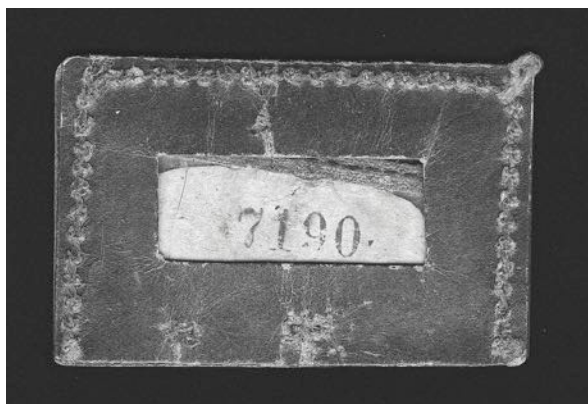
the Jewish Military Union). This organization had good connections with the Polish underground (Armia Krajowa [Polish Home Army], AK) and apparently succeeded in obtaining more arms than the ŻOB. The two groups had their differences, but a short time before the great revolt, the ŻZW did agree to fight alongside the ŻOB, while not being absorbed into it.

The first attempt at an uprising took place in January 1943 in response to the second deportation Aktion, and sporadic attacks on German and Ukrainian personnel continued for the next three months. The January revolt convinced the Jews that the Germans would try to liquidate the ghetto, and therefore they began to prepare hiding places for the future. Hundreds of bunkers were built, some of them dug beneath buildings that had already been destroyed in September 1939. The headquarters of the revolt was based initially at 29 Miła Street and later in the bunker at 18 Miła Street.¹¹ The standing of the ŻOB grew stronger as a result of the January uprising, and it earned the support of many of the Jews who remained in the ghetto. A short time before the revolt there were about 800 fighters in the two underground groups.

In preparation for the liquidation of the ghetto, the Germans organized the transfer of more than 20,000 Jewish workers with their production units from the Warsaw ghetto to the Trawniki, Poniatowa, and other labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, starting in February and continuing into the uprising in early May 1943.¹² The Germans assumed that the Jews would forcefully oppose deportation, as they had in January. On the morning of April 19, 1943, they entered the ghetto with a force of 2,000 soldiers, accompanied by tanks. The Germans expected to make short work of the poorly armed fighters, but the main struggle went on for more than four weeks, with sporadic fighting afterwards. Eventually the Germans had to blast and burn the fighters out of their positions. The Germans discovered the headquarters of the ŻOB in the bunker at 18 Miła Street on May 8. After German forces blocked all exits and several hundred civilians emerged, the ŻOB commander Mordechai Anielewicz committed suicide along with some 120 Jewish fighters, as the Germans dropped in poison gas. In September 1943, the Germans destroyed the remaining buildings and the ghetto walls. Most of the Jews still in hiding were apparently killed in this action, but a few individuals survived in the area until the end of the war.

The Warsaw ghetto revolt became one of the most significant occurrences in the history of the Jewish people. At the beginning, no one gave the ghetto any chance to hold out. But this seemingly hopeless struggle showed that even the years of the Nazi terror regime and the passivity in the Polish surroundings were not enough to break the fighting spirit of the youth movement members and the ghetto dwellers. The revolt became a symbol of resistance and heroism.

At the end of the revolt more than 20,000 Jews were left in Warsaw, in hiding or on the Aryan side, but it is impossible to know how many survived the war. The Germans established a concentration camp in the ruins of the ghetto to salvage building materials.¹³



An identification tag issued to Gina Tabaczynska, when she was detained with other personnel of the Schultz & Co. factory in the Warsaw ghetto in the summer of 1942. Those who held these tags were presumed to be exempt from deportation.

USHMM WS #16638, COURTESY OF EUGENIA TABACZYNSKA STRUT

SOURCES Among the many publications on the Warsaw ghetto, the following titles in English can be recommended: Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, trans. Emma Harris (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Israel Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939–1943: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt*, trans. Ina Friedman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?: Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); and Gunnar S. Paulsson, *Secret City: The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940–1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002). More extensive bibliographies can be found in these and other publications.

Published primary sources include the following: Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961); Mary Berg, *Warsaw Ghetto: A Diary by Mary Berg*, ed. S.L. Schneiderman (New York: L.B. Fischer, 1945); Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1988); Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kerr, eds., *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow: Prelude to Doom* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979); J. Katsh, ed., *Scroll of Agony: The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan* (New York, 1965); Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives* “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”) (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986); Abraham Lewin, *A Cup of Tears: A Diary of the Warsaw Ghetto* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989); *Report concerning the Uprising in the Ghetto of Warsaw and the Liquidation of the Jewish Residential Area*, trans. D. Dąbrowska (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1958); Ruta Sakowska et al., eds., *Archiwum Ringelbluma: Konspiracyjne Archiwum Gęty Warszawy*, 3 vols. (Warsaw: PWN, 2000); and Jacob Sloan, ed. and trans., *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto: The Journal of Emanuel Ringelblum* (1958; New York: Schocken, 1974).

Among the many memoirs by survivors, the following are worthy of mention: J. David, *A Square of Sky: Recollections of My Childhood* (New York, 1964); Janusz Korczak, *The Warsaw Ghetto Memoirs of Janusz Korczak*, trans. with an introduction by E.P. Kulawiec (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1978); Zivia Lubetkin, *In the Days of Destruction and Revolt* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House and Am Oved Publishing House, 1981); Vladka Meed, *On Both Sides of the Wall: Memoirs from the Warsaw Ghetto*, trans. Steven Meed (New York: Holocaust Library, 1993); and Władysław Szpilman, *The Pianist: The Extraordinary Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw, 1939–1945* (New York: Picador USA, 1999).

The recent publication of *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes Ringelblum Archive: Catalog and Guide*, ed. Robert Moses Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, 2009) and the digitization of these unique records have greatly increased their accessibility.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN (202/II 26-29); APW (e.g., Der Obmann des Judenrates in Warschau; Amt des Gouverneurs des Distriktes Warschau—Der Kommissar für den Jüdischen Wohnbezirk in Warschau); AŻIH (e.g., sygn. 200; 210; 211; 301; 302; Ring I); BA-BL; BA-L; BLH; CAHJP; IPN (e.g., ASG); MA; NARA;

USHMM (e.g., Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1998.A.0241 [Trial of Ludwig Fischer]; RG-02; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]; RG-15.077M [CENTOS]; RG-15.079 [Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; RG-50); VHF; YIVO; and YVA (e.g., O-3; O-16; O-33).

Miri Freilich and Martin Dean
trans. Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. An English translation of the October decree establishing the ghetto is published in Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, p. 102.
2. An overview of events leading up to the establishment of the ghetto can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 52–76. Also see *Warschauer Zeitung*, November 3–4, 1940.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1075, pp. 28–29; AŻIH, Ring I/116.
4. Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, pp. 48–49; USHMM, RG-15.073M, Der Jüdische Wohnbezirk in Warschau (Zahlen und Tatsachen), Warschau, June 1942; see also Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, p. 177.
5. USHMM, RG-15.079, Ring I/115, published in Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 304–309.
6. See Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, pp. 218–232.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 307–308; Sloan, *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto*, p. 192.
8. Katsh, *Scroll of Agony*, p. 207; Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, pp. 647–648.
9. USHMM, RG-15.079, Ring I/412 [1115].
10. Hilberg, Staron, and Kerr, *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, pp. 383–384.
11. Engelking and Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, p. 786.
12. Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, pp. 181, 207, 318–319. Most of these Jews were murdered during Aktion Erntefest (Harvest Festival) in November 1943. See also the entries for **Poniatowa** and **Trawniki**—both in **Lublin Main Camp**—in volume I of the *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*.
13. See **Warschau Main Camp** entry in volume I of the *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*.

WAWER

Pre-1939: Wawer, village, Warsaw województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Wawer is located about 10 kilometers (6 miles) east-southeast of the center of Warsaw. As of September 1, 1939, there were around 1,300 Jews living in Wawer.

German forces occupied Wawer in September 1939. In the fall of 1939, Jews were required to perform forced labor and to pay “contributions” imposed by the German authorities. Jews were forced to wear the Star of David, and a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by Menachem Kestenber. In October 1939, Wawer became part of Kreis Warschau-Land; the Kreishauptmann was Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht.

On the night of December 26–27, 1939, on the orders of Unterleutnant Max Daume, the 2nd and 3rd Companies of

the 6th Battalion of the 31st Regiment of the Order Police (Ordnungspolizei) carried out a special “pacification” Aktion in the area of Wawer and Anin, near Warsaw. The Aktion was a reprisal for the shooting on the previous day of two officers from the German 538th Construction Battalion, stationed in Wawer. The two men were killed in a town restaurant by Marian Prasuł and Stanisław Dąbek. The Germans then arrested 120 Polish, Jewish, and Russian men, aged 16 to 70, and sentenced 114 of them to death. The executioners used machine guns, and the killings took place publicly in the square between Błękitna and Spizowa Streets. The following Jews were among those shot: Elja Brajtman, Jankiel Czerwonka, Szachna Desau, Aron Fogelnest, Elias Nusselbaum, Lejbuś Płatkowski, Jankiel Rosenberg, Uszer Rosenberg, Herszek Szajman, and Lejbuś Szajman. The bodies of the victims first were buried in a provisional grave, then were exhumed on June 25–27, 1940, on the orders of the Kreishauptmann. The “Eternity” (Wieczność) Association sent the remains of 11 of the victims to the city of Warsaw.¹

After the events of December 27, 1939, in fear of further reprisals by the Germans, one Jewish man fled with his mother and two sisters to stay with his father in Opatów. His father was a painter, who had painted the local synagogue in Opatów.² By June 1, 1940, around 60 Jewish refugees had arrived in Wawer.³

Sources differ regarding the date on which the Wawer ghetto was established. The first documentary reference to the ghetto is a letter from the Kreishauptmann Warschau-Land to the Wawer Judenrat, dated November 30, 1940. In the letter, the Kreishauptmann issued various instructions concerning sanitary conditions in the recently established ghetto (*Jüdisches Wohngebiet*). This implies that the ghetto had been established just prior to this, some time in November 1940.⁴

Due to a shortage of apartments in the ghetto area, the Judenrat was permitted to erect special barracks, and also four adjoining buildings were to be added to the ghetto, to be used to house sick beds and a quarantine section. However, the Judenrat had to take down provisional wooden walls set up in the larger buildings for privacy, creating instead a corridor system with separate quarters, for sanitary reasons. In addition, a sanitation column was to be established to enforce sanitary regulations, and the Jews were to be vaccinated against typhus at the cost of 0.50 złoty per head. The Judenrat was also obliged to prepare a list of the Jews in each apartment and to establish a bathing facility by the end of the year.⁵

A postwar Polish report indicates that the ghetto was located in Czaplowizna, within the Wawer gmina, in an area known as “Kolonія Różyczka.” It encompassed an area of about 5 hectares (12.4 acres) on Klasztorna Street. On the grounds of the ghetto, there were no factories, but some Jews performed artisanal work in their own homes.⁶

In Wawer, a Jewish welfare committee was active to assist the refugees and local Jews in need. It received support from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee for Kreis Warschau-Land, headed by Dr. Ignaz (Icchak) Schiper. On March 20, 1941, the board of the Jewish welfare committee

referred to a letter from the Kreishauptmann ordering the establishment of a hospital, a quarantine section, and a steam bath. The committee had the space to set these up but no money to fix and open the bath. In the letter, the committee also requested 10 blankets, sheets, pillow cases, white aprons, men’s and women’s shirts, dressing gowns, and pajamas. The letter was signed by the head of the Judenrat, M. Kestenberg.⁷

On May 25, 1941, the board in Wawer sent the following note to the JSS in Warsaw: “We are waiting . . . hungry, sick, swollen, and ragged . . . mainly elderly and children, all miserable. It is so bad for us now that we can find no words to describe it. We beg you to help us!” The JSS reported providing aid to some 500 people in Wawer.⁸

A further appeal from the Judenrat in Wawer, on August 18, 1941, noted that a severe outbreak of typhus had struck the ghetto. The Germans had ordered the ghetto to be closed, and the Jews were completely cut off from the outside world. The letter concluded: “We are starving. Help us.”⁹ As a result of the epidemic, five Jews died.

In March 1942, there were approximately 950 Jews residing in the Wawer ghetto.¹⁰ According to Manes Puterman, the German authorities liquidated the ghetto on Thursday, March 23, 1942.¹¹ At the time of the ghetto liquidation, the German police shot around 10 sick and bedridden Jews locally. The remaining inmates of the ghetto were resettled into the Warsaw ghetto. During the transport to Warsaw, more than a dozen Jews were shot and buried in unmarked graves along the way.¹² Confirmation of the timing of the transfer can be found in a report preserved in the Ringelblum Archive concerning the ghetto in Tłuszcz. This noted that at the start of April, two weeks before Passover (April 16), news had arrived of the expulsion of the Jews from Pustelnik and Wawer.¹³

At the time of the ghetto’s liquidation in late March 1942, a number of Jews avoided the roundup and managed to find shelter with non-Jews in and around Wawer. For example, four members of the Frydman family found refuge with their old acquaintances, the Kupidłowska family. The Frydmans remained hidden successfully for two and a half years until the Germans were driven from the area. Other Jews who fled from the Warsaw ghetto also found temporary shelter in a specially prepared hiding place in Wawer set up with the help of Żegota (the Polish Council of Aid for Jews). Not all the Jews were able to hide successfully. On March 3, 1944, two Poles and two Jews, who had been in hiding in Wawer during the occupation, were shot on the street while trying to escape.¹⁴

After the war, “the crimes in Wawer” committed on December 27, 1939, were tried by the Polish Supreme National Tribunal (Najwyższy Trybunał Narodowy). On March 3, 1947, the court sentenced Max Daume to death. Friedrich Wilhelm Wenzel also was sentenced to death by the Regional Court (Sąd Wojewódzki) in Warsaw in 1951.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish population of Wawer during the German occupation can be found in the following publications: T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1

(1952); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 556; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 923–924.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (Ring I/222 and 501b; 211/1081, 1082, 1084, 1087 [JSS]; 301/447, 1134, 2747 [Relacje]); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]; RG-15.079M [Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); and YVA (e.g., M.31).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. H. Pawłowicz, *Wawer, 27 grudnia 1939 roku* (Warsaw, 1962), pp. 30, 111–115; S. Płowski, “Wawer,” *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce* (Warsaw) 6 (1951): 125–130; W. Bartoszewski, *Warszawski pierścień śmierci* (Warsaw, 1970), pp. 53–58.

2. AŻIH, 301/1134, testimony of Samuel Wilenberg, p. 1.

3. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” table 2a.

4. AŻIH, 211/1081, p. 48, Kreishauptmann Warschau-Land an den Judenrat in Kol. Różycka Gem. Wawer, November 30, 1940. According to the report of Manes Puterman from Wawer, the German authorities established a ghetto in Wawer on November 10, 1941 [sic]; it appears likely that Puterman was mistaken by one year; see AŻIH, Ring I/501b [938.], report of Manes Puterman.

5. Ibid., 211/1081, p. 48.

6. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 556; IPN, ASG, reel 19, vol. 62, pp. 294 and verso.

7. Ruta Sakowska, “Icchak Schiper w getcie warszawskim. Działalność opiekuńcza,” *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, no. 4 (216): (December 2005): 487; AŻIH, 211/1081, p. 34a.

8. AŻIH, 211/1082, pp. 2, 22.

9. Ibid., 211/1084, p. 41.

10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 556.

11. Ibid., date it also in March 1942; AŻIH, Ring I/501b [938.].

12. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 556; IPN, ASG, vol. 62, pp. 294 and verso; Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” p. 88; AŻIH, 301/447, testimony of Helena Lewińska, 1945.

13. Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 204, from Ring I/222.

14. Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 396, 414–415, 423–424; H. Wierchowski, *Anin, Wawer* (Warsaw, 1971), p. 83.

WĘGRÓW

Pre-1939: Węgrów (Yiddish: Vengrov), town, initially Lublin województwo, then on April 1, 1938, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Wegrow, Kreis Sokolow, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Węgrów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Węgrów is located alongside the Liwiec River, about 71 kilometers (44 miles) east-northeast of Warsaw. By September 1, 1939, there were 9,200 Jews living among the 92,226 residents of the Węgrów powiat. The Jews were concentrated mainly in the town of Węgrów, comprising two thirds of the town's 11,000 residents.

Upon occupying Węgrów on September 10, 1939, German soldiers engaged in antisemitic attacks. In the first week, they arrested and then executed a number of the town's wealthiest Jews.¹ Węgrów's German military administration also closed the town's synagogues. On Yom Kippur (September 23, 1939), the Germans discovered a private prayer service and dragged the men to the market square, where they ordered them to dance and sing. On this occasion they murdered Rabbi Jaakov Mendel Morgenstern by bayoneting him in the stomach.²

On November 28, 1939, the county's new Kreishauptmann, Landrat Friedrich Schultz, ordered Węgrów's Jews to create a Judenrat. The Judenrat's chair was Mordechai Zajman, and Shmuel Halberstadt served as vice president. The Judenrat also established a Jewish police force of 10 to 15 men headed by Noach Kochman, and medical services were placed under the direction of Dr. Melchoir. By mid-October, a German Gendarmerie post of 10 to 15 men, commanded by Oberleutnant Müller, patrolled Węgrów. A military detachment, directed by Commandant Scherle, also was stationed there.³

In the first months of the war, 390 Jews arrived in Węgrów, most of them fleeing from larger cities. By August 1940, the Germans had deported an additional 1,000 Jews there, mainly from Piotrków, Aleksandrów Łódzki, Kalisz, and Pułtusk. By September 1940, there were about 8,500 Jews living in Węgrów. By the end of December 1941, the Germans had ordered to Węgrów another 255 Jews, including those from the villages of Ruchna, Jaczew, Jarnice, and Wyszaków. Expellees from this last village included its rabbi, who assumed the functions of the murdered Morgenstern. Jews forcibly deported to Węgrów in



Two Jewish policemen, presumably in the Węgrów ghetto, n.d. USHMM WS #05514, COURTESY OF LEOPOLD PAGE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

this period included those from areas east of the town, such as from Grochów Szlachecki.⁴

The new arrivals were mainly destitute, with many of them begging for food. The Judenrat extended food assistance to the deportees, who comprised nearly half of the town's 2,500 most impoverished Jews by August 1940. In 1940, the Judenrat's Housing Authority also ordered Jews from Węgrów who lived in homes with more than one room to surrender remaining rooms to the emigrants. Even so, there was insufficient housing for the refugees, with some living in attics.⁵

Jews in Węgrów also faced increasingly more organized forced labor roundups. In 1939 and 1940, patrols of German soldiers and police arbitrarily conscripted hundreds of Jewish men to work at various army barracks. Tasks included gardening, latrine cleaning, and purchasing groceries. By the end of 1940, the Judenrat's Arbeitsamt (labor office) was assigning men to specific tasks. In 1940 and 1941, 250 Jews from Węgrów worked at a freight terminal near Sokołów Podlaski, unloading sacks of wheat. Others worked near the village of Liw, on the Liwiec River, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) from Węgrów, replacing bridge pilings destroyed in September 1939. Several hundred others were sent to a forced labor camp near Mordy to drain marshland. In September 1941, a large number was called up to work on a similar project in Łęki, and others labored in agriculture. By late 1941, part of Węgrów's forced labor quota was for craftsmen to work at the Treblinka forced labor camp. From May 1942, Jews from Węgrów also formed the initial labor pool used to build the Treblinka extermination camp.⁶

Hoping to forestall larger labor quotas, deportations, and the creation of a closed ghetto in Węgrów, the Judenrat organized internal taxes to raise money for gifts and payments to German authorities. It negotiated for smaller labor quotas by bribing German officials with diamonds, gold, fur coats, and leather boots. When German demands for labor increased at the end of 1940, the Judenrat imposed higher taxes to pay for larger bribes. In the first half of 1941, the Germans threatened to deport Węgrów's Jews to the Warsaw ghetto if a large demand was not met. A second large payment was made in the early summer of 1942 to avert the creation of a closed ghetto in Węgrów.⁷

As this evidence suggests, the town's ghetto remained open. Appointed Kreishauptmann of Sokołów Podlaski on June 10, 1940, Reichslandwirtschaftsrat Ernst Grams appears to have intended its closure. In a February 1, 1941, report, he stated that Węgrów was one of six concentration points for Jews in the Kreis and promised to close these ghettos as soon as weather permitted.⁸ Grams never implemented this plan fully. In Węgrów, as well as in Stoczek Węgrowski and Łochów, the ghettos remained open. Many eyewitnesses in Węgrów later claimed that the Germans nonetheless had created a Jewish quarter, as migrants and expellees were housed in the southern part of town, where Jews had been most heavily concentrated before the war. But many Polish Christians continued to live in this neighborhood. Some Jews continued to reside outside the Jewish neighborhood. Until Yom Kippur 1942, Jews were allowed

free movement about the town, except perhaps for a few streets that housed German administrative and residential buildings. From February 1941, the Germans forbade Jews from leaving the town's boundaries.⁹

The February 1941 prohibition on Jewish movement beyond Węgrów brought a drastic deterioration in Jewish living conditions. Most Jewish business owners could not sustain operations by the end of 1941. Some traveled illicitly to the Warsaw ghetto for merchandise to stock their stores. A far larger number had to close their businesses. Some were wholly or partially expropriated by Poles. Under these conditions, poverty became widespread, as unemployment consumed virtually all those not employed by official Judenrat institutions. Most Jews now hovered on the edge of starvation, due to the prohibition on Jewish movement and the refusal of Grams's administration to make winter food rations available to Jews and Poles. The majority of Węgrów's Jews sought charity assistance in September 1941. The Judenrat, which reopened its community kitchen to feed the destitute, could provide meals only for 1,200 people. In early 1941 and again later that year, typhus epidemics ravaged the Jewish community.¹⁰

To secure money to pay bribes and to meet quotas for forced labor, the Judenrat resorted from mid-1941 to authoritarian measures. The Jewish Police arrested several families to extort money from them, and by July 1942, it even raided the homes of Jews behind on their taxes, conscripting able-bodied men for forced labor.¹¹

Although Węgrów's ghetto remained open, the town's Jews realized by the summer of 1942 that they would not be excluded from deportations to the Treblinka extermination camp. Suspicions about the camp heightened in July 1942 after forced laborers from Węgrów working there did not return home. In July, the wives of German military and police officials in Węgrów told Jews who worked for them to hide their valuables. Then, on August 24, 1942, posters were hung in Węgrów signed by Grams restricting access to Jewish neighborhoods only to registered residents and voiding all Jewish travel passes. The majority of the town's Jews realized that Grams's orders signaled their impending deaths. Many Jews constructed hiding places in their homes, and some arranged shelter with local farmers, usually in exchange for advance payment. Fearing the Germans would send them to their deaths on Yom Kippur, private services were begun early. The *Shacharis* (services of morning prayer) and *Musaf* (additional service recited on festive days) were prayed on Sunday, September 20, 1942, on the evening of Yom Kippur, with weeping interrupting the cantor at one such service during the *Unesaneh Tokef* (liturgical poem).¹²

The Germans' extermination of Węgrów's Jews began at dawn on Yom Kippur (Monday, September 21, 1942). Members of the SS, aided by Ukrainian auxiliaries, German Gendarmes, and Polish (Blue) Police, surrounded the town. Then they went from house to house, ordering the Jews—approximately 9,000 people—to the town's square. Those who refused or were too old or infirm to comply were shot in their homes. By some accounts, the Germans murdered some 600 Jews in the first

two hours of the roundup. More than 2,000 Jews perished from gunshots in Węgrów before this first effort to exterminate Węgrów's Jews ended. Only 100 to 200 of the town's Jews were selected to form a postliquidation labor force. In the late afternoon, the remainder of those assembled, between 3,500 and 5,000 people, were marched 17 kilometers (10.6 miles) to the train station in Sokołów Podlaski. Along the way, the Germans shot those who failed to keep pace with the march. A large group of young Jews—reacting to a prearranged signal—fled en masse into the woods. Although an unknown number of them were shot, some survived. The march's remaining Jews, placed on wagons at the train station, were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

In Węgrów, the SS, German Gendarmes, and Polish (Blue) Police began searching for more than 2,000 Jews believed to be hiding. In the following days, an unknown number, possibly more than 1,400, were extricated from their hiding places and shot at the cemetery. After a week the SS departed and responsibility for pursuing Jews still in hiding fell to the Gendarmerie.¹³

In Węgrów, Christian complicity accompanied the murder of Jews in hiding. The Germans initially asked members of the Polish volunteer fire department to help them locate hidden Jews. Fire department members soon surpassed the Germans engaged in this task. Local members of the Polish (Blue) Police also participated at the outset in executions of Węgrów's Jews. The German police came to rely heavily on both forces to search for and execute Jews in hiding. Extricated from hiding by teams of firemen, groups of Jews usually were accompanied to the cemetery by one member of the Gendarmerie and six armed members of the Polish (Blue) Police. The firemen provided further reinforcement, surrounding the armed guards. Polish workers buried the dead. As payment the Poles received clothing that had belonged to the executed Jews. The fire department and their Polish followers became known as "the dentists" for the gold that they stripped from the mouths of Jews murdered at the cemetery.¹⁴

After locking up members of the postliquidation Jewish labor force for several weeks in an armory, the Germans organized an enclosed ghetto in Węgrów during the second week of November. Located on the corner of the main market square and Gdańsk Street, the ghetto was policed by German Gendarmes. Those who resided there, including some who had survived the Yom Kippur roundup in hiding, were required to repair Jewish homes and businesses to prepare them for transfer to local non-Jews. German police patrolled the ghetto, which had between 150 and 300 residents, executing Jews they found there during the day for evading work. At night, they confined most of the ghetto's residents to the basement of a large building on the corner of the square. The ghetto was administered by a Judenrat, which remained briefly under the direction of Mordechai Zajman. About another 100 Jews were allowed to remain outside the ghetto, as they were registered as workers necessary for the German war effort. Another 100 to 200 Jews refused to register with the Germans, preferring to remain in hiding. On the night of April 26–27, 1943, the

Germans surrounded the ghetto and the homes of Jews officially living outside of it. That night, they shot the majority of the town's surviving Jews. The search for those in hiding continued through at least June 10, when the Germans executed about 10 Jews.¹⁵

In March 1944, a team from Sonderkommando 1005, the unit charged with obliterating traces of mass killings, arrived in Węgrów. In April, the officers of the Sonderkommando forced a tightly guarded group of Jewish prisoners, probably from Łódź, to dig up the remains of the Jews executed in Węgrów and burn them.¹⁶

No more than 100 of Węgrów's Jews are thought to have survived the war. Some did so by making their way to Mordy to join a forced labor camp, at which Jews continued to work. Most of the remainder of Węgrów's Jews depended on the assistance of local Poles. Several young children were brought into the homes of Polish families. These included Gitel Przepiórka, 3 years old when her mother turned her over to the Kowalczyks in the summer of 1942; Zofia Shenberg, an abandoned infant discovered by Marianna Ruszkowska in Węgrów on Yom Kippur 1942; Lusia Fabiarz found by Pelagia Vogelgesang on May 1, 1943; and the 10-year-old Sara Nortman who survived the ghetto liquidations living with the Buczyński family.¹⁷ Other Poles extended assistance to Węgrów's adult Jews, some in exchange for compensation. Zbigniew Bucholc, a Pole employed at Węgrów's labor office, arranged false documents for members of the Friedman family, which enabled them to travel as non-Jews to positions in Lwów. Similar papers enabled Ella Picot and her niece, Halusha Gross, to walk off the market square during the liquidation of the town's Jews on Yom Kippur 1942.¹⁸ The Potockis in Węgrów, the Czyżewskis in Pieńki, the Toefels in Jarnice, and the Korczak and Bujalski families in Zajac all extended shelter at some time to 10 members of the Bielowski (also known as the Bielawski or Biel) family, enabling them to survive the war.¹⁹

Węgrów's Jewish community was not reconstituted after the war. A majority of the few Jews who returned to the town soon immigrated to England, Canada, the United States, Argentina, and Israel. The only one of Węgrów's 13 Torahs known to have survived the Holocaust is located today at the Sixth & I Historic Synagogue in Washington, DC.²⁰

SOURCES A number of important published sources are available, including the memoirs by Shraga Feivel Bielawski (Fajwel Bielowski), *The Last Jew from Węgrów* (New York: Praeger, 1991), and by Nelli Rotbart, *A Long Journey: A Holocaust Memoir and After: Poland, Soviet Union, Canada* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies, 2002); as well as the yizkor book, *Kehilat Vengrov: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at yots'e Vengrov be-Yisrael be-hishtatfut yots'e Vengrov ba-Argentinah, 1961).

Documentary sources on the Jews of Węgrów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/38, 301/687, 301/3387, 301/4875, and 301/6043); BA-L (e.g., B 162/6843, 6845, and 6873); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [ŻSS, reel 50, 211/1091]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC, 210/708];

RG-15.019M, reel 14 [ASG, 45 Warsaw woj.]; VHF (e.g., # 13697, 17292, 18608, 23573, 26871, 32778, 34246, 35694, 45830, 51043); and YVA (e.g., O-33/1066).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/6043, Władysław Okulus, “Największa tragedia w dziejach Węgrowa,” p. 1.

2. Ibid., 301/38, testimony of Fajwel Bielowski, pp. 1–2; see also his account in Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 20–22; and under his Americanized name, VHF, # 34246, testimony of Phillip Biel; # 23573, testimony of Sara Kaye; *Kehilat Vengrov*, pp. 62, 116.

3. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 22, 32, 47–48; VHF, # 35694, testimony of Henry Miller; and Tomasz Szczuchura, “Terror okupanta w powiecie węgrowskim w latach 1939–1944,” *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce* 27 (1977): 57–59.

4. For population figures and the origins of the migrants, see, among others, T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (January–June 1952): 95; Tomasz Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada społeczności żydowskiej w powiecie węgrowskim w latach 1939–1944,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (January–March 1978): 40–42; T. Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 278 (in German) and p. 279 (in Polish); AŻIH, 301/6043 (introduction); and 301/38, pp. 1–2; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 22–24; and Barbara Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego,” in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Provincia noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), p. 219.

5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/708 (Węgrów), pp. 39, 47–48; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, p. 23; and VHF, # 34246; # 35694; and # 17292, testimony of Nellie Kaptsan.

6. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 23, 30, 36, 38, 41–43, 46, 39; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (ŻSS), reel # 8, 211/129, p. 43, and reel # 50, 211/1091 (Węgrów), p. 10; VHF, # 13697, testimony of Renia Lipska-Micznik, 1996; and # 34246; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, “Treblinka—obóz śmierci ‘akcji Reinhardt,’” in Dariusz Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 217–218.

7. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 23–34, 27, 48, 38, 46; AŻIH, 301/6043, p. 2; and VHF, # 23573, testimony of Sara Kaye; # 45830, testimony of Leokadia Michalska.

8. On the creation of six regional concentration points for the Jews in Kreis Sokolow Węgrowski, see Document # 45 in Berenstein et al., *Eksterminacja Żydów*, p. 108.

9. AŻIH, 301/6043, pp. 1–2; 301/3387, p. 1; VHF, # 32778, testimony of Maria Borowska; # 51043, testimony of Ella Picot; # 35694; # 45830; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, p. 29; and Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada,” p. 44. Available sources differ on whether the concentration of Jews in Węgrów should be regarded as a ghetto or not. For example, Bielawski says “there was no ghetto” in Węgrów but goes on to say that all the town’s “Jews had been concentrated in one area. Only in a very few cases did Jews live together with Christians.” In their VHF testimonies, Borowska, Picot, Miller, and Michalska all discuss

“Aryan” or “Christian” and “Jewish” sections of town, with Picot describing the town’s main square as “neutral ground.”

10. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 38, 43–44, 46, 49; VHF, # 32778; # 35694; # 17292; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1091 (Węgrów), p. 10. The failure of Grams’s administration to deliver food rations to Jews and Poles in Kreis Sokolow is the subject of USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel # 8, 211/129, pp. 45–47; reel # 44, 211/912, p. 20; and reel # 45, 211/950 (Siedlce), pp. 13, 30–46.

11. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 46–49; and VHF, # 35694.

12. Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 45, 48, 53–56; VHF, # 26871, testimony of Perla Orenstein; and Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada,” p. 46.

13. Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada,” pp. 46–47; AŻIH, 301/6043, pp. 3, 5; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, “‘Akcja Reinhardt’ w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego, 1942–1943,” in Engelking, Leociak, and Libionka, *Provincia noc*, p. 67; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 57–62; and VHF, # 35694; # 51043; # 32778; # 34246; # 26871; and # 45830. Agreement exists over the bloody nature of the Germans’ liquidation of the Węgrów ghetto, but discrepancies emerge in the documentation over the number of Jews murdered in Węgrów. Młynarczyk, for example, cites a testimony by a member of Węgrów’s Jewish police force, who worked over the course of two days to remove the bodies of 2,000 Jews murdered in Węgrów; see BA-L, B 162/6843, testimony of Ruwen F., June 12, 1962, p. 55.

14. On Polish collaboration, see the account of Władysław Okulus, AŻIH, 301/6043, pp. 4–7, 9–10, and those of Fajwel Bielowski: AŻIH, 301/38, p. 2; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 57–67; and VHF, # 34246. Equally useful are the smaller treatments by eyewitness Hillel Zydman, titled, in English translation, “‘Good Neighbors’ as Beasts of Prey,” and by Ephraim Przepiurka, “The Way Wengrow Was Destroyed by Its Inhabitants,” in *Kehilat Vengrov*, pp. 63–65. See, too, VHF, # 13697.

15. Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada,” p. 48; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 77, 80–86, 97–101, 106–107, 114–115; AŻIH, 301/6043, pp. 5, 7; 301/4875, testimony of Pelagia Vogelgesang, p. 1; and VHF, # 23573.

16. AŻIH, 301/6043, pp. 8–9; 301/4875, p. 7; and Szczuchura, “Życie i zagłada,” p. 49.

17. These children’s survival accounts are retold in Gloria Glantz, “A Child’s Journey,” *Holocaust/Genocide Project: Survivors Speak* (June 2001), pp. 6–7, on the Web site of the International Education and Resource Network, at www.iearn.org/hgp/aeti/aeti-2001/2-SS.PDF; VHF, # 10888, testimony of Gloria Glantz; # 23573; Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, pp. 683, 842–843; AŻIH, 301/4875, pp. 1–10.

18. AŻIH, 301/3387, pp. 1–4; and VHF, # 32778.

19. VHF, # 35694; and Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 111–144.

20. AŻIH, 301/4875, p. 9; Bielawski, *The Last Jew*, pp. 145–162; and David Brooks, “A Time to Dance, and Mourn,” *New York Times*, February 28, 2004.

WŁOCHY

Pre-1939: Włochy, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Włochy, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Włochy, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

VOLUME II: PART A

Włochy is located on the outskirts of Warsaw, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) southwest of the city center. Only a few Jewish families were living in Włochy on the eve of war in 1939.

Włochy was occupied by the Germans at the end of September 1939. In late October a German civil administration took over the region from the military. Włochy became part of Kreis Warschau-Land; the Kreishauptmann was Regierungsrat Dr. Hermann Rupprecht.

Jewish residents of Włochy were subjected to a number of persecutory measures from early in the occupation. They had to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David; they had to perform forced labor; and their property was confiscated. At some time before the summer of 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Włochy.

Information regarding the Włochy ghetto is scant, mainly because no survivor testimonies could be located for this town. A report from the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Warsaw notes that at the end of October a deadline had been set of November 15, 1940, for the resettlement of the Jews from the Włochy gmina and surrounding areas, some 700 people into Fort Solipse (aka Fort V, a nineteenth-century fort located outside the town). As the fortress was in an absolutely ruined condition, the gmina of Pruszków had offered to take in some of the Jews intended to go to Fort Solipse.¹

The establishment of the ghetto is confirmed in an official Polish postwar questionnaire, signed by the deputy mayor of Włochy. According to this report, the ghetto indeed was established on November 15, 1940. In total, around 300 Jews were brought into the Włochy ghetto, but only 17 of them were originally from Włochy. Among the others, there were 130 from Ożarów due west of Warsaw, 67 from Łomianki (gmina Młociny), 50 from the nearby gmina of Falenty, 14 from Okęcie, 12 from Warsaw, 6 from Piastów, and 6 from Skorosze. The ghetto measured about 4,860 square meters (1.2 acres) in area. Jews living in the ghetto worked in the bakery located there, in the slaughterhouse, and in workshops for sewing, tailoring, and shoemaking. Some craftsmen also received orders from the local residents of Włochy. There was no communal kitchen in the ghetto, so families had to fend for themselves. The head of the Judenrat was Jozek Ferszt. He permitted some wealthy Jews to leave the ghetto to visit the town in return for a payment. In the initial weeks, two members of the Polish (Blue) Police guarded the Jewish families in the ghetto. Subsequently German Gendarmes took over from them, and they escorted all the Jews to Warsaw.²

According to an account in the Ringelblum Archive, in early November, the Jews of Łomianki were given only until November 10 to leave Łomianki and to depart for [Fort] Solipse. Following a tip-off from local ethnic Germans, however, many of the Jews from Łomianki decided instead to move directly to the Warsaw ghetto, while another 25 moved to the ghetto established in Legionowo. The anonymous report states that around 60 Jews from Łomianki departed for [Fort] Solipse in mid-November 1940.³

Personal details of 296 Jews registered in the ghetto, including the town from which they came, were recorded by the

town administration of Włochy and added to the postwar report on the ghetto as an appendix.⁴

According to a letter addressed to the JSS in Warsaw from the Włochy Judenrat, dated January 1, 1941, there were 274 Jewish residents in the Jewish quarter (*dzielnica Żydowska*). These people consisted mainly of women and children, who were in extreme need of material support. The letter complained in particular about a tax or “contribution” of 5 złoty per head, which had been imposed on the Jews of Włochy by the Kreishauptmann. The Judenrat requested that the JSS intervene with the Kreishauptmann to have this onerous tax rescinded. The last correspondence from the Judenrat in Włochy to the JSS is dated January 13, 1941.⁵ The JSS in Warsaw noted on January 16 that all the resettled Jews from around Włochy had been accommodated in Fort Solipse and were making urgent appeals for assistance in the form of bread and heating materials.⁶

An internal document from the Department for Resettlement (Abteilung Umsiedlung) in the office of the Gouverneur of Distrikt Warschau, dated January 20, 1941, states that the remaining 320 Jews in Włochy were scheduled to be deported to the Warsaw ghetto on February 3, 1941.⁷ It appears that the transfer may have occurred a few days earlier. According to the anonymous account concerning Łomianki in the Ringelblum Archive: “In January, the Jews who lived in [Fort] Solipse were within a half hour, put in vehicles and brought to Warsaw. [They were] not permitted to take anything with them other than a few bedding items. The entire Łomianki population—those who were in Warsaw, as well as those who were shipped from [Fort] Solipse to Warsaw and left everything behind—lives now in terrible need and poverty.”⁸ An article in the *Gazeta Żydowska*, dated February 18, 1941, noted that Jews from Włochy were among the recent arrivals in the Warsaw ghetto.⁹

After the ghetto liquidation, all the remaining Jewish property was confiscated by the Germans. The Jews transferred to the Warsaw ghetto shared the fate of most other Jews there. Jews from Włochy were among those who died from cold, starvation, and disease in the winter of 1941–1942. The majority were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp in the summer and fall of 1942.

After the liquidation of the ghetto in Włochy, there were several Poles in the town who provided shelter to Jews. After escaping from the Warsaw ghetto on June 30, 1942, Maria Klimczuk-Miron and her son were hidden in the home of Anna and Zygmunt Wróbel until the end of the occupation.¹⁰ Jadwiga Gedychowa, who lived in Włochy at 5 Sowińska Street, also cared for five members of a Jewish family.¹¹ Alicja Prechner hid on the “Aryan” side in Włochy, as did two other Jewish survivors, Irene Faitlowicz and Irene Rubinstein.¹² Unfortunately none of these survivors are able to provide information regarding the Włochy ghetto.

SOURCES Information on the Jewish population in Włochy during the Nazi occupation can be found in the following publications: T. Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 1 (1952); Czesław

Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 556; and Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007), pp. 208, 210.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews in Włochy during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/124, 125, 1108 [JSS]; 301/2737, 5843 [Relacje]); IPN (ASG, sygn. 62, pp. 299–312); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, JSS]; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]; RG-15.079M [Ring]; RG-15.084 [AŻIH, Relacje]); and VHF (e.g., # 12272, 43738).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/124, pp. 32–33, report of Dr. G. Wielikowski to JSS in Kraków, October 30, 1940.
2. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 19, sygn. 62, pp. 299–312.
3. Ibid., RG-15.079M, Ring I/847 [874.], “Geyrush Lomianki bay Varshe,” February 12, 1941.
4. The list includes the name and surname, names of parents, profession, date of birth, and place from which each person arrived; see *ibid.*, RG-15.019M (IPN, ASG), reel 19, sygn. 62, pp. 301–312.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/1108, Włochy Judenrat letters to JSS, January 1 and 13, 1941.
6. Ibid., 211/125, undated note in German about “Aus-siedlungen im Distrikt Warschau,” January 16, 1941.
7. The order is partially reprinted in Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Vollstrecker: Die Liquidation von 500.000 Juden im Ghetto Warschau* (Berlin: Arani, 1961), pp. 329–330.
8. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/847 [874.].
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 14, February 18, 1941. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 19, sygn. 62, p. 299, however, dates the ghetto’s liquidation on February 26, 1941.
10. AŻIH, 301/5843, testimony of Anna and Zygmunt Wróbel.
11. Michał Grynberg, *Księga sprawiedliwych* (Warsaw, 1993), p. 147.
12. AŻIH, 301/2737, testimony of Alicja Prechner; VHF, # 12272, testimony of Irene Faitlowicz; # 43738, testimony of Irene Rubinstein.

WOŁOMIN [AKA SOSNÓWKA]

Pre-1939: Wołomin, town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Wolomin, Kreis Warschau-Land, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wołomin, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Wołomin is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Warsaw. The Jewish population in 1921 was 3,079, 49.3 percent of the total population. About 100 Jews living in villages nearby were also linked to the Wołomin community. By 1939, as a result of Polish economic policies and other disruptions,

the number of Jews in Wołomin had declined to 3,000, only 22 percent of the total population.¹

On the first day of World War II, the Germans bombed Wołomin, hitting neighborhoods that were predominantly Jewish and causing much damage and loss of life. The town was taken on September 13, 1939. From the first day the Germans tormented the Jews, stealing their possessions, robbing their stores, and grabbing men off the streets for forced labor. The most respected members of the community were ordered to sweep the streets and dance with their brooms. The Bet Midrash was burned together with the Torah scrolls on October 4, 1939.²

Many people fled eastward into areas taken by the Soviet army. In November, the occupiers also ordered the formation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by Yaakov Blumberg. The Judenrat’s function was to meet all German demands; it had to organize forced labor groups and deliver money (“contributions”) and valuables. It was assisted in its functions by a Jewish police force. At the end of 1939, Jews over the age of 12 were ordered to wear the Star of David. From the beginning of the occupation Jews were subject to random shootings. When these occurred, the Judenrat was notified and ordered to bury the victims.³

In October 1940, the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Wołomin.⁴ The ghetto was composed of two neighborhoods. Jews were evicted from their homes and taken to the nearby settlement of Sosnówka,⁵ which consisted mainly of summer houses. The Jews were put in the houses of the Polish farmers, who in turn were moved into the Jewish homes. The “nicer” neighborhood on the edge of Wołomin was for members of the Judenrat, the Jewish Police, and prominent members of the community. The larger and more crowded neighborhood was for the others. At first it was an “open ghetto” with a population of 2,800 Jews, including 600 refugees expelled from Pułtusk, Wyszaków, Serock, and Nasielsk. Later on some displaced Jews arrived from Radzymin.⁶

Conditions in the ghetto were extremely overcrowded. Fourteen people, for example, were jammed into a small house with two rooms, a kitchen, and an attic.⁷ There was a severe shortage of food, which had to be obtained at inflated prices from local Poles by bartering valuables and personal possessions. Jewish artisans and craftsmen were able to exchange their finished goods for food. Others did not fare so well. Within the ghetto there was a bakery, to which farmers brought their grain. Jews ground the grain into flour on concealed hand mills, and the farmers smuggled the bread into Warsaw.⁸

There were two young Jewish women from Wołomin who had “Aryan” features that enabled them to engage in smuggling. They would travel by train to the outskirts of Warsaw, board a tram that passed by the Warsaw ghetto (but was not allowed to discharge passengers), and bribe the driver to slow down so they could jump off the tram. Then they would bribe their way into the ghetto, exchange bread for clothing, and make their way back to the ghetto in Sosnówka. The clothing was traded to the farmers for more grain to bake more bread.⁹

There is a brief note of a wedding in the ghetto, without music, singing, or dancing. Instead of rejoicing, the families in attendance read psalms as a source of consolation. Jewish marriages were forbidden, so the wedding was seen as an act of defiance. There is no mention of dates or names.¹⁰

A local “currency” was created by which needy Jews could “pay” for their free hot meals. The ghetto leaders also established an orphanage and formed a sanitation department to supervise cleanliness and run the local hospital. The physicians in charge were Drs. Resnik and Freik. Jews engaged in forced labor left the ghetto each day to work on the railroad tracks and on the estates of Polish gentry. Hundreds of young people were sent to work at camps in Lipnik, Izabelin, and Wilanów. Three hundred youths worked in a labor camp on the farm of Count Potocki.¹¹

At some time in the first half of 1941 (according to one account, in June), barbed wire was strung around the ghetto, making it an “enclosed ghetto.” The Germans placed signs at the entrance reading: “Beware, Infectious Diseases: Entry for ‘Aryans’ Forbidden!” The entrance to the ghetto was guarded by Jewish policemen.¹² In February 1941, the number of ghetto inhabitants reached 3,000. Hundreds died from starvation, overcrowded conditions, and disease, especially typhus. The Germans imposed a fine of 2,000 złoty on anyone caught smuggling food. Sometimes the smugglers, including children, were shot on the spot. Among the worst perpetrators was an SS officer named Nowak.¹³

By the summer of 1942, word arrived that the Warsaw ghetto was being liquidated. Several survivors recall the train transports to the Treblinka extermination camp that passed within sight of the Wołomin ghetto. One woman wrote:

I remember the trains. Day and night they rolled from Warsaw on the way to Treblinka. I could see the faces pressed against the small openings of the cattle cars. I could hear the cries of women and children. Often notes were thrown to the ground by someone in the transport warning: “Save yourselves,” or “Do something, we are on our way to destruction.” But of course, there was nothing we could do. It was too late. We were exhausted, starved, diseased, beaten.¹⁴

The Jews in the Sosnówka ghetto knew that nearly all the other ghettos in the vicinity had been liquidated and their day was coming soon. They frantically sought places to conceal themselves, in improvised hiding spots, underground bunkers, or the thick forests.¹⁵ All those attempting to escape and caught by the local police were taken off to be killed in some unknown place. Many Poles were indifferent to the fate of the Jews or even hostile towards them; however, several Polish families, including Antony Kleimak and his wife who rescued two Jewish families, took considerable risks to aid escaped Jews.¹⁶

At the beginning of October, the Germans liquidated the Wołomin orphanage, taking the children into the forest and murdering them. The destruction of the ghetto community

began on the night of October 2, 1942,¹⁷ which was the holiday of Shemini Atzeret. By morning SS and Polish (Blue) Police had surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were driven from their houses into the village square. Anyone resisting was shot. Only a few managed to escape. They were taken to Radzymin and sent along with the Jews of that town to Treblinka. Around the same time the 300 youths working on the farm of Count Potocki were taken out and shot.¹⁸ Polish sources indicate that as many as 620 Jews were shot altogether in and around Wołomin at the time of the ghetto liquidation.¹⁹

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jews of Wołomin and their fate during the Holocaust include the following: Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin* (Tel Aviv: Wolomin Society, 1971); and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 184–186. The ghetto in Wołomin is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 570; and Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, eds., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (prepared originally by ITS in 1949–1951; repr., with new introductory matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 690.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Wołomin under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 211/1132–33 [JSS]; Ring II, PH/41–1–5); IPN (ASG, sygn. 62, p. 222); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 52); VHF (e.g., # 10331, 14868, 18625, 30068, 39044); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 36; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., vol. 21 (Detroit: Thomson Gale/Keter, 2007), p. 153.

2. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 382; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; VHF, # 10331, testimony of Solomon Aidelson.

3. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; VHF, # 14868, testimony of Henry Kruger; # 18625, testimony of Kuba Markusfeld; Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 381.

4. VHF, # 10331.

5. In 1921, Sosnówka had a Jewish population of 20; *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965). The ghetto in Sosnówka is referred to in some sources as Kobylka. In fact this was part of the Wołomin ghetto.

6. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; AŻIH, 211/1132, p. 3, report dated December 30, 1940.

7. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 385.

8. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; VHF, # 18625.

9. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 388.

10. Ibid., p. 397. One child survivor also recalls celebrating her fifth birthday party in the ghetto with several friends; VHF, # 39044, testimony of Rita Ross.

11. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; AŻIH, 211/1133; VHF, # 18625.

12. Kapl Berman, “Meyn iberlebenishn in geto,” in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 418; VHF, # 14868; # 39044; # 10331, dates the enclosure of the ghetto in June 1941, linking it to the German attack on the Soviet Union.

13. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; AŻIH, 211/1133; Berman, “Meyn iberlebenishn in geto,” p. 418; VHF, # 14868; # 10331.

14. Riva Kopyto Pfeffer, “Volomin Remembered,” in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 582 (English-language entry); see also VHF, # 10331.

15. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, pp. 383–385; VHF, # 10331.

16. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186. Among those named as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem is Eleonora Warszawska of Wołomin, who hid the Rubinstein family after they escaped from the ghetto; see Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 849. VHF, # 14868, Kruger mentions the hostile attitude of some Poles he encountered after escaping from the ghetto.

17. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron kehillat Wolomin*, p. 389; Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 587.

18. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region*, p. 186; VHF, # 10331.

19. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 570.

ŻELECHÓW

Pre-1939: Żelechów, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Żelechów, Kreis Garwolin, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Żelechów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Żelechów is located 85 kilometers (53 miles) southeast of Warsaw. By 1921, it had 4,806 Jewish residents.

On entering Żelechów in September 1939, the Germans burned the synagogue. Soon after, a number of Jews from the shelled town of Garwolin arrived.



Deportation of Jews from the Żelechów ghetto, September 30, 1942. USHMM WS #50433, COURTESY OF IPN

In November 1939, the new authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), initially chaired by Israel Mordecai Engel. Szulim Finkelsztajn (Shalom Finkelstein), the pre-war leader of Żelechów's Zionists, soon replaced Engel. The Judenrat also included Dawid Kesselbrener (deputy), the craftsman Welwel Szprynger (Velvel Shpringer), Moses Weislander, and the tradesman Chaim Dawid Altman.

Altman also chaired the Judenrat affiliated self-help committee, which included the following members: Łódź journalist Izrael Lichtenstein (also in charge of the soup kitchen), Lipno refugee Dawid Bromberg, and Majer Dobrzyński of Łaskarzew. In the course of 1940, the kitchen operated for only 156 days. The Judenrat, the self-help committee, and the soup kitchen were located at 28 Piłsudski Street.

One of the Judenrat's first assignments was the selection of 150 Jews for labor on a German managed estate in Jarczew. Survivor Halina Gedanken recalls that after the ghetto's establishment, these laborers, having been provided with proof of employment, were permitted to walk the 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) to the estate unescorted.

By the summer of 1940, Żelechów's Jews were obliged to pay rent to continue living in their houses. Shops and businesses were either confiscated or assigned to a non-Jewish commissar. In July and August 1940, 1,200 refugees from Warsaw and Maciejowice arrived. At the end of this period, a medical office for ambulatory patients managed by gynecologist Dr. Mordechaj Szkop was organized.¹

In October 1940, an open ghetto was established in Żelechów. The ghetto was unfenced, but the Jews, as survivor Dwora Shamai recalls, knew where the borders were. The center of the town—with its marketplace and adjacent streets—was assigned to the ghetto, as many of Żelechów's Jews already lived there. The following streets were included in the ghetto: Chłopicki, Traugutt, Kościusko, 11 Listopada, and Piłsudski. Those Poles living within this area were forcibly removed and consigned to Jewish houses outside the ghetto.

Poles were allowed access to the ghetto. In addition, the Tuesday market continued to operate in the town's market square, with non-Jewish participants also receiving access. With rumors of deportations circulating by the summer of 1942, posts were erected around the ghetto in preparation for establishing a fence, but the job was never completed.²

In December 1940, a Jewish police force was established, commanded by Mejlach Szarfhar. One of the policemen—Bromberg—was later shot by the Germans. Subsequently, a 50-man fire brigade was established. Its members were exempted from forced labor and permitted to leave the ghetto.

Confiscations and house searches became more and more frequent. Living conditions in the overcrowded dwellings deteriorated. For example, in January 1941, the Judenrat reported: “Due to the establishment of a Jewish quarter in Żelechów, living conditions are terrible.” Of the 18,000 Jews in the Kreis, 12,000 were living in Żelechów by February 1942. (This total includes the 600 Jews transferred there from Stoczek Łukowski on February 9, 1941). The soup kitchen served 1,000 meals daily; half of them for 5 groszy each, the other half for no payment.

Since the Kreis center, Garwolin, had been almost completely depopulated of Jews, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków considered establishing its main branch for the Kreis elsewhere, with Żelechów a strong candidate, as it contained the most Jews. This office would supervise welfare assistance for the remainder of the Kreis, with smaller local branch organizations to be established in the other towns, where Jews still resided. Finkelsztajn sent numerous memoranda to Kraków insisting that Żelechów should be the Kreis seat, but the existing Żelechów self-help committee, consisting mostly of refugees, who claimed Finkelsztajn was corrupt to the bone, successfully undermined his credibility. Other localities were also against the establishment of the seat in Żelechów, particularly as the German Kreis authorities were based in Garwolin. Nevertheless, Finkelsztajn defended his position: “Neither Stoczek, Parysów, nor any other gossip, malicious types from Żelechów, can guarantee credible insight [on who is able to provide social assistance], but we—and only we—deserve this trust.”³

In April 1941, “due to [unhealthy] relations between local activists” in Żelechów, and despite the fact that the Germans had expelled all but 36 Jewish families from Garwolin, Kraków decided to establish the Kreis JSS committee there. Finkelsztajn finally fought his way onto the Kreis JSS committee by proposing that he should be included in it so as “not to encounter obstacles.” As of July 1941, he was a member, along with Jonathan Klepfisz and J. Wasserman.

The local branch of the JSS was established in Żelechów in April 1941. It included Dr. Mordechaj Szkop (as chairman), Dawid Bromberg (as deputy), Izrael Lichtenstein, Dawid Kesselbrener, Chil Judensznajder, Jankiel Lejb Goldcwaig, and Wolf Springer; membership was reduced to the initial three by July 1941. Nonetheless, Judenrat-JSS relations did not improve. In May 1941, Szkop wrote to Kraków, “Finkelsztajn felt that a potato and an ounce of bread are slipping from his hands. [He] began to terrorize me in ways unacceptable . . . to force me to resign.” Although this committee also offered to include Finkelsztajn, so as to be able to work in a “peaceful atmosphere,” relations only worsened with time. The committee continued to give examples of Finkelsztajn’s fraud. The JSS members claimed that they were not allowed to leave the ghetto due to Finkelsztajn’s actions.⁴

Following the start of the German-Soviet war in June 1941, Jews could leave the ghetto only for reasons of conscripted labor. That same month, four young Jews were caught smuggling sugar into the ghetto and sentenced to death; a fifth person was shot by the Germans when trying to exchange a fur for food with farmers.

In June 1941, with deteriorating sanitary conditions and cases of typhus appearing in the ghetto, the authorities ordered the opening of a 20-bed hospital. What came to be an epidemic reached its peak in August and September of 1941. By the end of that year, 637 Jews had been treated for typhus. With only 19 cases in January and 9 in February 1942, the epidemic was then considered to have been contained. At its height, during September 1941, a number of Jews were taken

to the nearby labor camp in Wilga, where they dug drainage ditches near the Vistula River.⁵

In November 1941, “due to the forcible expulsion of Jews from some towns in the Kreis,” 900 additional Jews were resettled to Żelechów. The community was informed of their arrival on November 15, 1941—only five days beforehand. The newcomers included almost all the remaining Jews from Garwolin (which then became free of Jews), as well as residents of Huta Dąbrowa, Koryczany, and other villages.

As of November 1941, the Jews were allowed to live in only six localities within the Kreis: Parysów, Sobienie Jeziory, Stoczek Łukowski, Sobolew, Łaskarzew, and Żelechów. In December 1941, the Kreishauptmann moved the JSS seat to Żelechów, as both Wasserman and Klepfisz had been transferred there.

In December 1941, 3 Jews were hanged in the market square (a female teacher, a policeman, and a tradesman). In January 1942, there were reportedly 11,000 Jews living in the ghetto. Increasing poverty caused one third of the ghetto’s population to apply for winter aid, consisting of fuel and potatoes. Over 2,500 Jews applied for soup kitchen meals, yet only 1,600 were available.

The situation of the incoming refugees was especially difficult. In February 1942, Szkop sent the following comment to Kraków: “The Jewish cemetery has expanded thanks to the hospitality of local citizens towards their refugee brothers.” Moreover, “a refugee, as unwanted, is abused, and humiliated.”⁶

On March 4, 1942, the Judenrat opened a one-room orphanage for 20 children, which the JSS termed a “children’s cage.” As the power struggle continued, the Kreishauptmann ordered the deportation of Dr. Szkop to Sobienie by March 15, 1942; the deadline subsequently was postponed for one month. In the meantime, Szkop’s coworkers reported: “Szkop is of late afraid to visit the JSS office, believing that for this price, Finkelsztajn will allow him to stay.” Finkelsztajn denied any involvement. Klepfisz—who replaced Szkop in April—was arrested on June 7, 1942, and sent to the Wilga camp.⁷

In mid-July 1942, the Germans shot Finkelsztajn. Lichtenstein was nominated as the new chairman of a reorganized Judenrat. By mid-August 1942, Gedalia Kijewski had replaced him. A number of executions took place in the course of the summer in Żelechów, including those of the Polish Bürgermeister Ludwik Pudło and policeman Władysław Rybak, both of whom were sympathetic to Jews.

In July 1942, 400 laborers were sent to Wilga and 300 to Mińsk Mazowiecki. Those sent to Mińsk were repairing the Mińsk-Siedlce road for the Wolfer und Goebel Company. Another 200 Żelechów laborers worked on the Dęblin-Ryki road for the Schalinger Company. On September 18, 1942, the Kreishauptmann permitted the opening of workshops in Żelechów; however, there was work for only 20 carpenters, who were ordered to make windows and doors for 18 barracks.⁸

According to *Pinkas ha-kehilot*, a Jewish underground organization existed in the ghetto under the command of Isaac Weislander. It gathered clothing and food for Russian prisoners of war (POWs) who had fled from a nearby camp. Weislander was killed after some Poles informed on him, and the

group was disbanded. According to *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, Yosef Melinkowski was the leader of the Żelechów underground.

Terror in the ghetto intensified just prior to its liquidation. In the course of September and early October 1942, over 700 Jews were shot and buried in 14 mass graves. According to Gedanken, the community sensed the approaching liquidation. The Germans did not announce it. On the contrary, “to mislead the Jews” they ordered shoes from cobblers one day before the liquidation.⁹

The ghetto was surrounded on September 30, 1942. In the morning, accompanied by the sound of sirens, Żelechów’s Jews were chased out onto the square, on which there stood the remains of the burned-out synagogue. Approximately 70 persons were killed during the Aktion. The remainder were taken to the train station in Sobolew (20 kilometers [12 miles] to the southwest), and from there they were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

The Germans left only the following Jews in Żelechów: 50 members of the fire brigade, the Jewish Police, and 25 craftsmen. The task of the firemen was to bury the dead and then sort Jewish property. Upon completing these tasks, they were sent to the Wilga camp, and then to another camp near Sobolew. The craftsmen continued working in the former study house until they were murdered on February 28, 1943. All the members of the Jewish Police, approximately 20 people including its commander Szarfhar, were shot at the Jewish cemetery in the spring of 1943.¹⁰

Several of the ghetto’s residents who had fled the deportation joined a partisan group led by Samuel Olshak. In 1943, the unit became more active, thanks to weapons airdropped by the Soviets. Its actions included operations to free Soviet POWs from a camp near Dęblin-Irena, as well as the destruction of railways and highways in the Dęblin-Lubartów area.

SOURCES The following publications include information on the Żelechów ghetto: Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, and Dariusz Libionka, eds., *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2007); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 598; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 199–203; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 975–977.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/755 [AJDC]; 211/394, 211/1176–1180 [JSS]; 301/4800, 301/5820 [Relacje]; IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]); and VHF (# 12350, 30347).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/755 (Żelechów), p. 8; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1176 (Żelechów), pp. 1, 7–8,

12–13; AŻIH, 301/5820, testimony of Halina Gedanken; *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 6, 1942.

2. VHF, # 12350, testimony of Dwora Shamai, 1996; # 30347, testimony of Janusz Sierczyński, 1997; AŻIH, 301/5820; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1179 (Żelechów), p. 43.

3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 6, 1942; VHF, # 30347; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1177 (Żelechów), pp. 2–8, 12–15, 38; 211/1178 (Żelechów), p. 51.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/394 (Garwolin), pp. 19, 42–44, 57, 63; 211/1176, pp. 29, 49–51; 211/1177, pp. 6, 16–18, 22, 25–26; 211/1178, pp. 29–31; and 211/1179, pp. 19–21.

5. Ibid., 211/1177, pp. 27, 35–36, 50; 211/1178, pp. 3, 8–9; and 211/1179, p. 35.

6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 9, 1942; AŻIH, 301/4800, testimony of Jankiel Grynblat, 1950; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1178, pp. 40–42, 47, 59, 64–65; and 211/1179, pp. 5–6, 19–21, 40.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1179, pp. 36–37, 53–54, 68–69, 73; 211/1180 (Żelechów), p. 3; *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 29, 1942.

8. AŻIH, 301/5820; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 16, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1180, pp. 17–18, 21, 33; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo siedleckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, IPN, 1985), pp. 337–338.

9. AŻIH, 301/5820.

10. USHMM, RG-15.019M (Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos), reel 13, file 307–308; AŻIH, 301/5820; *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 339.

ŻYRARDÓW

Pre-1939: Żyrardów (Yiddish: Zsbirardov), town, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Żyrardow, Kreis Sochaczew, Distrikt Warschau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Żyrardów, województwo mazowieckie, Poland

Żyrardów is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) southwest of Warsaw. It is named after Philip Girard (Żyrard), the French inventor of the spinning mill, who first set up spinning mills in Poland in 1825. In 1921, there were 2,547 Jews living in Żyrardów, comprising 12 percent of the total population. On the outbreak of war on September 1, 1939, there were more than 3,000 Jews in Żyrardów, out of a total population of more than 30,000.

In the war’s first days, there was great panic as thousands of fleeing refugees passed through and the Luftwaffe bombed the town. Some local Jews also sought to escape. A few made it across the border into areas under Soviet control, but most were forced to return by the rapid German advance. German forces captured the town on September 8, 1939. Jewish properties were plundered by the local Polish population, as well as by “Poles” who were recognized as ethnic Germans (*Volks-deutsche*) by the new authorities. The Germans held refugees from Łódź for two weeks in an open stadium, without cover from the rain. The refugees were greatly helped by local Jews, who brought them food and clothing.¹

VOLUME II: PART A



The deportation of Jews from the Żyrardów ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #81229, COURTESY OF IPN

In October 1939, the German military authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by Jacob Baran (formerly a member of the Mizrahi political party).² On October 26, 1939, a German civil administration took over from the German military: Żyrardów was incorporated into Kreis Sochaczew. The Kreishauptmann was Landrat Pott. The head of the Judenrat, Baran, believed that “money will soften the heart of the German,” and he collected contributions from all segments of the Jewish population to bribe the Germans.³ Following the initial abuses and forced labor, there was a period of relative quiet in Żyrardów, with the required number of laborers being provided daily by the Judenrat.⁴

In July 1940, the Jewish population of the town was about 3,200, including some 1,000 refugees, mostly from parts of Poland annexed to the Reich, and almost all in desperate need.⁵ In December 1939, the Judenrat had established a public kitchen, which by January 1941 was serving 700 meals per day and also distributing food products to 600 needy people.⁶ Under the authority of the Judenrat, a Jewish court was established for the Jews of the town, regulating mainly disputes between Jewish tenants and subtenants; its decisions were also recognized by the other local courts.⁷

In December 1940, the Germans established a Jewish residential area (*dzielnica żydowska*), or open ghetto, in Żyrardów.⁸ The Jews were given until December 15 to move into the specified ghetto area, which lay within the following streets (German names): Familienstrasse, 1. Maistrasse, and Bahnhofstrasse. Some houses on the streets leading to Bahnhofstrasse were excluded from the ghetto. The Jews were permitted to take their smaller household items (*Hausrat*) with them but officially were supposed to leave the furniture (*Einrichtungsgegenstände*) behind. Accommodation within the Jewish quarter was to be assigned by the Judenrat. After December 15, Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto. To assist with the transfer, a 50-member unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was established. The Jews were obliged to report to the authorities the addresses of all the apartments vacated by the move into the ghetto.⁹

In the second half of January 1941, 900 Jews from Sochaczew, and additional Jews from other places in the Kreis, including Mszczonów, were moved into the Żyrardów ghetto. A telegram from the Jewish Council in Żyrardów was received on January 19 by the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Warsaw that read: “Very many Jews from Sochaczew have arrived—requesting immediate help.” The Judenrat housed a number of the new arrivals in the synagogue, where they were subjected to severe beatings and abuse from the German Gendarmerie.¹⁰ Due to the short period of its existence, there were no serious outbreaks of disease in the Żyrardów ghetto and only a few deaths from illness or starvation.

On January 31, 1941, the Germans issued an instruction to the Judenrat that all the Jews were to be transferred to the Warsaw ghetto within 48 hours, taking with them no more than 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of their belongings.¹¹ Although Baran had known about the deportation plan before, he kept it secret, hoping somehow to forestall it through bribes. Therefore, no one was prepared when the news of the resettlement was announced.¹²

On February 1, 1941, German forces surrounded the Jewish residential area, and going from house to house, they took the Jews out to waiting railcars, separating men from women.¹³ The Jews were transported for one day and one night without being told their destination. Upon arrival in Warsaw, everyone was ordered to undress and taken to the bath; their clothing was steamed, and women’s hair was cut.

Some secondary sources indicate that similar short-lived ghettos were also established in the neighboring towns of Mszczonów and Wiskitki (Yiddish: Viskit).¹⁴ The available contemporary documentation does not appear to confirm this, although it remains unclear. According to a report in the *Gazeta Żydowska*, dated January 24, 1941, at that time it was still not known whether the Jews of Mszczonów would remain in place or be transferred to the Jewish quarter in Żyrardów. A subsequent report dated January 28 mentions a 6:00 p.m. curfew in Mszczonów and that exceptions were permitted only for those with special permits.¹⁵ The Kreishauptmann’s January 30 order concerning the clearing of Jews from the Kreis mentions that henceforth the Jews were confined to their residential

areas (*Wohngebiete*). However, the same order lists Żyrardów, Wiskitki, and Mszczonów together for transfer to the Warsaw ghetto between February 1 and 9—implying, perhaps, that all these Jews were to be expelled via the Żyrardów ghetto.¹⁶

Firsthand accounts of the events in Mszczonów could not be located. However, two survivors from Wiskitki both report that in the period just before the expulsion to Warsaw the Jewish Council faced repeated demands for contributions from the Germans. The Jews surrendered all their remaining jewelry, silver, and gold, as each time they were assured that if they paid, the Germans would not create a ghetto in Wiskitki. Neither of them states that a ghetto was created but rather that on February 4 the Jews of Wiskitki were marched through the snow to Żyrardów, where they spent one night in the deserted ghetto, six or seven families to a room, before being sent on to the Warsaw ghetto the next day. Fajga Wołkowicz confirmed that two days earlier the Jews of Żyrardów had been expelled to Warsaw but noted that the Żyrardów Judenrat head, Baran, and his helpers were still there to supervise the loading of the Wiskitki Jews.¹⁷ Already on February 3, a permit was issued by the branch of the Arbeitsamt (labor office) in Żyrardów for one of its employees to remove salvaged Jewish property from the Jewish residential area.¹⁸ On February 11, 1941, the *Gazeta Żydowska* reported the arrival of 600 Jews from Żyrardów in the Warsaw ghetto; these Jews were sent for disinfection at a facility on Spokojnej Street.¹⁹

During the last months of 1941 and the first of 1942, a severe typhus epidemic in the Warsaw ghetto claimed the lives of many Jews from Żyrardów and its surrounding areas. The worst conditions of hunger and disease came in January 1942.²⁰ Jacob Baron, the former head of the Żyrardów Judenrat, registered for “volunteer” work in the Warsaw ghetto and never returned after the war.²¹ The majority of the remaining Jews from Żyrardów were deported to the extermination camps from Warsaw in the summer and fall of 1942.

A number of Jews from Żyrardów played an active role in the Warsaw Uprising in April and May 1943.²² Among those who were killed in the fighting was Itzhak Bloistein—one of the organizers of the uprising and the commander of a Dror (Freedom) detachment. Other fighters from Żyrardów who laid down their lives included Itzhak Greenboim, Aaron Haldzband, Moshe Ziegler, Feivl Schwarzshtein, and the Jewish women Irke Jakobowitch and Roize Blumstein.²³

Abraham Margolis from Żyrardów was a member of the group who planned the uprising at the Sobibór extermination camp. Margolis was 1 of 47 Jews known to have successfully escaped from the camp and survived the war.²⁴

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on the yizkor book, Mardekhai V. Bernshteyn, ed., *Pinkes Zshirardov, Amshinov un Viskit: Yizker-bukh tsu der geschikhte fun di kebiles . . .* (Buenos Aires: Di landlayt-faraynen in Amerike, Yisroel, Frankraykh, Argentine, 1961). Additional information on the Jewish population of the town can be found in Elżbieta Hulka-Laskowska, *Żyrardowsky Żydzi w mojej pamięci* (Żyrardów: Stacja Naukowa MOBN, 1985).

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jewish communities of Żyrardów, Mszczonów, and Wiskitki under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., Ring I/328/2, 352, 353, 458, 947, 1261; and 211/1071 and 1190); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH, Ring]); VHF (e.g., # 11002); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, pp. 453–454. According to another account in AŻIH, Ring I/458, published in Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives* “O.S.” (“*Oneg Shabbath*”) (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), p. 230, the sports stadium camp held mostly Polish POWs. This account notes that “Jewish soldiers had to suffer much abuse from their Polish colleagues” and that “city people brought plenty of food, but demanded high prices.”

2. Isruel Milnbak, “Der ershter Pogrom un nach im,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 482.

3. M. Boymerder, “In Iene Teg,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 466.

4. Etarah Blumenshtayn, “Geblibn Eyne,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 525.

5. Rukhl Fogel, “Dos gevein fun Zshirardover geto,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 473.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 54 (AŻIH, 211/1190), correspondence of the Jewish Council of Elders and Aid Committee in Żyrardów with the JSS in Kraków. These documents are also published in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, pp. 455–462.

7. Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 454; see also Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (1972; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 181.

8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 54 (AŻIH, 211/1190), Żyrardów, January 14, 1941, letter to JSS in Kraków.

9. Ibid., RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/353; see also Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 454.

10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1071, p. 56; Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 454; *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 11, February 7, 1941. Avraham Margulis, “Sobibor—Dos Schechtheuz far Mentshn,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 506, however, dates the transfer of Jews from Mszczonów, Wiskitki, and Sochaczew in December 1941. See also Paweł Fijałkowski, *Żydzi sochaczewscy* (Sochaczew: Muzeum Ziemi Sochaczewskiej i Pola Bitwy nad Bzura, 1989), p. 22; and Milnbak, “Der ershter Pogrom,” p. 484, which dates the transfer in January 1941.

11. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/352, Kreishauptmann Sochaczew-Blonie, order concerning the clearing of the Kreis of Jews, January 31, 1941.

12. Fogel, “Dos gevein,” p. 469.

13. Berel Vaytser, “Vie azoy mir hobn sikh geratevet,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 517.

14. For example, Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 503–504, describes an open ghetto in Mszczonów; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator*

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encyklopedyczny (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 564, mentions a ghetto in Wiskitki.

15. *Gazeta Żydowska*, nos. 7–8, January 24 and 28, 1941.
16. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/352.
17. VHF, # 11002, testimony of Samuel Feldman; AŻIH, 301/5992, testimony of Fajga Wołkowicz.
18. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/328/2.
19. *Gazeta Żydowska*, no. 12, February 11, 1941.
20. See Kermish, *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor*, pp. 326–327.
21. Freyde Sheradzki, “Zvishn lebn un teut,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 502.
22. “Die finf Zshirardover heldn,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, pp. 497–500.
23. Yosele Yakubovitsh, “Begegnishn mit Zshirardover Yidn,” in Bernshteyn, *Pinkes Zshirardov*, p. 569.
24. Margulis, “Sobibor,” pp. 507–515. The 47 survivors are listed in Jules Schelvis, *Sobibor: A History of a Nazi Death Camp* (Oxford: Berg in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007), p. 168.

KRAKÓW REGION



View of the Kraków ghetto gate, ca. 1941. The text in Yiddish reads Yidisher Voynbazirk (Jewish residential district).
USHMM WS #73170, COURTESY OF IPN

KRAKÓW REGION (DISTRIKT KRAKAU)

Pre-1939: parts of the Kraków, Kielce, and Lwów województwa, Poland; 1941–1945: Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: parts of województwa podkarpackie, małopolskie, and świętokrzyskie, Poland

Distrikt Krakau was established by the German authorities on October 26, 1939, as one of the four initial Distrikte of the Generalgouvernement. On this date the city of Kraków became the capital of the Generalgouvernement, where Generalgouverneur Hans Frank soon took up residence in the Wawel Castle, as well as the capital of Distrikt Krakau. The Distrikt was divided into 12 Kreise (counties), each governed by a Kreishauptmann. The Kreise were Debica, Jaroslau, Jasło, Krakau-Land, Krosno, Miechów, Neumarkt, Neu-Sandez, Przemyśl, Reichshof, Sanok, and Tarnów.

According to German statistics from 1940, Distrikt Krakau held more than 200,000 Jews, exceeding 5 percent of the total population.¹ These statistics, however, are likely an underestimate, as they do not fully reflect the large influx of Jewish refugees that arrived at the end of 1939 from Polish territories incorporated into the Reich.

The chief German civil authority in the Distrikt was initially Distrikt governor Dr. Otto Gustav Wächter, who was succeeded first by Richard Wendler, then by Dr. Ludwig Losacker (provisionally), and finally by Dr. Kurt von Burgsdorff. The SS and Police Leader (SSPF) was the senior police official in the Distrikt, subordinated to the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger. The position of SSPF in Distrikt Krakau was held in the following succession: Hans Walter Zech, SS-Oberführer Julian Scherner, and finally SS-Sturmabführer Willi Haase. The SSPF oversaw the forces of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo) in the Distrikt and also those of the Ordnungspolizei (Orpo), which included both the Schutzpolizei (Schupo) in the cities and the Gendarmerie in the smaller towns and rural areas. The relevant local civil administrators, the Kreishauptmänner and their subordinates, were generally in charge of ghetto affairs. Surveillance and order were in the hands of the German Sipo and Orpo forces. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) kept order in the ghettos, guarding their internal borders, whereas Orpo forces and Polish (Blue) Police patrolled the ghettos externally.

Taking over authority from the military on October 26, 1939, the German civil administration introduced a series of antisemitic laws that deprived the Jews of their economic, cultural, and social rights and regulated forced labor.² On November 28, 1939, the Generalgouverneur ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils (Judenräte) for each Jewish community.³ The members were to be held personally responsible for the implementation of German orders. The main tasks of the Jewish Councils included the organization of

forced labor, the collection of taxes and contributions, registration, the enforcement of sanitary regulations, and the organization of welfare and medical services. As of December 1, 1939, all Jews were obliged to wear armbands bearing the Star of David.⁴

Several improvised ghettos—for example, in Pruchnik, Sanok, and Leżajsk and, according to one source, also in Przeworsk—were established in Distrikt Krakau at the end of 1939. These ghettos were formed in response to the Soviet authorities closing the frontier to further immigration by Jews. Once German expulsion efforts in various border towns had failed to drive all the Jews across the border, in some places those that remained were forced to move together in specific parts of town. These early, improvised ghettos were established around November or December 1939, that is, just after the first documented ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski (Distrikt Radom).

In the summer of 1940, Generalgouverneur Hans Frank announced a temporary halt to ghetto establishment. Nevertheless, in some towns, such as Tarnów, the first stage of ghettoization commenced with the exclusion of Jews from specific streets in the center of town. The main development at this time was the removal of Jews from the capital city of Kraków, as Stadthauptmann Dr. Carl Schmid sought to reduce considerably its Jewish population of more than 60,000 people. Initially Jews were encouraged to leave voluntarily. In response, tens of thousands of Jews left Kraków, mainly for other towns in the Distrikt: for example, some 4,000 fled to Tarnów and another 1,000 to Miechów. Then from November 1940 until March 1941, about 10,000 Jews were deported from the city of Kraków into Distrikt Lublin.

The establishment of the Kraków ghetto in March 1941 was followed by a wave of ghetto creation in the spring of 1941: additional ghettos were set up, for example, in Miechów, Bochnia, Jasło, and Wolbrom. Most of these ghettos were initially unfenced, although some were enclosed subsequently. In Miechów, the Judenrat was instructed to build a 5-meter-high (16.4-foot-high) wall topped with barbed wire. Jews continued to work outside the ghettos, facilitating the smuggling in of food to support the ghetto inhabitants.

The administration of welfare was transferred from the Jewish Councils to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, which had set up branches in most places with a significant Jewish population by mid-1941. The JSS branches opened soup kitchens, distributed food and clothing, and sought to provide for children and the elderly. The level of assistance was generally insufficient to meet the dire needs of the Jewish



Jews forced out of Myślenice taking their household possessions on horse-drawn wagons, under the supervision of Kraków district officials, on August 22, 1942. Maria Gorniesiewicz clandestinely photographed this scene from the balcony of her second-story apartment.

USHMM WS #38494 COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

population, but it served to ameliorate conditions for the poorest Jews. Jewish Councils were criticized for their treatment of refugees, alleged corruption, and favoritism. However, the Judenräte inevitably faced “choiceless choices,” which also produced a high turnover among their leadership. A number were killed for failing to meet the incessant and impossible German demands. The Judenräte’s most common response to German pressure was bribery, but this had little chance of success in the long term, as Jewish financial resources became exhausted.

Following another brief halt to ghettoization, ordered by Hans Frank in the summer of 1941s, a more intense wave of ghetto establishment started towards the end of that year. Among the reasons for the Germans to establish ghettos were concerns about the spread of typhus among the Jews, the desire to control black market activities, and the acquisition of space in the cities and towns. On October 25, 1941, Generalgouverneur Frank decreed that henceforth Jews leaving their place of residence without permission were subject to the death penalty.⁵ Although formal ghettoization was not as widespread as in Distrikt Radom, more than 25 additional ghettos were established between October 1941 and February 1942 in Distrikt Krakau, many of them unfenced. Several of these were in Kreis Reichshof, where on December 17, 1941, Kreishauptmann Dr. Heinz Ehaus had ordered the establishment of Jewish quarters, setting dates for them to be closed. In Rzeszów,

the closing order was effective on January 10, 1942; for the remainder of the Kreis, it was February 1, 1942. In Kolbuszowa, also in Kreis Reichshof, where a ghetto had been established previously in June 1941, on January 5, 1942, posters were put up around the ghetto, prohibiting Germans and other “Aryans” from entering the ghetto without a special pass.⁶

The new more stringent movement restrictions severely impacted Jewish communities. Jews now had to risk their lives to buy or barter for food with villagers. In the spring and early summer of 1942, there was a further wave of consolidation, as Jews in many smaller communities were moved to the nearest towns. In some regions, this process of consolidation had started earlier. For example, about 2,000 Jews from the surrounding region had been concentrated in the Nowy Targ ghetto in May 1941, as the Germans attempted to clear the border region near Slovakia of Jews.⁷ Some towns, such as Mszana Dolna, were named as concentration points for Jews, but no separate residential district (ghetto) was established there.⁸

As living conditions for Jews deteriorated in the first half of 1942, the terror of the Gestapo also intensified. In February 1942, the Security Police shot about 50 Jews in Jasło who had been allowed to return from Eastern Galicia in the fall of 1941. A similar Aktion was conducted in Tarnów a few weeks later. These people were deemed suspect as they had lived under Soviet rule. In the spring of 1942, the Security Police also seized and killed prominent Jewish social and political activists in a number of ghettos in Distrikt Krakau, especially any Jews known to be Communists, Socialists, or Zionists. For example, the head of the Gestapo in Nowy Sącz, SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Hamann, received orders from the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) in Kraków to arrest and shoot all Jews in the Kreis known to be Communists or to sympathize with them. In response, Hamann obtained an old membership list for the Poalei Zion (left-wing Zionist) movement and ordered that all those on the list be arrested with the assistance of the Jewish Councils and Jewish Police. When the head of the Judenrat in Grybów attempted to limit the effects of this order, arresting only 20 people from a much longer list, Hamann ordered the shooting of 5 members each from the Judenrat and the Jewish Police.⁹ Similar “anti-Communist” Aktions took place, for example, in Rzeszów and Dąbrowa Tarnowska. The goal was to terrorize Jews and forestall efforts at resistance just prior to the deportations. At the same time, the Germans were rounding up young Jews for work in labor camps within the Distrikt, including those in Biesiadka, Pustków, and Płaszów.

In March 1942, the complete expulsion of the Jews from Mielec provided an indication of the terrible fate awaiting the Jewish communities of Distrikt Krakau. In a brutal Aktion, about 500 people were murdered in and around the town, 750 were selected for the Pustków camp, and another 3,000 were deported to various towns in Distrikt Lublin.

In 1942, the Jewish Councils and the JSS conducted a campaign to find employment for as many Jews as possible. Attempts were made to secure work for Jews, including women,



Religious Jews from Jasło, rounded up for forced labor or deportation, are crowded onto the back of a truck, ca. 1940.

USHMM WS #08311, COURTESY OF MUZEUM OKRĘGOWE W RADOMIU

in agriculture and to establish workshops and vocational training courses. As news spread of large-scale deportations, there was a growing conviction that only those whom the Germans considered useful would be spared.

The organization of the deportations was in the hands of the SSPF and his staff. The ghetto liquidation Aktions were implemented by the German Security Police assisted by a number of Trawniki-trained auxiliaries and German Order Police units. In some places, units of the Polish (Blue) Police and Jewish Police were involved in the roundups. The Construction Service (Baudienst) organization, made up of conscripted Polish young men, was occasionally tasked with digging and filling in mass graves.

The main wave of deportation Aktions in Distrikt Krakau took place between June 1 and mid-September 1942—that is, within a period of only three and a half months. All of these transports were directed to the Bełżec extermination center. The first deportation Aktion took place on June 1 to June 8, 1942, from the Kraków ghetto. An additional group of Jews from Słomniki was added to this transport. Another large-scale deportation then followed from the Tarnów ghetto. The remaining deportations were carried out more or less Kreis by Kreis, as follows: Reichshof and Debica in July; Jaroslau, Krosno, Jaslo, Neu-Sandez, Neumarkt, and Krakau-Land in August; Miechow, Sanok, and Tarnow in September. A further large-scale Aktion was conducted in the Kraków ghetto at the end of October, while most of the smaller remnant ghettos were cleared in November 1942.¹⁰ It seems that in a number of places Jews continued to live in their former houses, without ghettoization, right up to the deportations, as, for example, in Skalbierz, while for a few locations, there is inadequate documentation to determine whether a ghetto was established.¹¹

The concentration process connected with the deportations, however, did produce a further wave of ghetto establishment. In Kreis Tarnow, ghettos were established in Dąbrowa Tar-



Jews are ferried from Sandomierz to the Kraków ghetto, 1940.

USHMM WS #14688, COURTESY OF ARCHIWUM DOKUMENTACJI MECHANICZNEJ

nowska, Brzesko, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, and Żabno in the summer of 1942 to serve as concentration points up to the main deportation Aktions in mid-September 1942.¹² At the time of the deportations, Kreishauptmann Dr. Kipke issued proclamations threatening Poles with the death penalty for concealing Jews and ordering them not to buy or receive Jewish property.¹³

Some ghettos were set up only a few weeks before the deportations, as was the case in Sędziszów Małopolski and Ropczyce. In other places, such as Słomniki and Radomyśl Wielki, the announcement of a “ghetto” by the German authorities was used mainly as a ruse to allay Jews’ fears during the period of concentration.

Two large collection ghettos were established in the Kreis centers of Dębica and Rzeszów, which held most of the Jews of their respective Kreis just prior to deportation. Some Jews were transferred twice during the period of consolidation. For example, the Jews of the Ropczyce ghetto were transferred first to the Sędziszów Małopolski ghetto before being deported to Bełżec via the Dębica ghetto. In most places, the sick and the elderly, as well as those uncovered in hiding or resisting deportation, were shot locally.

At several locations in Distrikt Krakau, almost all the Jews were shot not far from their places of residence, rather than being deported to Bełżec. In Mszana Dolna, where no ghetto had been established, more than 880 of the town’s 1,029 Jews were shot on the orders of Heinrich Hamann on August 19, 1942, just outside the town.¹⁴ In Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, after the selection of 30 Jews to be sent to the Gorlice ghetto, the remaining 364 Jews were shot in the nearby Dąbry Forest, located only about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from the ghetto. Similar mass shootings were conducted against the Jews from the ghettos in Jasienica Rosielna, Kołaczyce, Jodłowa, and Brzozów.

In Kreis Sanok, the Germans established a transit camp for Jews at Zasław, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) south of Sanok. In early September 1942, most of the Jews of Kreis Sanok (more than 10,000 people) were brought to the camp and crammed into barracks suitable for only about 500. They were then deported to Bełżec in three large transports over the

ensuing days. In December 1942, around 700 of the last Jews from Sanok were murdered close to the camp.¹⁵ Similar transit camps existed at Pełkinie in Kreis Jaroslau and at Słomniki in Kreis Miechow, where Jews were held under horrendous conditions for several days prior to their deportation to Bełżec.

During the deportation Aktions, many of the able-bodied Jews were selected out and sent to labor camps. Following most deportations, a few Jews, often from the Jewish Police and the Judenrat, were retained to sort Jewish belongings or perform other labor tasks in so-called remnant ghettos. These registered Jews were often soon joined by others who had evaded the roundups by hiding. In a few locations, a form of remnant ghetto was established where no ghetto had existed prior to the main deportation Aktion. This was the case, for example, in Proszowice and in Pilica where, a few days after the deportations, the German authorities announced that Jews would be permitted to return to live in remnant ghettos. One of the main aims of such remnant ghettos was to lure additional Jews out of hiding.

On November 10, 1942, HSSPF Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger issued an order creating five official remnant ghettos in Distrikt Krakau. They were established in Kraków, Bochnia, Tarnów, Rzeszów, and Przemyśl.¹⁶ Their purpose was to lure out of hiding those who had evaded the deportations by promising them safety and work. A number of Jews were transferred to these places in November from other unofficial remnant ghettos. However, in many places the remaining Jews were shot or transferred to work camps. The five official ghettos had each been divided by December 1942 into “A” and “B” ghettos, with the former for working Jews and the latter for women, children, and the elderly, incapable of work. The A ghettos were gradually converted into labor camps over the ensuing months, while the situation of the Jews in the B ghettos became desperate with periodic selections and inadequate food supplies.

Jewish resistance movements were active in several ghettos in Distrikt Krakau. Bochnia had a branch of the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (Jewish Fighting Organization, ŻOB), which was linked to the larger organizations in Kraków and Warsaw. The ŻOB in the Kraków ghetto carried out several attacks in and around the city, including the bombing of the Cyganeria and Esplanada Cafés in December 1942. Several ghetto fighters were captured in the aftermath of these operations, however, severely disrupting the organization’s effectiveness. Other forms of resistance included the dissemination of the underground press, the smuggling of weapons, the preparation of bunkers, and mass escapes from several places just prior to deportation Aktions.

On December 31, 1942, according to the Korherr report, there were about 37,000 Jews remaining in Distrikt Krakau.¹⁷ These “legal” Jews were now all confined either in the five main remnant ghettos or in various enclosed camps, including those in Pustków, Mielec, Płaszów, and other locations.

The five remnant ghettos in Kraków, Tarnów, Przemyśl, Rzeszów, and Bochnia had all been liquidated by the end of September 1943. The labor camps, which succeeded the A ghettos, however, were in some cases not finally liquidated

until February 1944, with many of the remaining Jews being transferred to other labor camps.

SOURCES Surprisingly, no comprehensive monograph has yet been prepared on the fate of the Jews of Distrikt Krakau during the Holocaust. Secondary works with coverage of the history of the Jewish communities of the region include the following: E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w detyryckie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 87–109; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984); Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK “Kraj,” 1992); Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” pts. 3 and 4, *BŻIH* (1987–1988); and Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APKra; AŻIH; BA-BL; BA-L; FVA; IPN; MOR; NARA; USHMM; USHMPA; VHF; YIVO; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Bericht der Regierung des Generalgouvernements über die Lage der jüdischen Bevölkerung . . . bis Juli 1940, in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges [FGM]* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 86.

2. For a more extensive list of restrictions, see *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 667a, pp. 350–354.

3. Verordnung des Generalgouverneurs H. Frank über die Einsetzung von Judenräten, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, p. 71.

4. Anordnung: Kennzeichnung der Juden im Distrikt Krakau, signed Wächter, November 18, 1939 in Marian Domanski, *Fleeing from the Hunter* (Toronto: Azriei: Foundation, 2010).

5. *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs*, 1941, p. 595.

6. USHMPA, WS # N64876, Polizeiliche Anordnung, signed Dr. Ehaus, January 5, 1942.

7. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 342; Report of the Kreishauptmann in Nowy Targ for the period from September 17, 1939, to May 31, 1941, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, p. 64.

8. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 308; AŻIH, 211/710.

9. Shlomo Zalman Lehrer and Leizer Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz* (Southfield, MI: Targum, 1997), p. 312; *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 357.

10. For a concise overview, see Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 387–388.

11. Concerning Skalmierz, see PAIH, testimony of Zeev Lida, December 17, 1997: “It’s hard to call it a ghetto, even though we were not allowed to leave. They did not concentrate

us in a specific street. We stayed in the same houses.” Other possible sites of ghettos include Żołynia (see www.zolynia.org/about-new.html—unfortunately, the information on this Web site could not be verified from other sources) and also Charsznica, where a small remnant ghetto for 25 Jews may have existed in the fall of 1942 (see VHF, # 37148, testimony of Solomon Salat; and AŻIH, 301/5484).

12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, protocol of the JSS in Tarnów, July 31, 1942. See also *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 31, 1942.

13. *JuNS-V*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 710a, pp. 390–391; and vol. 35 (Am-

sterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), Lfd. Nr. 775, p. 303.

14. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” doc. 264; AŻIH, 301/1715, testimony of Abraham Borger; *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 397–403.

15. BA-L, B 162/14494, pp. 17–18; AŻIH, 301/3246, 301/3556, 301/4916.

16. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, pp. 344–345.

17. Korherr report, March 23, 1943, in *ibid.*, p. 348.



BARANÓW SANDOMIERSKI

Pre-1939: Baranów Sandomierski, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Baranow, Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Baranów Sandomierski, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Baranów Sandomierski is located 24 kilometers (15 miles) south-southwest of Sandomierz. In 1921, there were 745 Jews living in the town (42 percent of the total population).

The Jews of Baranów, mostly poor and barely making a living, were unprepared for the coming of war. Except for a few well-to-do families, they did not acquire any supplies. Hunger followed immediately on the German occupation in September 1939. Initially, the Wehrmacht administered the town, which did not particularly mistreat the Jews but required them to perform forced labor. Jewish men worked on road repairs, and women were cleaning and doing laundry; all returned after work to their quarters in Baranów. Later, the Polish (Blue) Police maintained order, with periodic visits by SS men who abused the Jews as they pleased. A man by the name of Numerik, who was a shepherd before the war working for a Jew, conveniently remembered his distant German heritage, deciding that he was a member of the “master race,” and became the ruler of the town, with the Bürgermeister deferring to him. Numerik took money from the Jews and also beat and abused them. (He is reported to have organized the deportation of Baranów’s Jews and personally to have shot Jews.)

After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, Jews were sent to work camps in Biesiadka, Dęba, and Huta Komorowska. In Płaszów and Mielec the letters *KL* (Konzentrationslager—concentration camp) were tattooed on the hands of Jews. Polish policemen were the guards and frequently beat the Jews. There were about 180 Baranów Jews in all the work camps. They received passes to visit their families from Saturday afternoon until the roll call Monday morning, but they chose to return Sunday afternoon, to make sure they were not late. A German by the name of Nickel got drunk and announced that he must kill 2 Jews to prove himself to his friends. He shot and killed two brothers.¹

The Baranów ghetto was established on June 30, 1942, to facilitate the extermination of the Jews of Baranów and its surroundings, which began on July 20, 1942—three weeks later.² The ghetto encompassed part of the marketplace and sections of adjoining streets. Anticipating disaster, some Jews (including two Jewish policemen) managed to escape but perished later.³ A day before the liquidation, 40 Jews from Tarnobrzeg were marched to the Baranów ghetto, guarded by Polish policemen.⁴

On Sunday, the ghetto Jews were ordered to assemble on Monday morning in the marketplace, taking with them not more than “25 pounds” (11.3 kilograms) of their belongings and leaving the keys to their homes in the door. Of the assembled Jews, the Germans took 20 or 30 elderly people and children by horse and cart to the cemetery, where Jews had been forced to dig a ditch, and they shot them there; Poles were

brought in to cover the ditch. The rest of the assembled Jews were marched to the railroad station and put into cattle cars that already contained Jews from Rozwadów and Łańcut. For two days the train traveled the 50 kilometers (31 miles) to Dębica, where a selection took place, including Jews brought from Rozwadów, Tarnobrzeg, Kolbuszowa, and Dębica (about 10,000 people). SS men from Pustków carried out the selection. The elderly were immediately shot; some others were taken to work camps and some to the ghetto in Dębica. On Thursday, the rest were transported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁵

At the time of the deportation in July 1942, the Hauser family, consisting of Natan, his wife Dora, and their two children, escaped and found shelter with a farmer in a neighboring village. After six months the farmer asked them to leave, as he was afraid. Therefore, the family returned to Baranów, where they hid in the hayloft of Stanisław Karol Wawrzycki, a Christian friend from before the war. When it became too dangerous for them to stay in Baranów, Wawrzycki took them to a forester and continued thereafter to supply them with food. Here the Hauser family survived until the arrival of the Red Army in July 1944.⁶

After the war, Poles were afraid returning Jews would claim their possessions, and most were not welcoming; returning Jews soon left, as they feared for their lives. In the Jewish cemeteries only one tombstone remained intact.

The yizkor book *Sefer Yizkor Barnov* includes a listing of 162 names of the heads of Jewish families in Baranów who perished in the Holocaust. Having been derived entirely from the memories of survivors, the list cannot claim to be complete or accurate. The Jewish inhabitants of the following nearby villages perished along with the Jewish population of Baranów: Dąbrowica, Wola, Dymitrów, Skopanie, Padew, Przykop, Knapy, and Krasieczyn.⁷

SOURCES Much information on the fate of the Jews of Baranów during the Holocaust can be found in the yizkor book edited by N. Blumenthal, *Sefer Yizkor Barnov* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1964). There is also a short article in Hebrew in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 59–62. The ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 91; and in *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 95.

Samuel Schalkowsky

NOTES

1. Blumenthal, *Sefer Yizkor Barnov*, pp. 196, 198–200, 204.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 205; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 62.
3. At first they were hidden by non-Jews who, for payment, later either turned them over to the Nazi authorities or killed them personally; see Blumenthal, *Sefer Yizkor Barnov*, pp. 208–210.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 205, 208.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 202–203, 209–210.

6. Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 854. On May 16, 1993, Yad Vashem recognized Stanisław Karol Wawrzycki as being Righteous Among the Nations.

7. Blumenthal, *Sefer Yizkor Barnov*, pp. 220–222.

BIECZ

Pre-1939: Biecz, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

The town of Biecz is located about 104 kilometers (65 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. In 1921, the Jewish population of Biecz was 632.

On September 7, 1939, German forces entered Biecz. Some of the Jews tried to escape, but most were forced to return because of the rapid advance of the German army.¹ Soon the German military administration started to conscript Jews for forced labor and impose large financial contributions on the Jewish community. The Germans confiscated two study houses, converting them into a warehouse and a theater. In late 1939 and 1940, Biecz absorbed 500 refugees from Łódź and its surroundings, raising the Jewish population to 1,300.

In March 1940, the German civil administration introduced the wearing of white armbands bearing a blue Star of David for all Jews over the age of 12. It also established a Judenrat (Jewish Council) in Biecz, headed by Markus Peller. Its main task was to provide forced laborers for the Germans. In the summer of 1940, the Judenrat had to supply 30 Jews per day for German forces stationed in the area. Some Jews worked in the Ulrich-Becker sand and gravel plant, where meager wages were paid, and others on water regulation projects. Among the many discriminatory regulations imposed by the Germans, including onerous taxes and the confiscation of property, the Jews were also prohibited from leaving the town limits without a valid work permit. Furthermore, Jews were not allowed to participate in funerals unless they were closely related to the deceased. During the first two years of German occupation, acts of random violence and harassment were commonplace, including the shaving of beards from Jewish men, but very few Jews were killed in this period.²

By the end of November 1940, the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) had organized a public kitchen that distributed more than 500 free meals during that month, serving also refugees from Łódź and Kraków. In May 1941, the JSS branch reported that there were 1,063 Jews in Biecz. Of the adult male Jews able to work, 260 were working, and 85 were unemployed; 18 Jews were assigned to a labor camp outside the town.³ These figures reflected the ability of the Biecz Jewish Council to bribe the German authorities, limiting the number of those sent away to work.

In October 1941, the German authorities prohibited Jews from leaving the Jewish quarter in Biecz on pain of death.⁴ The Jewish quarter (or open ghetto) was based around the

Ringplatz (market square) and the surrounding alleys leading onto it. Living conditions for the Jews were extremely harsh. Although the Judenrat had to comply with the demands of the occupying authorities, they attempted to save the lives of some Jews by establishing workshops, including shops making straw shoe-covers for German soldiers, which employed some of the most impoverished Jewish residents. Three members of the Jewish Council were the only Jews permitted to move freely outside the Jewish quarter.⁵

At the end of December 1941 the Germans ordered the Jews to surrender their fur items for the German army within three days. The collection was organized by the Judenrat, but some Jews burned their winter clothing rather than let them fall into the hands of the Germans.⁶

In 1942, conditions for the Jews in Biecz deteriorated severely. The number of shootings and killings increased markedly. Between January 3 and February 21, 1942, the Gestapo from Jasło and Gorlice visited Biecz several times; assisted by the local Polish auxiliary police, they shot more than 70 Jews. The corpses of the victims were buried in a common grave in the Jewish cemetery.⁷

By May 1942 the movement of Jews was further restricted within the town to the area around the Ringplatz. In June and July 1942, there was a large influx of Jews from surrounding small towns and villages that resulted in increased overcrowding and shortages of food. The population rose to almost 1,700 Jews in the Biecz ghetto in July. This concentration of the Jews was part of German preparations for their destruction.⁸ At the end of July, the Germans summoned all male Jews aged 18 to 35 to the market square and selected about 170 for work in the Płaszów forced labor camp. Among this group were most of the few survivors from the Biecz ghetto.⁹

On August 14, 1942, German policemen assisted by Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto in the early hours of the morning. All of the Jews were ordered to assemble at 7:00 A.M. on the Ringplatz with a few belongings, as they would be “resettled.” During the roundup the police forces murdered about 150 elderly and sick Jews, and their remains were buried in the Jewish cemetery. The roughly 1,000 Jews gathered on the market square were crammed into a barracks, where they were held for at least three days without food or water. On August 17, they were loaded onto railway wagons and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰

Many Jews attempted to hide within the ghetto or escape to the surrounding countryside. Some were shot by the Polish auxiliary police as they fled or when discovered in hiding. Others were handed over by local Poles, as the Germans imposed severe penalties for aiding Jews. One Pole was shot by the Germans for robbing a Jew he had handed over to them. The Judenrat members were taken to the Jewish cemetery in Gorlice and shot there. The Germans sealed the empty Jewish houses and confiscated remaining property. Only the 40 Jews who worked in the Ulrich-Becker factory remained in Biecz. Subsequently they were sent to a labor camp in Przemyśl. Most of the Jews who fled to the villages were captured and killed with the assistance of the Polish (Blue) Police.¹¹

SOURCES Further information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Biecz can be found in the following publications: Yehudah Leyb Blum and Devorah Vinfeld-Samu'el, eds., *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh/Unzer shtetl Baytsb: Be/vinyanab uve-burbanab* (Ramat Gan: Irgun yotse Baitsh vecha-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1959 [or 1960]); Samuel Halpern, *The Life Story of Rabbi Samuel Halpern: A Holocaust Survivor* (Canarsie, NY: S. Halpern, 1981); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 88–90.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Biecz can be found in the following archives: AHJP (HM/7921); AŻIH (301/3199); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 15); VHF; and YVA (JM/1573, O-3/1695, O-16/1649, and O-33/42).

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, pp. 147–150.
2. Ibid., pp. 149–159; VHF, # 42739, testimony of Ira Goetz; Halpern, *The Life Story*, p. 11; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 89–90.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 15, 211/217, pp. 3, 7, report of the Judenrat in Biecz to JSS in Kraków, November 26, 1940, and statistical report of the JSS delegation in Biecz to JSS in Kraków, May 31, 1941.
4. Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, p. 153.
5. Ibid., pp. 153–154; VHF, # 42739; Halpern, *The Life Story*, p. 11; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 89–90.
6. Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, p. 155; Halpern, *The Life Story*, p. 12.
7. AŻIH, 301/3199, testimony of S. Kurz; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krosnińskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1983), pp. 18–19; Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, pp. 155–157.
8. Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, p. 159, specifically mentions the Biecz “ghetto” with reference to this time.
9. AŻIH, 301/3199; Halpern, *The Life Story*, p. 12; Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, p. 167.
10. Blum and Vinfeld-Samu'el, *Sefer-zikaron li-kidoshe 'ayaratenu Baitsh*, pp. 164–165.
11. Ibid., pp. 165–168; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 90.

BIRCZA

Pre-1939: Bircza (Yiddish: Berch), village, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Przemyśl, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Bircza is located 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Przemyśl. By 1921, there were 1,038 Jews residing there, constitut-

ing 54 percent of the village's population. Before World War II, the town had three ethnic quarters. Poles occupied the eastern part of the market square; Ukrainians, the western and southern parts; and the Jews lived in the northern part of the square.

In September 1939, Bircza was briefly under German occupation. On September 17, 1939, it was taken over by the Soviets and remained under their rule until the invasion of the Soviet Union by the German army on June 22, 1941. In the summer of 1940, a number of Bircza's Jews, who declared that they desired to move to German-occupied Polish territory, were deported instead into the eastern part of the Soviet Union.¹

According to survivor Avraham Kern, an unfenced ghetto was established in Bircza immediately on the renewed German occupation, at the end of June 1941. The German authorities announced that the entire village was a ghetto. The Jewish population was informed that no one was allowed to leave Bircza on pain of death. The Germans, lacking a presence there, established a Judenrat (Jewish Council) and charged it with fulfilling German orders.

Famine, including deaths from starvation, followed the establishment of the ghetto. As a result, many Jews risked their lives seeking food in the surrounding villages. According to Kern, the Ukrainian police never killed any of the ghetto's inhabitants; yet there were instances when local Poles or Ukrainians murdered Jews attempting to escape from the ghetto. The ghetto's inhabitants were not conscripted for forced labor. There were, however, some Jews who were taken to a labor camp (e.g., survivor Izrael Rubinfeld).

Kern and his friends organized the clandestine teaching of Hebrew and Jewish history to the ghetto's children. These classes lasted only a few months, as a Ukrainian policeman uncovered their existence and forced them to cease. No one was punished, due to connections one parent had with the Ukrainian police.²

The first mass execution of Bircza's Jews took place in April 1942, when 50 of them were rounded up, shot on a hill outside the village, and buried in a mass grave. One of the victims was Rubinfeld's father. Several other mass executions—most likely including Jews from other localities—were carried out prior to the ghetto's liquidation. The precise dating of these events remains unclear, but most secondary sources cite 16, reportedly wealthy, Jews shot on Kamienna Górka in May 1942, and between May and August of that same year approximately 200 Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery. In Bircza Stara (Wierzyssko) 500 (or according to another source, 800) people were executed in either July or August 1942. The bodies of all these victims were exhumed in 1957 and buried in the Jewish cemetery in Przemyśl.³

Sometime prior to the ghetto's liquidation, Jews from other places in the vicinity were brought to the Bircza ghetto, including Jews from Pruchnik and from Leszczawa Dolna.

The ghetto was liquidated in mid-August 1942. About 48 hours before the deportation, on pain of death, Bircza's Jews were ordered to collect a large contribution of money, wedding rings, and other jewelry. After the ransom was paid, the community was ordered to gather at the village square at

4:00 P.M. Men wearing uniforms shot those who did not report as instructed. All the ghetto residents were held in the square overnight, in the open, until dawn and were then marched 24 kilometers (15 miles) to the Przemyśl ghetto. The old and children were driven in carts, from which many elderly people were thrown and shot along the way.

In Przemyśl, 150 to 160 Jews were selected and sent for labor in Rzeszów. The remainder were deported soon afterwards to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁴

SOURCES The Bircza ghetto is briefly mentioned in Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich and Muzeum Regionalne PTTK w Brzozowie, 1993), pp. 26–27.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: VHF (# 816, 14890).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. “Izrael (Srulek Jack) Rubinfeld,” in John J. Hartman and Jacek Krochmal, eds., *Pamiętam każdy dzień . . . losy Żydów przemyskich podczas II wojny światowej* (Przemyśl: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Przemyślu, 2001), pp. 72–74; VHF, # 14890, testimony of Avraham Kern, 1996; # 816, testimony of Hanna Bertram, 1995.

2. “Izrael (Srulek Jack) Rubinfeld,” pp. 72–74; VHF, # 14890.

3. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo przemyskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), pp. 13–15; “Izrael (Srulek Jack) Rubinfeld,” pp. 72–74.

4. “Izrael (Srulek Jack) Rubinfeld,” pp. 72–74; VHF, # 14890.

BŁĄŻOWA

Pre-1939: Błazowa, town, Rzeszów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Blazowa, Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Błazowa, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Błazowa is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) south of Rzeszów. The 1921 census reported 930 Jews living in Błazowa (18.2 percent of the total population of 5,123); another 51 Jews resided within the Błazowa gmina. The Błazowa Jewish community numbered 825 people in 1939.

After the Soviets invaded Poland from the east on September 17, 1939, German troops stationed in Błazowa tried to expel as many Jews as possible by ordering them to cross the San River—located less than 16 kilometers (10 miles) from Błazowa—which had already been reached by Soviet forces. A total of 57 Jews left Błazowa permanently, and 768 decided to stay.¹

German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Abraham Unger as the chairman and Wolf Silberstain as the secretary.² Mojsze Weiss was charged with assigning local Jews to labor conscription in accordance with German demands. Jakob Atlas was also a member of the Judenrat.

Members of Błazowa's Jewish establishment were generally assigned to paid jobs that were fairly easy, such as work-

ing at a large estate occupied by the German authorities. Both Poles and Jews worked the estate's land; as laborers, they were not mistreated. Weiss negotiated laborers' paid minimum wages with the estate's owner; most likely they received 1 or 1.20 złoty per day. Those Jews who were assigned to work for the municipality were unpaid.

According to the survivor Jozef Atlas, the Germans did not interfere with local Jews and hardly ever came to Błazowa. It seems that there was only a collaborationist Polish (Blue) Police unit in the town, at least from the summer of 1941, when the Germans invaded the Soviet Union. As Jozef Atlas reported, the Polish (Blue) Police were ill-disposed towards the Jews at times and confiscated goods in their frequent house searches.

By July 1940, 89 deportees from Łódź and 50 from Kalisz had been transferred to Błazowa via Rzeszów. By mid-October 1940, 60 more had arrived from the same towns.³ In December 1940, the Judenrat reported the following statistics regarding Jewish residents in Błazowa: out of a total of 991 Jews, 778 (240 families) were locals. Out of the total of 213 newcomers, 154 were deportees (39 families) and 59 refugees (23 families). The latter came to Błazowa as they had relatives there and had to rely on their support.

Some 30 of the deportee families (90 people) subsisted solely on the welfare provided by the self-help committee set up by the Judenrat, as less than 10 of the newly arrived families were able to find employment. A parentless child who was found later in Błazowa was assigned to a private family for sustenance at the Judenrat's expense.

The Judenrat opened a soup kitchen on November 26, 1940, which placed a great financial burden on the community. It served an average of 120 meals daily, although there were demands for 200. Those able to pay were charged 0.20 złoty per meal. Aside from the Judenrat's small monthly donation, this charge was the only other source of income for the kitchen.

A local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), subordinated to the Kreis office in Rzeszów, was established on May 2, 1941, and took over provision of welfare for Błazowa's Jews. Józef Natansohn chaired the local committee, which also included Hersch Lieber and Simche Intrator. However, the efforts of the local JSS were largely futile, as the kitchen ceased its activity by August 1941 due to lack of funds.

When Natansohn resigned in September 1941, Dr. Jakób Neiss was charged with running the organization. Unhappy with the performance of the other two elderly members of the JSS (Lieber and Intrator), Neiss suggested that they be relieved from the committee by November 1941, because in his opinion they were either not willing or not capable of fulfilling their duties. At Neiss's suggestion, David Lieber and Aleksander Klaristenfeld were nominated in their place. When the kitchen reopened in January 1942, it served only children, the elderly, and the sick. An estimated 80 children were undernourished in Błazowa, but the kitchen was able to feed only a total of 70 people per day.

JSS records imply that most Jewish businesses were taken over and placed under trustee management by mid-1941, although in many cases this process had been accomplished

much earlier. In July 1941, only 13 Jewish craftsmen were running their own businesses: haberdashers, cobblers, and tailors.⁴

In mid-June 1941, approximately 100 Jews were taken to Rzeszów and employed in road works. They received full board and were paid enough to save some money for their families in Błażowa. This, the JSS believed, eased the burden on the town considerably. Another 80 Jews labored at this time outside the gmina. By September 1941, the number of Błażowa workers decreased to 40 laboring within the gmina, and 35 beyond it. The same source reports approximately 250 Jews working in the gmina in the following months and none beyond its borders. There is no information on where or what kind of labor Błażowa Jews performed then or if they were paid or compensated in any way.⁵

According to a survivor, Sam Reich, in the winter of 1941, the German authorities requested one young man from each Jewish family in Błażowa to go to a labor camp. The roundup was conducted in the middle of the night by two SS men, who arrived in a truck. Approximately 40 to 50 boys were driven to the nearby Huta Komorowska labor camp. The camp was unfenced, and although it was guarded by civilian ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), it was controlled by the SS. Its commander, a brutal man named Johann Robert Schmidt, was later replaced by Kopf, and then Nickel. There were no toilets in the camp. Water had to be delivered by wagons from another town. When it was available, it was dirty, and there was never enough for the prisoners to wash themselves. Many died of disease and exhaustion there. Inmates were housed in a wooden barracks and slept on bunk beds with little straw. Each day they were escorted to a nearby forest to cut beech trees.

During the “fur Aktion” in December 1941, Błażowa Jews were given only two days to give up their fur garments and other winter clothing.

By mid-January 1942, the community was made aware that from February 1, 1942, Jews would no longer be allowed to leave Błażowa’s town limits. The basis for this was an order issued by the Reichshof Kreishauptmann, Heinz Ehaus, on December 17, 1941, creating Jewish quarters in the territory of the Kreis. It was effective from January 10, 1942, in Reichshof; in the remainder of the Kreis, from February 1, 1942. A ghetto in Błażowa was most likely set up soon after this date. There is no information available as to how the establishment of the ghetto influenced the community’s life.⁶

A new demand for young Jewish laborers came in the spring of 1942. According to Jozef Atlas, the Jews captured in this roundup were sent to the Pustków labor camp. Those who had fake jobs through connections (e.g., Atlas, whom the Judenrat had registered as a courier) were able to stay in Błażowa.

That spring, the Gestapo suddenly appeared in Błażowa. Jews ran in panic, trying to hide in the nearby hills and along the riverbed. A total of 10 or 11 (according to another testimony, up to 15) Jews were captured and executed that day. Among them were Błażowa’s rabbi Meir Shapiro and his son.⁷

In May or June 1942, the Jews living in the vicinity were resettled into the Błażowa ghetto. The Błażowa community

was not surprised by the resettlement to the Rzeszów ghetto. German authorities permitted a special market to be open for a week or two for Jews to sell their belongings. Then local Poles were ordered to report with their wagons on the day of the deportation to transport the ghetto residents to the Rzeszów ghetto.⁸

The liquidation of the Błażowa ghetto took place on June 26, 1942. There is no information on how many Jews were evacuated to Rzeszów. A Polish woman, Stanisława Jakubczyk, is known to have been shot in the course of the Aktion, but there is no information regarding Jewish victims on that day.⁹

In July 1942, the Jews of Błażowa, along with the other Jews concentrated in the Rzeszów ghetto, were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰

SOURCES The Jewish community of Błażowa and its fate during the Holocaust are briefly mentioned in the following publications: Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 27–28; Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 91–92; and in a series of articles by Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” published by BŻIH (nos. 1–2 [1984] and 3–4 [1985]).

Documents on the persecution of the Jews of Błażowa can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/265 [AJDC]; 211/231–233 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 15); and VHF (# 15572 and 19803).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 15, 211/231, p. 53.
2. VHF, # 15572, testimony of Sam Reich, 1996; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC Błażowa), 210/265, p. 12.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/265, p. 3.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 15, 211/231, pp. 28, 29; and 211/232, p. 38.
5. Ibid., 211/231, pp. 44, 54; and 211/232, pp. 14, 32, 38.
6. Ibid., 211/233, p. 18.
7. VHF, # 15572; and # 19803, testimony of Jozef Atlas.
8. Ibid., # 19803.
9. Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów,” pt. 3, p. 91; and Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 28.
10. Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów,” pt. 3, p. 99.

BOBOWA

Pre-1939: Bobowa, village, Kraków województwo, Poland;
1939–1944: Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement;
post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Bobowa is located about 90 kilometers (56 miles) southeast of Kraków. In 1939, there were approximately 700 Jews living in the village.

The Wehrmacht captured the village on September 7, 1939. Kazimierz Wieniawa-Długoszowski was the Polish mayor of Bobowa at this time. It is unknown if there were any German

forces permanently stationed in the village. Most sources note only that Gestapo and Gendarmerie officials from Jasło and Gorlice paid occasional visits.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was organized at the beginning of 1940, with Samuel Messinger as the chairman and Moses Hochberger as the secretary. The Judenrat's main task was to care for refugees, collect contributions imposed by the authorities, and conscript laborers to meet German demands. According to one survivor, Efraim Landau, the Judenrat did its best to treat the Jews fairly in the interests of the whole community, but other sources indicate there was some criticism of its handling of German demands for forced labor.

Unlike many other communities, the Judenrat did not initially organize a rotation system for forced labor. Rather, on its authority, Jews were seized at random from Bobowa's streets or houses. The workday lasted 10 to 12 hours (including Saturdays). It is not clear who supervised the laborers. Records show that 30 Jews were working outside of Bobowa throughout 1940 and 10 during the first months of 1941.¹

Jewish-owned businesses remained open for the first six months of the war. By September 1941, the number of tradesmen permitted to keep their businesses open had diminished from 62 before the war to only 23. The number of craftsmen also declined by more than half, from 29 to 13.²

By May 1940, there were already 90 refugees in the village, including many from Gorlice and its vicinity. A soup kitchen opened in the first part of the year but had to close when supplies collected among Jews and Christians dried up. The number of refugees rose to 140, after approximately 40 Jews expelled from Krynica and its environs arrived in November 1940. The soup kitchen reopened and fed 100 Jews two or three meals per day. About 125 children received cocoa milk and white rolls.

There were 1,237 Jews registered in Bobowa in July 1941. This included 160 Gorlice Jews expelled to Bobowa that same month. By August 1941, 60 Jews expelled from the town of Oświęcim were transferred to Bobowa, raising the total number of Jewish residents to 1,270. Like many other groups, they arrived empty-handed, draining Bobowa further of its resources. The local Jews pleaded with the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) central office in Kraków for additional support. One of the refugees, Rubin Wassertheil, recalls Bobowa's Jews blaming the less religious refugees for their persecution, believing that it was a punishment from God for their not being observant.³

According to some sources, the Germans established a ghetto in Bobowa as early as October 1941.⁴ Apparently it remained an open ghetto at first, as recalled by one survivor—Moishe Hochhauser—who was among those transferred to the Biezanów labor camp in the summer of 1942. Another survivor, Samuel Oliner, however, who did not enter the ghetto until June 1942, recalls the ghetto as being gated and surrounded with barbed wire, implying that it was probably enclosed by the summer of 1942. There is no information as to who guarded the ghetto. It measured roughly 1 or 2 square kilometers (0.4 to 0.8 square mile) in area and was located in Bobowa's predominantly Jewish center, including at least one side of the market

square. Local Jews stayed in their own houses, while some refugees, who lived among Christians, were forced to move within the ghetto limits.⁵ Its inhabitants often sneaked out either to barter or to buy food from local farmers. Workshops manufacturing straw overshoes were organized in the synagogue, possibly before the ghetto was established.

Between January and March 1942, a series of executions took place, including of Jews brought in from other towns. Victims were shot either publicly on the market square or at the Jewish cemetery. The following shootings of Jews have been documented: on January 5, 1942, when the Gorlice Gestapo shot 17 Jews; on February 5, 4 shot; on March 4, 30 shot; and on March 14, 18 shot. During the execution on March 4, 30 of Bobowa's wealthier ghetto residents were shot. They were first taken to a barn on the outskirts of Bobowa, where they were ordered to hand over all of their remaining valuables. Those who agreed were escorted home to collect the ransom and then shot on providing it; the Germans shot the remainder at the cemetery.⁶

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Germans began transferring Jews living in the surrounding villages (including Brzana) into the Bobowa ghetto. The Jewish residents of Brzana were given only half an hour to pack their clothing and pots on sleighs. German Gendarmes then escorted them to the ghetto.⁷ By April 1942, there were 1,345 Jews concentrated in the ghetto, including 678 refugees, indicating that the population had doubled since the start of the war. At some point, Jews from Gładyszów were also brought in.⁸

On June 12, 1942, Jews living in the villages of Mszanka and Bielanka were forced into the ghetto. They could take with them only basic necessities and bedding. In July 1942, the Jews from Stróża were brought in. At the time, the ghetto was extremely overcrowded, and the Judenrat was forced to place several families into one room. Samuel Oliner, who moved into the ghetto at this time, remembers its inhabitants as frightened and hungry; some were forced to eat nonkosher food. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, due to the efforts of the Polish mayor, there was no spread of contagious diseases among the Jews in Bobowa.⁹

Between May and August 1942, a number of Jews were taken to labor camps in Biezanów, Prokocim, and possibly Bochnia. A group of 210 Jews was sent to Biezanów in August, where they worked on the railway for the Stua and Klug companies.¹⁰

In June 1942, a workshop employing 150 Jewish tailors, shoemakers, upholsterers, haberdashers, and patch-makers was set up in Bobowa. Their production included straw shoes, drapery, and children's toys.¹¹

On August 13, 1942, the Germans called for new volunteers for the Biezanów camp. The community was promised that if each family were to send one able body, the remainder would be left in peace. The number of volunteers is unknown, but upon their departure the same afternoon, Germans and Ukrainian auxiliary forces surrounded the ghetto.¹²

The ghetto was liquidated on the morning of August 14, 1942. The liquidation Kommando went from house to house,

banging on doors and dragging the inhabitants from their dwellings to the market square, where trucks awaited them. The Germans offered the Judenrat chairman, Messinger, a chance to save himself, but he refused.¹³

Twenty-five of Bobowa's Jews were reportedly shot in the course of the liquidation Aktion, either on the streets of Bobowa or in the Jewish cemetery, where they were later buried in a mass grave.¹⁴ The same day, several hundred (possibly 700) of Bobowa's and Gorlice's Jews were shot in the Garbacz Forest near Stróżówka village, in the vicinity of Gorlice. Another 80 are recorded as having been shot in the Dąbry Forest, near Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, "after August 14, 1942."

The number of Jews inhabiting the ghetto prior to its liquidation is difficult to determine, because the number of Jews reportedly sent to various labor camps differs considerably among the available sources. Another complication arises from the German policy of selecting Jews from different locations and taking them together to yet another location to execute them, as in the August 14, 1942, shooting of Bobowa and Gorlice Jews mentioned above. In addition, there are several accounts that indicate that those who survived the initial selection were also subsequently murdered.

It appears most likely that in fact most, if not all, of Bobowa's ghetto residents were shot in the Garbacz Forest near Stróżówka, where the Jews were made to undress before they were shot next to a mass grave.¹⁵ Some sources indicate, however, that only about 400 Jews, probably women, children, and elderly, were murdered in the Dombro (Dąbry) Forest near Bobowa. Of the remainder, some were sent to the Szebnie labor camp, and the others were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp after their transfer to and subsequent deportation from the Gorlice ghetto.

SOURCES The following published sources make reference to the Bobowa ghetto: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 63–64; Samuel P. Oliner and Pearl M. Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe* (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. xvi; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 109.

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (210/258, 211/235, 301/1373, and 301/242); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 15; RG-02.208M [Pamiętniki]; and Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 10797, 15948, 18652, 20731, 34133-3, 49767-1).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 34133-3, testimony of Efraim Landau, 1997.
2. Ibid.; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/258, pp. 5, 17.
3. VHF, # 20731, testimony of Rubin Wassertheil, 1996; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 15, 211/235, pp. 13, 17, 35; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/258, pp. 35–36, 60.
4. But see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 15, 211/235 (Bobowa), p. 2.

5. VHF, # 49767-1, testimony of Samuel Oliner, 1999; # 15948, testimony of Moïshe Hochhauser, 1996; # 10797, testimony of David Borgenicht, 1996.

6. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo nowosądeckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1984), pp. 15–16; AŻIH, 301/1373, testimony of Rena Kant, 1946; 301/242, testimony of Hirsch Tauber, 1946; VHF, # 34133-3; # 15948; and Władysław Boczoń, *Żydzi gorlicy* (Gorlice: Władysław Boczoń, 1998), p. 149.

7. AŻIH, 301/1373.

8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/258, p. 2; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 109.

9. VHF, # 49767-1.

10. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August, 16, 1942; VHF, # 15948; # 10797; and # 18652.

11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 8, 1942.

12. VHF, # 20731.

13. Ibid., # 34-133-3.

14. Ibid., # 49767-1; *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 16–17.

15. This version is indicated by VHF, # 49767-1.

BOCHNIA

Pre-1939: Bochnia, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Salzberg, Kreis Krakau-Land, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Bochnia, powiat center, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Bochnia is located 45 kilometers (28 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. In 1939, there were around 3,500 Jews living there, comprising about 20 percent of the town's population.

German forces occupied Bochnia on September 3, 1939. Soon after their arrival the Germans began to kidnap Jews for forced labor. Deportations to labor camps began in 1940 and continued through most of the ghetto's existence. Sometimes the Jewish community had to pay the transportation costs to the camps.¹



Jewish men and women make brooms in a workshop inside the Bochnia ghetto, n.d. The original German caption reads, "City workshops in Bochnia. Jewish labor strength made useful."

USHMM WS #51738, COURTESY OF IPN

In the fall of 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Bochnia to act as intermediary between the Jewish community and the German authorities. In 1940, Symcha Weiss was appointed as chairman of the Judenrat, and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was created under Dr. Szymon Rosen.

The Jewish population grew through the arrival of successive waves of Jewish refugees, from Kraków (May 1940), Krzeszowice (March 1941), and Mielec (spring 1942).

The German authorities established a ghetto in the center of Bochnia in March or April 1941. Initially the ghetto remained unfenced. The area of the ghetto was about 600 meters by 200 meters (656 by 219 yards), based around Kowalska Street.² From July 1941, Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto without a special permit; by October the punishment for disobeying this order was death. Over the following 10 months, over 300 Jews were shot in the Jewish cemetery for disobeying this command.

Following the arrival of the Krzeszowice Jews, the ghetto was expanded in April 1941 and included the following streets: Proszowska, Wygoda, Podedworze Dolne, and the remainder of Krzeczowska Street. Due to the large number of refugees and the very confined space, the ghetto became severely overcrowded, and sanitary conditions were deplorable.³

The Germans controlled the supply of food into the ghetto and enforced strict food rationing. Those who worked received rations that were sufficient barely for one person. To feed the sick and the old, their names were added to the list of productive workers, but their relatives then had to cover for them by working even longer hours to meet stiff production quotas.

By the end of 1941, about 2,000 Jews were employed in workshops in the ghetto. They manufactured army uniforms, handkerchiefs, underwear, shoes, brushes, toys, electrical equipment, and baskets for the Germans. A German named Wettermann was in charge of these workshops, but a Jew, Salomon Greiwer, oversaw day-to-day operations.⁴ Other Jews exited the ghetto under escort each day to perform forced labor.

To maintain a semblance of normalcy, an elementary school and a Bet Midrash operated within the ghetto until August 1942. There was also a hospital from the end of 1941, which the Germans established to deal with a typhus epidemic. Dr. Anatol Gutfreund was in charge. The hospital received some medical supplies, with aid initially received from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Kraków.⁵

Nazi restrictions did not extend to Jews who were citizens of certain foreign countries. Therefore, these Jews were able to provide some contact between the ghetto's residents and the outside world. They also helped to smuggle foodstuffs into the ghetto, gave refuge to children during Aktions, and helped to organize escape routes to Hungary and Slovakia.⁶

In the spring of 1942, the ghetto was enclosed by a wooden fence, about 2 meters (7 feet) high, which Polish police guarded.⁷

Mass expulsions throughout the region spread fear among the Jews in the spring and summer of 1942. There were reports about whole communities being murdered. Greiwer

tried to reassure the workers that they would remain protected, but many ghetto residents constructed bunkers to hide when the time came.

A few days before the first mass deportation in August 1942, the Judenrat was forced to pay the Germans a sum of 250,000 złoty—the latest in a series of demands—supposedly as protection money to guarantee the Jews' safety. However, it proved to be just a scam to steal the Jews' last remaining money.

All the Jews in the Kreis were gathered together on the evening of Friday August 21, 1942, and were brought to Bochnia the next morning. The entire Jewish community of Nowy Wiśnicz (about 1,500 people) was transferred to the Bochnia ghetto, along with Jews from a number of villages, including Brzeźnica, Bogucice, Lipnica Murowana, Rzezawa, Targowisko, Trzciana, Uście Solne, and Zabierzów. This relocation caused fear and panic in the Bochnia ghetto, as they now expected a large-scale Aktion—which indeed followed, between August 25 and 27.⁸ Some Jews went into hiding, on their own or with their German employers.⁹

Gestapo, SS, and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto. Then (with help from the Jewish Police) they rounded up the Jews and conducted selections. As so many people were in hiding, there was a shortage of deportees. As a result, even some people with special permits were included in the deportation, and Jewish policemen had to bring their own family members. Those who were unwilling or unable to follow orders were shot in front of their families. Greiwer was murdered when he tried to save his workers.¹⁰

The Gestapo shot a number of Jews in and around the ghetto, and a group of about 800 elderly and sick Jews (including some from the hospital) was loaded onto trucks with the assistance of Polish Labor Battalion (Baudienst) members and transported to the village of Baczków to be shot. They were thrown into a pit and buried while many were still alive.¹¹

The remaining Jews on the roll-call square (*Appellplatz*), comprising healthy and strong Jews, were loaded onto a waiting train and sent to the Bełżec killing center, where they were murdered in the gas chambers.¹² Almost the entire membership of the Judenrat was on the last transport to Bełżec. They went along to reassure people that the Nazis were really resettling them to the east. In total, more than 5,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec during the August Aktion.¹³

After the Aktion, the remaining ghetto residents again had to pay for their right to survive, which they ironically called "slaughter money."¹⁴ Officially there were still some 1,000 Jews left in the ghetto, plus an additional 400 "illegals" in hiding. The number soon swelled to around 5,000 again, however, as many Jews emerged from hiding in Bochnia and the surrounding countryside. The head of the Gestapo in Bochnia, SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Schomberg, issued the Jews special permits allowing them to remain, and the workshops resumed operations, now employing some 3,000 people. During a second Aktion on November 10, 1942, 150 people were shot, and around 500 were sent to Bełżec.¹⁵

That same day, the Germans announced that Bochnia would be one of the five remaining towns in Distrikt Krakau

where Jews could live in a “Jewish residential area” (*Juden-wohnbezirk*).¹⁶ As a result, the ghetto population again swelled to more than 5,000, as additional people emerged from hiding.

In December 1942, several German officers bought the workshops to run them as a private business. At this time the Bochnia ghetto was split into two parts—Ghettos A and B—divided by an internal fence guarded by the Jewish Police. In Ghetto A, those who held workers’ permits were housed in separate barracks for men and women, as it was now officially designated a forced labor camp, subordinated to the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Kraków; Ghetto B contained those who did not work: the elderly, disabled, weak, and children. The new owners were obliged to pay the SS for the right to exploit Jewish slave laborers. The Bochnia Jewish community had officially ceased to exist, and children had to be hidden, as they were forbidden in the labor camp.¹⁷

The Hebrew youth movement Akiba was active in Bochnia before the war, and from 1940 its members established an underground cell in the town, which cooperated with the branch of the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (Jewish Fighting Organization, ŻOB) in Kraków. The Bochnia underground dealt in money and false identifications and prepared bunkers in the forest as a base for resistance operations. ŻOB members were recruited in the ghetto, and after December 1942 the underground was located in Ghetto B. From there they maintained communications with sections of the Polish underground and also the ŻOB members in Kraków. On Friday, February 26, 1943, the Germans arrested most members of the Bochnia underground. Surviving ŻOB leaders moved to the forest to continue the armed struggle against the Nazis. They remained in contact with the remaining cell inside the ghetto until the ghetto’s liquidation.

In the early spring of 1943, another Aktion took place in which 100 Jews were sent to Płaszów for forced labor. In July 1943, there was a scramble in the ghetto to purchase false documents showing foreign citizenship, as it was rumored that any foreign Jew who paid a large sum would be able to migrate to the United States. However, the ruse was soon exposed when approximately 100 Jews were not sent to the United States but to Płaszów, where the Germans shot all but 2 of them.¹⁸

The final liquidation Aktion started on September 1, 1943. At approximately 5:00 A.M., SS forces surrounded the ghetto and roused the residents from sleep, with orders to go to the Appellplatz. There they were divided into two groups. One contained most of the inhabitants of Ghetto B, including all of the children and elderly. This group, numbering approximately 4,000 people, was sent to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp to be murdered. The other group, comprising approximately 1,000 people aged 13 to 35, was transported to the Szebnie camp on September 3, where most of them died. At the communal cemetery, around 60 people were shot and their bodies burned.¹⁹

Officially, 150 Jews were allowed to remain in Bochnia as a work detail to clear the ghetto, along with a few members of the Jewish Police. Another 100 people joined the work detail after appealing to the Judenrat. However, when this was dis-

covered the next day, 100 people were taken at random and shot in the street. Those remaining were forced to pile up the dead and burn the bodies. These 150 people worked until December 1943, and then 50 were sent to the Płaszów camp and 100 went to Szebnie.²⁰

Many Jews hid during the last Aktion, but most were uncovered over the following six weeks.²¹ The Jews in the work details tried to help them, but the Germans used dogs and smoke to force the Jews out of hiding to murder them. Most who tried to escape were murdered either by the Germans or by extremist Polish nationalists. A few made it to Hungary. The total death toll for the Bochnia ghetto was at least 13,000 Jews deported, most of them sent straight to their deaths in Bełżec or Auschwitz, and over 1,800 people killed in Bochnia and its vicinity.²²

SOURCES Publications on the Bochnia ghetto include the following: I. Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia: On the Trail of the Family I Never Knew* (Canada: I. Zelinkovsky, 1995)—another version is available on the Web (www.angelfire.com); “Bochnia Ghetto,” on the Aktion Reinhard Camps (ARC) Web site (www.deathcamps.org/occupation/bochnia%20ghetto.html); Irena Zawidzka, “W 50 rocznice zagłady getta bocheńskiego,” in *Rocznik Bocheński*, vol. 1 (Bochnia, 1993); Maria Szymkowska, “Bochenskie getto,” *Wiadomości bochenskie*, no. 3 (2002); *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 667; Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 64–69; and Chaim Shlomo Friedman, *Dare to Survive* (New York: CIS, 1992).

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Bochnia during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AZIH (301/1909, 4927; 211/236–241); BA-L (B 162/1967–1976, 2251–2259, and 14275–14276 [Verdict of LG-Kiel, 2 Ks 4/66, March 19, 1968]); USHMM (RG-15.019M; RG-50.120*0099 and 0251; and RG-50.166*0021); VHF; and YVA (e.g., collections M-1/E and O-3).

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NOTES

1. Recorded testimony of Pinkas Klapholz, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia* (TST5), pp. 3–4.
2. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, p. 357; YVA, O-3/4504, testimony of Bertha Brauhn, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia* (TST1), p. 5.
3. YVA, O-3/4504, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 5; *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 25, 1941.
4. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, p. 357; Friedman, *Dare to Survive*, pp. 76–77.
5. YVA, O-3/1383, testimony of Dr. Stefan Korenhauser, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 1.
6. Ibid., p. 3; testimony of Ida Grinberg, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, pp. 7–8; Friedman, *Dare to Survive*, pp. 216–219.
7. Recorded testimony of Pinkas Klapholz, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 6; *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, p. 357.
8. Klapholz, p. 7, and Brauhn, p. 5, both in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*; and USHMM, RG-50.120*0099.
9. YVA, O-3/1383, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 2.

10. Klapholz, p. 7, and YVA, O-3/1383, p. 2, both in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*; AŻIH, 301/1909, mentions the brutality of the Jewish Police.

11. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, pp. 366–367.

12. YVA, O-3/3284, testimony of Johanan Kalfus, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 8.

13. Testimony of Pincus Kolender, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, pp. 4–5; *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, pp. 366–367.

14. Klapholz, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 8.

15. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, p. 380.

16. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

17. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667, p. 379.

18. YVA, O-3/3091, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, pp. 20–21.

19. Braunhut, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, pp. 12–14.

20. YVA, O-3/1383, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 8.

21. Kolender, in Zelinkovsky, *Ghetto Bochnia*, p. 8.

22. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 110.

BRZESKO

Pre-1939: Brzesko, town, Tarnów powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tarnow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Brzesko is located about 52 kilometers (32 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. On the outbreak of World War II in 1939, there were 2,119 Jews living in Brzesko (around 50 percent of the total population).¹

German armed forces occupied the town on September 5, 1939. The Jews were rounded up for forced labor. In September 1939, the Germans set the synagogue on fire. They also demanded a ransom of 40,000 złoty from the Jewish community and took 10 Jews hostage. In October 1939, the Germans registered all men between the ages of 15 and 60. The Jews were ordered to wear armbands bearing the Star of David. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by Jakub Hendler. It was entrusted with meeting German demands for forced laborers. The Szczurowa and Borzęcin Jewish communities (comprising 239 Jews in total in 1940) were both subordinated to the Brzesko Judenrat. Apart from the Judenrat and the Brzesko branch of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), there was also a Committee for the Aid to Refugees and the Poor, as well as the Central Organization for Orphan Care (CENTOS), which provided assistance to around 130 children in 1940. German police officials (most notoriously Wilhelm Rommelmann, Lapsch, and Beck) visited Brzesko occasionally to shoot Jews. They selected their victims either from a previously prepared list or at random.²

The Brzesko JSS reports 3,270 Jews in Brzesko on May 31, 1941. There were 1,625 Jews seeking assistance, but only 1,125 received help. Furthermore, around 500 Jews received meals from the community kitchen; 1,100 received financial assistance; 1,033 Jews received coal; 328 were given medical assistance; and 640 received medicine. There were still 48 Jewish workshops in Brzesko, where mainly tailors, hatmakers, furriers, and butchers worked. Around 82 businesses were owned by Jews, and some 200 Jews performed physical labor. In the first week of March 1941 and again on March 9, 1941, transports of Jews from Kraków arrived in Brzesko. These resettled Jews were left without any means of support. In December 1941, the Germans demanded that the Jews surrender all their winter equipment and fur clothing for the German army in Russia.³

In the fall of 1941, the Germans created an open ghetto in Brzesko, the area of which was designated by signs. Two Jewish residential districts were created in separate areas of the town: one area was located on both sides of Wapienna Street; the second area was situated around present-day Sobieski, Ruchu Oporu, Ogrodu Jordanowsi, and Chopin Streets and also Kazimierz Wielki Square. The Jews could not leave these areas on pain of death. At first, there were around 3,000 Jews concentrated in the ghetto, but the number rose to 6,000 in the summer of 1942. A Jewish police force also was created, headed by Diestler, a former soldier in the Austrian army. Jews performed forced labor for the Germans (a number of Jews from Brzesko were sent to the Pustków and other labor camps), as well as working in workshops inside the ghetto.⁴

In the ghetto, the Jews experienced hunger and disease. They could still obtain food while the ghetto remained open, as some contact with the local population was maintained. Due to poor sanitary conditions and malnutrition, an epidemic of typhus broke out. Patients were treated in the ghetto hospital where Maurycy Gross was one of the doctors. During three days around 15 people were hospitalized, 5 of whom died. Jews also became victims of shootings by the Germans. After the executions, the Germans demanded payment for the ammunition used and forced the Jews to sign documents falsely indicating the natural death of the victim. The Germans also demanded further “contributions” from the Jewish community.⁵

By the spring of 1942, the typhus epidemic had ended. An Aktion took place around that time. The Germans came to the town, rounded up people, and shot 6 of them in the town square. In mid-April 1942, a further Aktion took place. The Germans, including three members of the local Order Police, Lapsch, Wagner, and Mikler, shot around 50 Jews; the bodies were buried in two mass graves at the Jewish cemetery. In May 1942, Germans arrived from Tarnów, demanding furniture and money from the Jews of Brzesko. On June 18, 1942, the third Aktion took place. Ukrainian units surrounded the town, while German forces carried out the Aktion. Around 200 Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Brzesko, and 400 were deported.⁶

According to an order issued by Kreishauptmann Dr. Kipke in Tarnów on July 15, 1942, Jews from the settlements

of Kreis Tarnow, except from the city of Tarnów itself, were required to move to Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Brzesko, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, or Żabno by July 23, 1942. In mid-July 1942, the Germans established an enclosed ghetto in Brzesko. It was surrounded by a fence; windows had to remain closed, and the curtains drawn. There were two ghettos, one on each side of the church and divided by an “Aryan” street. Jews were transferred from one ghetto to the other escorted by the Jewish Police. In the ghetto there was overcrowding. According to German policy, 10 people were assigned for each window in a dwelling. People prepared hiding places; some forged Aryan papers. There was not enough to eat. The social organizations distributed only small amounts of food, and the ghetto inhabitants had to obtain the rest themselves. The Jewish Police were able to smuggle food into the ghetto; people also used to sneak out at night and barter items for food with the Poles. Polish police guarded the ghetto externally, but some Jews were able to escape. If they were caught outside the ghetto, they were shot. Although no official religious services were held, some people maintained their religious practices, such as observing Shabbat.⁷

In September 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. The Jews were rounded up and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. A number of Jews managed to escape the roundup, but most were subsequently captured and shot. Some escapees received help from Dr. Jan Brzeski, who treated Jews in their hideouts at great personal risk. Only around 70 Jews remained after the Aktion, tasked with clearing out the ghetto area. Afterwards, these Jews were sent to the Tarnów ghetto. In 1943, the Germans shot 28 Jews at the Brzesko Jewish cemetery (presumably people uncovered in hiding).⁸

Only about 200 Jews from Brzesko survived the Holocaust.

SOURCES Publications dealing with the history and murder of the Jews in Brzesko include the following: “Brzesko,” in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984); Aleksandra Pietrzykowa, *Region tarnowski w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Polityka okupanta i ruch oporu* (Warsaw: PWN, 1984); Iwona Zawadzka, *Cmentarz żydowski w Brzesku* (Brzesko: Brzeska Oficyna Wydawnicza, 2001); and Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK “Kraj,” 1992).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Brzesko can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/609, 611, 1376; JM 10005, # 5735958); IPN (ASG, sygn. 48a, p. 25; ZhIII/31/35/68; Dsn 7/30/68/“W” 471); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 16; and RG-15.019M, reels 3 and 14); VHF (# 4147, 8609, 30095, 37249, 41736, 42765, 51734); WAPKOB; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 16, JSS Brzesko report for period from September 1939 to May 31, 1941.

2. Ibid., report of the Mitglied des Judenrates in Brzesko für die Sammelgemeinden Szczurowa und Borzęcin, September 29, 1940, and letters of the Committee for the Aid to Refugees and the Poor, November 18 and 19, 1940; AŻIH,

301/609, testimony of Mendel Feichtal; and VHF, # 37249, testimony of Maurice Moritz Reiss.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 16, JSS Brzesko report for period from September 1939 to May 31, 1941, and JSS Brzesko reports for May and June 1941.

4. Ibid., note from Kraków, March 17, 1941; RG-15.019M, reel 14, “Kwestionariusz o obozach”; and VHF, # 4147 and # 30095, testimonies of Anita Hirsch and Samuel Brandsdorfer.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 16, letter of JSS Brzesko to Kraków, November 21, 1941.

6. A. Dylewski, *Śladami Żydów polskich* (Pascal, 2002); AŻIH, 301/611, testimony of Felicja Schafer; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych.”

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 16, protocol of JSS in Tarnów, July 31, 1942; AŻIH 301/611, pp. 3–5; VHF, # 8609, testimony of Aron Beidner; # 37249, # 30095, and # 42765, testimony of Stella Lanner.

8. Władysław Myśliński, *A jednak tak było* (Warsaw, 1978), pp. 283–284, states that the Aktion took place on August 24, 1942; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, dates the Aktion on September 12, 1942; AŻIH 301/611 and 1376, testimony of Helena Schmalholz; Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 117, 217.

BRZOSTEK

Pre-1939: Brzostek, village, Kraków województwo, Poland;
1939–1945: Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement;
post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Brzostek is located 49 kilometers (29 miles) southwest of Rzeszów. According to the 1921 census, there were 479 Jews living in Brzostek. The Jewish community occupied the village square, 20 Czerwca and Żydowska Streets; the synagogue was located on the latter. By 1939 Brzostek had an estimated 500 Jewish residents.

A significant number of Brzostek's Jews fled to the east on the outbreak of war into the part of Poland annexed by the Soviet Union in the fall of 1939. With the occupation, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by Israel Schonwetter. Its primary task was to supply laborers for agricultural work, to level and beautify the village square, and to pave roads. Labor squads building fortifications in Wiśniowa were driven to work on trucks and brought back in the evening.¹

By February 1940, a committee for refugee relief had been established in Brzostek. A man named Goldman was its chairman. Refugees were quartered in the synagogue; their numbers and place of origin are unknown. In 1942, a number of Jews from the Jodłowa ghetto were transferred to Brzostek.²

In the summer of 1941, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Germans selected around 40 professionals from among Brzostek's Jews to be sent to a labor camp in Lwów. One of the men selected, Adam Szus, recalls that the Ger-

mans threatened to kill his parents after he went into hiding to avoid deportation.³

By the summer of 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) had been established in Brzostek. It operated briefly, only to be closed in September 1941 by the Kraków JSS headquarters, in response to an assessment by the Jasło branch describing the Brzostek JSS's "insignificant activity."⁴

Mieczysław Wieliczko, historian of Jasło County, established that the process of ghettoization in the Kreis was completed in 1941 (most likely in the autumn), when a ghetto in Jasło was established. One of the ghettos created around that time was in Brzostek. An open ghetto, unguarded and unfenced, most likely included the village square and Żydowska Street.

At the beginning of 1942, a number of Jews were seized for work in labor camps, including in Pustków.⁵ On May 1, 1942, the Germans shot eight Jewish Communists, who were then buried in the Jewish cemetery on Szkotnia Street.⁶

Two days before the ghetto's liquidation on August 12, 1942, the Gestapo requested chairman Schonwetter to report to the Polish police station for questioning, where he was then held until the Aktion. The wife of the Polish police commander informed Schonwetter's family of the planned execution. The police commander released Schonwetter, asking him to "go for a walk." Schonwetter returned to the jail, saying: "I know exactly what is happening. But I am the leader of this community. I will stand with my people."⁷

According to Wieliczko, Jews from the Brzostek ghetto were brought to nearby Kołaczyce on August 12, 1942. Following a selection, some were sent to a labor camp in Jasło. Several people were shot during the liquidation Aktion in Kołaczyce. Others (as many as 260 people) were transported by the Germans to the Podzamcze Forest (also referred to as the forest in Kowalowy) near Krajowice village and then shot that same afternoon. Members of the Jasło Gestapo supervised the execution.⁸

SOURCES The following publications refer to the fate of the Jews of Brzostek: Bogdan Stanaszek, *Brzostek i okolice* (Brzostek: Towarzystwo Miłośników Ziemi Brzostockiej, 1997), pp. 61, 63, 66; Mieczysław Wieliczko, *Żasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), pp. 131, 148, 182–184; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 147–148.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/280 [AJDC]; 211/472–473 [JSS]; 301/4697 [Relacje]; USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/280; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 4409, 20720, 35501).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 4409, testimony of Adam Szus, 1995; # 20720, testimony of Mark Schonwetter, 1996; Tadeusz Frączek, "Historia ludności żydowskiej zamieszkałej w Brzostku w okresie II wojny światowej," *Wiadomości Brzostockie*, no. 4 (41) (July 1999): 9—see www.brzostek.alpha.pl/wiadomos/archiwum.html.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/280 (Brzostek), p. 1; AŻIH, 301/4697, testimony of Regina Rueck, 1945.

3. VHF, # 4409.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/472 (Jasło), p. 36; and 211/473 (Jasło), p. 9.

5. VHF, # 35501, testimony of Leona Silverman, 1997; AŻIH, 301/4697.

6. Frączek, "Historia ludności żydowskiej"—the article is based on an interview with survivor Abraham Schuss. According to Schuss, the killing of Communists took place in 1941, but it most likely took place in the spring of 1942, when the Germans conducted killings of Jewish activists in ghettos.

7. VHF, # 20720; Johanna Ginsberg, "Family Helps Polish Town Reclaim Its Painful Past," *New Jersey Jewish News*, July 30, 2009—see njewishnews.com/njnn.com/073009/njFamilyHelpsPolishTown.html.

8. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krośnieńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1983), pp. 70–71, 74–75.

BRZÓZÓW

Pre-1939: Brzozów, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Brzozow, Kreis Sanok, then from November 1941, Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Brzozów, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

The town of Brzozów is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) north of Sanok. There were 1,127 Jews living in Brzozów in 1921, constituting 21.7 percent of the total population. Their number had fallen to 1,046 by 1931.

The Germans occupied Brzozów on September 9, 1939. Upon entering the town, they confiscated merchandise from Jewish shops, marked them with an inscription in yellow paint ("Jew"), and later assigned trustees to these businesses.



A sports field in Brzozów where Jews were assembled prior to deportation, August 8, 1942.

USHMM WS #33438, COURTESY OF GFH

Jewish residents, including their rabbi, Mojżesz Weber, were forced to clean streets and labor at nearby petroleum wells. Women cleaned the offices of the German administration. By October 1939, the number of Jews had declined to 920, as many fled east to the Soviet-occupied Polish territories.

On October 26, 1939, the Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) chaired by Benzion Laufer. Joel Fass replaced him, most likely at the beginning of 1940. Mojżesz Knobelbarth was Fass's "sword-arm"; Sala Biber (secretary) and Uszer Freund (treasurer) also staffed the Judenrat. The Gestapo, together with officials from the Kreis and Landrat offices, paid the Judenrat frequent visits, demanding contributions in foreign currencies, gold, tea, coffee, liqueurs, and furs.¹

A German Gendarmerie post and its jail were located initially at 1 Sienkiewicz Street; later it was moved to the grounds of a church parish. The prison of a local court was located on Mickiewicz Street.

By March 1940, 91 Jewish refugees had settled in Brzozów. The Judenrat opened a kosher soup kitchen for their benefit on March 7, 1940. It operated six days a week, but half of its meals were meatless. The kitchen served on average 140 meals a day but only 33 to the newly arrived refugees. The Brzozów community contributed 25 percent of the kitchen expenses, while the remainder was covered by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). Due to financial constraints, meals with meat were soon reduced to one per week. As a result, the recipients became "very discontented," and the Judenrat considered closing the kitchen. Unable to finance it any longer, the Judenrat had no other choice and closed it anyway on July 20, 1940.²

In August 1940, the Judenrat reported 910 Jews (including 113 refugees) living in Brzozów. By November 7, 1940, the number of Jews had risen to 944, and the Judenrat was reporting, "We are sending over 300 workers to labor camps in Krosno, Baligród, Wzdów, and Bzianka."³

In May 1941, a local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Brzozów to relieve the Judenrat of its assistance duties to the poor and refugees. Out of a total of 1,007 Jews in Brzozów, one quarter sought assistance, and 811 were registered as "without an occupation." There were, however, 44 stores and 21 Jewish workshops still operating in the town. At the same time, only 13 Brzozów Jews were laboring in camps outside the gmina.⁴

The Brzozów ghetto was most likely set up in the second half of 1941, or possibly at the beginning of 1942. The ghetto encompassed the eastern part of the market square, including Piastowa and Kazimierzo Streets. The displacement was without warning. Brzozów's Jews were allowed to take up to 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of clothes and household goods with them.

Jacek Joterski, a Pole who assisted the Jewish community during the war and on whose memoir this entry is largely based, states that the ghetto inmates were forbidden to travel more than 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) beyond the town limits on pain of death. The ghetto was severely overcrowded, with up

to 10 people sharing a room, typically with only straw for a bed and people sleeping in shifts due to the lack of space.⁵

None of the sources refer to the ghetto being physically enclosed. A Jewish police force was organized in October 1941 to keep order inside the ghetto and to guard it internally. Approximately 200 men were conscripted into the Ortsschutz (local protection force) and also air-raid-defense units, which guarded and patrolled the ghetto at night and enforced the blackout. The latter included Poles and was supervised by the Gendarmerie and Polish police. Fifteen prominent Poles and all ghetto residents were declared to be hostages to prevent any acts of sabotage.

In October 1941, the JSS reported that it was responsible for a total of 1,350 Jews in seven neighboring settlements; of that number, 1,000 were Brzozów Jews. It was at this time that the soup kitchen was reopened. Over a dozen workers labored on road works in Kalnica near Baligród.⁶

In May 1942, the authorities announced an increase in the size of the Jewish Police.⁷

On June 18, 1942, 400 Jews from the surrounding settlements were transferred to Brzozów. The Housing Committee and the Jewish Police placed them en masse in community buildings. It was also reported that a group of Jews was transferred from the Krosno ghetto. At that time, the Jewish Police was in the process of recruiting new members, as most of its staffers had been sent to Jaśliska to supervise Jewish laborers.⁸ Among the newcomers were approximately 20 families from Humniska, who even before their transfer to the ghetto had been working in Brzozów on a daily basis, carrying stones for road construction. Ten of these families were housed in a local school.⁹

At the beginning of August 1942, 258 Jews were deported to the Płaszów labor camp via the Targowiska train station. Over 40 people were sent for spadework at the petroleum well in Grabownica.

The Germans informed the Judenrat one day in advance that the ghetto residents would be resettled to labor camps on August 10, 1942. It was also announced that 50 craftsmen and their families would stay in Brzozów. All the Jews were ordered to gather at the local stadium near the Stobnica River with up to 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of luggage. The community was anxious and suspicious of German intentions, as they were aware that large ditches had recently been dug in a nearby forest on August 8.

The ghetto residents were transferred to the stadium unescorted. There, a selection by a single SS man was conducted; he directed individual Jews to be escorted away by other SS men onto three trucks standing at the stadium's gate. The Judenrat secretary, Sala Biber, checked those selected against a list. The trucks departed in a southwesterly direction towards the Spring Forest (Las Zdrojowy). Some of the trucks reportedly went northwest, in the direction of Stara Wieś village. By 10:30 A.M., the stadium was empty. The last to be loaded onto trucks were the members of the Judenrat.

The trucks were unloaded near the turning off point to Zmiennica, at the Spring Forest. Jews were ordered to undress

and then led deeper into the forest to an opening, which locals often used for picnics. Three SS men carried out the executions by shooting their victims in the back of the skull on the edge of the pits. Small children were killed using an iron crowbar. By 2:00 P.M., an estimated 700 to 800 Jews had been murdered. As the SS had ordered the Judenrat to prepare a detailed list of all those selected to be killed, a search for the approximately 100 who had gone into hiding ensued.¹⁰

According to another source, the Krosno Gestapo conducted the liquidation Aktion. In its course, 1,400 Jews were murdered, of which 800 were shot in the settlement of Karolówka.¹¹ Some sources, for example, *Obozy hitlerowskie* and *Pinkas ha-kehilot*, state that a number of Jews survived the selection and were sent to Iwonicz (23 kilometers [14 miles], southwest of Brzozów).¹²

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 120; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004); and E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O Zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 88.

Archival sources referring to the Brzozów ghetto include AŻIH (210/282 [AJDC]; 302/258 [Memoirs of Jews]); and USHMM (RG.02.208M [Memoirs of Jews]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-50.002*0030).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/282, pp. 2, 6; AŻIH, 302/258, memoir of Jacek Joterski, 1962.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/282, pp. 8, 10–11, 23, 36–38, 41, 49, 60.
3. Ibid., pp. 57, 64. Note that pp. 67–74 list all 275 Jewish families living in Brzozów (name and surname of the head of the family and the number of family members). Although undated, it was most likely drawn up in December 1940.
4. Ibid., p. 2.
5. AŻIH, 302/258.
6. Ibid.; *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 17, 1941.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 20, 1942.
8. Ibid., June 18, 1942, and July 29, 1942.
9. USHMM, RG-50.002*0030, interview with Mina Zuckerman, 1983.
10. AŻIH, 302/258.
11. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krośnieńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), pp. 24–26.
12. Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), p. 72.

CZUDEEC

Pre-1939: Czudec, village, Rzeszów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Czudec is located 136 kilometers (85 miles) east of Kraków. The 1921 census registered 322 Jews in Czudec, constituting 35.3 percent of the total population; this number had increased to 376 by 1939.¹

According to survivor Samuel Halpern, when the war broke out on September 1, 1939, the commander of the local Polish police force approached Czudec's rabbi and advised him that all Jewish men should leave the village. He believed that the women would be safe under German occupation. There is no information regarding the initial occupation of the village and possible casualties.

The new German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat), but its composition is unknown. A self-help committee was set up following the arrival of a stream of refugees and deportees in November 1939. One of its initial members was Jakub Nebenzahl, who was likely a member of the Judenrat. This institution was charged with organizing social assistance for Jews in the initial months of the war. The 48-year-old Nebenzahl was a local tradesman and the pre-war leader of the kehillah.²

The Judenrat census shows that at the end of November 1940 there were 494 Jews living in Czudec, including 83 newcomers. By February 1941, the number of newcomers had risen to 123, but the total number of Jews had declined to 476. The newcomers, most of them transferred by the German authorities via Rzeszów, were originally from Kalisz, Łódź, Kraków, Silesia, and various places in Germany. An estimated 80 percent of all Jews in Czudec were in need of some sort of support.³

The winter and spring correspondence of 1941 between the Czudec Judenrat and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) office in Kraków, referring to the establishment of the official branch of the JSS in Czudec, indicates that the Judenrat, consisting of adversaries of the local Hasidim, sought to prevent them from taking charge of the organization. The three initial nominees pushed by the Hasidim (Zachariasz Jaffe, Szabse Herzig, and Samuel Engelberg) were deemed by the Judenrat to be “inadequate”—for example, Engelberg, “despite his wealth, pays his contributions only when forced.” Seeking to change the committee's composition, the Czudec Judenrat had to fight Jaffe and Herzig's supporter, Schmid, who was described by the Judenrat chairman as having “conjured up on the spot the surnames of his Hasidim, who for nearly a year and a half had not lifted their noses to see the light of day.”

By May 1941, the following were at last included in the committee: 37-year-old Szabse Herzig and two tradesmen, Jakub Nebenzahl and 43-year-old Pinkas Chajes. That same month, Nebenzahl was replaced by Samuel Engelberg, whose position was taken in August 1941 by a native of Rymanów, Izrael Iser Citronenbaum. Throughout most of that year, Czudec was entitled to 4 percent of the total amount of welfare distributed among all the localities in Kreis Reichshof by the JSS. A soup kitchen was opened on the market square only in September 1941, serving up to 100 meals daily.⁴

According to the records of the Czudec Judenrat, a total of 499 Jews were residing in Czudec in June 1941, increasing to

503 three months later. The same source indicates that 119 children under 18 years of age were living in Czudec that summer. Of that number, 14 were under 3 years old, 33 were 3 to 7 years old, 42 were 7 to 14 years old, and 30 were 14 to 18 years old.

There is no information concerning health or diseases among Czudec's Jews; however, it is known that there was no pharmacy in the village. By the summer of 1941, there was still no hospital or ambulatory clinic established there.

As regards Jewish labor conscription in Czudec, most of the surviving records refer to the summer months of 1941. At that time, only 11 Jewish businesses remained open with permission from the Germans, most of these being tailors and cobblers. Twenty-six Jewish laborers performed forced labor within the community, and another 41 worked in labor camps outside the village. The nature of their work and possible compensation—if any—are unknown. What is known is that between July and the end of October 1941, the so-called Administration of the Czudec Estate employed 35 Jews in agriculture. It is not clear whether their status was that of forced laborers and whether, as such, they were included in the statistics for “laboring Jews” cited in this paragraph, either as Jewish peasants working their own fields or simply as hired agriculture workers.⁵

Only one source, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, dates and briefly describes the establishment of a ghetto in Czudec between late 1941 and the beginning of 1942. The Czudec ghetto was unfenced, and the German authorities let the Jews remain in their existing residential area; however, permission was required to leave the village. Those laboring outside the village limits did so with explicit permission from the employment office. The relatively vague time frame and description of the ghetto provided in the *Pinkas ha-kebilot* publication are consistent with evidence regarding other small ghettos in the vicinity.⁶

On March 20, 1942, 80 Jews from the nearby village of Lubenia were resettled to Czudec. An unknown number of Jews from other neighboring settlements soon followed. By April 4, 1942, 52 Jews suitable for labor had been selected and sent to a work camp. The local JSS committee complained to their headquarters in Kraków that they were now the sole support for the women and children that remained. The transfer of Jews from smaller to larger Jewish settlements and the round-ups of Jews for labor camps that followed serve as the two main indicators for the existence of several smaller ghettos within Kreis Reichshof.⁷

Eighteen *Kennkarten* (identification cards issued by German authorities, with corresponding colors based on ethnicity) designating their holders as “Poles” were obtained with the cooperation of a Polish employee and two staffers within the Czudec gmina registration office. Nine of the identification cards were issued for the following Czudec residents: Henryk Tewel, Ewa Tewel, Golda Speiser, Simon Götrek, Chaim Goback, Mozes Heffer, Naftali Engelberg, Naftali Jaffa, and a man known only by his first name, Berl; the other *Kennkarten* were issued to Jews from Pstrągowa, Lubenia, and Wyżne.⁸

Kreis Reichshof was chosen by the Germans to be one of the first to become *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews) in Distrikt

Krakau. Several of the ghettos in the Kreis were liquidated between June 25 and 27, 1942, when their inhabitants were relocated to the Rzeszów ghetto. Czudec's Jews were most likely among the Jews transferred at this time. A series of railroad transports organized in July 1942, destined for the Bełżec extermination camp, practically emptied the Rzeszów ghetto of most of its inhabitants.⁹

SOURCES Publications containing some information regarding the fate of the small Jewish community of Czudec include the following: E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O Zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959); Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004); and Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984).

This entry is based mostly on documents that can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/311A [AJDC Czudec]; 211/336-337 [JSS Czudec], 211/922, 211/925, 211/933 [JSS Rzeszów]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 20); and VHF (# 45091).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 20, 211/336, p. 25.
2. VHF, # 45091, testimony of Samuel Halpern; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 20, 211/336, p. 20.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 20, 211/336, pp. 2, 10a, 11, 17.
4. Ibid., pp. 11–13, 15, and 211/637, pp. 8, 16; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 44, 211/922, p. 36, and 211/925, p. 49; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 45, 211/933, p. 17.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 20, 211/336, pp. 6, 25, 51, and 211/337, pp. 7, 14.
6. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 303.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 20, 211/337, pp. 61–62.
8. Elżbieta Rączy, *Pomoc Polaków dla ludności żydowskiej na Rzeszowszczyźnie 1939–1945* (Rzeszów: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej-Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), p. 59.
9. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O Zagładzie Żydów,” pp. 94–95; Zbigniew K. Wójcik, *Rzeszów w latach drugiej wojny światowej: Okupacja i konspiracja 1939–1944–1945* (Rzeszów: Instytut Europejskich Studiów Społecznych; Kraków: Tow. Sympatyków Historii, 1998), p. 156; Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem*, p. 41.

DĄBROWA TARNOWSKA

Pre-1939: Dąbrowa Tarnowska, town, Dąbrowa powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Kreis Tarnow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Dąbrowa Tarnowska, województwo małopolskie, Poland

The town of Dąbrowa Tarnowska is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) east-northeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were about 2,400 Jews living in Dąbrowa Tarnowska.

German troops entered the town on September 8, 1939. In October 1939, Dąbrowa Tarnowska was incorporated into Kreis Tarnow in Distrikt Krakau. Within Kreis Tarnow, Dąbrowa Tarnowska became the administrative center of its own Landgemeinde.¹ Anti-Jewish Aktions in Kreis Tarnow, including Dąbrowa Tarnowska, were organized and carried out by the Security Police detachment (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnów, which served under the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Kraków. The German Gendarmerie and Polish auxiliary police also took part in the Aktions against the local Jewish population.

Between 1939 and 1941, the German occupying authorities in Dąbrowa Tarnowska implemented a number of anti-Jewish policies. Jewish property was confiscated; the Jews were registered, ordered to wear patches and armbands bearing the Star of David, and were forbidden from leaving the limits of the town, performing ritual slaughter of animals, or trading with the non-Jewish population. Many were obliged to perform various forms of heavy physical labor. The Germans had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) by early in 1940, which was headed by Dr. Neuberger. The Judenrat took measures to meet the basic needs of the Jewish community. It organized a communal kitchen, which in May 1941 provided more than 7,000 meals; it distributed shoes and clothing, and it provided some means of financial support to the needy. The Judenrat also assisted those Jews who from December 1941 were sent to work in the labor camps in Pustków and Mielec.

By June 1941, as a result of the resettlement of many Jews from western Poland, including the city of Kraków, the total number of Jews in Dąbrowa rose to 3,200. Following the influx of refugees, sanitary conditions for the Jews seriously deteriorated. In January 1941, an epidemic of typhus broke out, and Jews were forbidden to leave their homes. The town remained sealed off for two months, during which the Jewish population was on the verge of starvation, and provisions had to be smuggled in. By September 1941, the Jewish population in the town had declined to 3,091. In January 1942, another epidemic of typhus broke out. Despite the efforts of the Judenrat to obtain medical supplies and funds to treat and cure those infected, the hospital was only able to function intermittently.²

At the end of April 1942, around 20 Jews accused of being Communist activists were shot as part of a larger Aktion against alleged members of leftist movements that was carried out by the Security Police throughout the region. In June 1942, in an attempt to spare as many Jews as possible from being conscripted for forced labor, the Judenrat created a workshop that employed 412 workers. That month, the Germans demanded a large "contribution" from the Jews, which was to be composed mainly of cash, furniture, and appliances. The contribution was paid in full in the hope that this would avert a large deportation Aktion. However, a few days later, a detachment of the Security Police and an associated deportation Sonderkommando from Tarnów surrounded the town in the early hours of the morning. They rounded up the Jews in the town square and selected about 450 for deportation to the Bełżec extermination camp. Men of the

Sonderkommando shot about 50 elderly people on the spot during the Aktion. Many people avoided the roundup by hiding in the woods and in underground bunkers.

Towards the end of June 1942, the German authorities established an enclosed ghetto in Dąbrowa Tarnowska. Between June 15 and June 23, 1942, Jews were resettled from the villages and small towns of Kreis Tarnow to Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Tarnów, and several other newly established ghettos. On July 17, a second Aktion was carried out in Dąbrowa Tarnowska. Around 1,800 Jews who had been concentrated in the town's ghetto from the surrounding area were deported to Bełżec; the German police forces shot nearly 100 people on the spot during the Aktion.³

The third Aktion took place on September 18, 1942. Although the Germans had intended to liquidate the ghetto on that day, a large number of people were able to hide. During this third Aktion, the Germans deported 500 people and shot 10 others, including the head of the Judenrat. In the days that followed, many people returned to the town from hiding, and a "small ghetto" was established. Suddenly on October 1, 1942, the German forces again descended on the town and deported 900 people to Bełżec. On October 6, the Germans rounded up 600 more people, many of whom had been hiding in bunkers, and they shot some 20 people. Around 30 Jews were left in the ghetto to clear out remaining property. Some of them were later taken to the Tarnów ghetto, while the Germans murdered the others at the Jewish cemetery on December 20, 1942.⁴

Although the ghetto was officially liquidated in 1942, between July and August 1943, more than 250 Jews were killed by the Gestapo in and around Dąbrowa. From October to December 1943, members of the Gestapo and the SS shot another 228 Jews in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, who had been in hiding. In 1944, there were at least two documented incidents in which members of the Gendarmerie and the SS shot Polish women and the Jewish families they had been hiding.⁵

SOURCES Information on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish population of Dąbrowa Tarnowska can be found in the following publications: *Dąbrowa Tarnowska: Zarys dziejów miasta i powiatu* (Warsaw, 1974); S. Zabierowski, *Pustków. Hitlerowskie obozy wyniszczenia w służbie poligonu SS* (Rzeszów, 1981); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 107–111; A. Pietrzykova, *Region tarnowski w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Polityka okupanta i ruch oporu* (Warsaw: PWN, 1984); and E. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim," *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 87–109.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Dąbrowa Tarnowska can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1209, 1637, and 2348); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.0124 [AŻIH, JSS], reels 47 and 48); VHF (# 20597 and 43549); and YVA.

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie Żydów," p. 88.

2. Pietrzykova, *Region tarnowski w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej*, p. 184; USHMM, Acc.1997.0124, reel 47, JSS Tarnów

protokół, September 30, 1941; VHF, # 20597 and # 43549, testimonies of A. Peled and H. Brand; AŻIH, 301/2348, testimony of A. Milet; and 301/1209, testimony of S. Feiner.

3. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie Żydów," pp. 93–95; AŻIH, 301/1209, 2348, and 1637, testimony of I. Stieglitz. According to Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 110, it took place on July 24–25, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.0124, reel 48.

4. AŻIH, 301/2348 and 1209.

5. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo tarnowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), pp. 48–49.

DĘBICA

Pre-1939: Dębica (Yiddish: Dembitz), town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Debica, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Dębica, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Dębica is located about 110 kilometers (68 miles) east of Kraków. In 1921, about 40 percent of the town's population was Jewish (1,564 individuals out of 3,922 inhabitants).

The Germans captured Dębica on Friday, September 8, 1939. On October 26, Dębica became part of the Generalgouvernement, which was ruled by Gouverneur Hans Frank. In the first weeks of the occupation, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures, which included the seizure of much of their movable property, the imposition of forced labor, and a ban on visiting public places. Jewish social organizations and community institutions were closed down and their property confiscated. However, during this initial period, many Jewish businesses continued to function, and Jews were still able to use public transportation. The most onerous burden was the imposition of forced labor. Jews worked as cleaners and orderlies in offices and military barracks; others

were made to clean the streets and to remove the ruins resulting from the German bombardments.

The German civil authorities in Dębica, under Kreishauptmann Dr. Auswald, initially made most key decisions regarding the Jewish community. The Gestapo, headed by a man named Gabler, only became more closely involved once the ghetto was established. In November 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created, under the leadership of Tovia Zucker. The Judenrat was responsible for providing the daily quota of men for forced labor. In addition, it had to collect Jewish property and valuables to meet the "contributions" demanded by the Germans. Forced labor entailed road construction and work in factories repairing locomotives and railway cars. At work the Jews were frequently beaten and abused by the overseers. Some young Jews tried to escape and flee to the east. However, restrictions on obtaining Soviet citizenship soon forced many to return to Dębica.¹

In the spring of 1940, the German authorities conducted a census and used it to register those Jews capable of performing forced labor. In June 1940, a group of young Jewish men was sent to the labor camp in Pustków. In April and May, the Waffen-SS had established a military training camp there using Jewish labor. Many smaller labor camps were established around the camp, where Jews and Poles were exploited as forced laborers until 1944. The Judenrat was required to provide food, utensils, and blankets for the inmates, which helped many of them to survive. During the course of the year, bribes enabled the Dębica Judenrat to obtain the return of some forced laborers from Pustków.

During the winter of 1940–1941, conditions for the Jews in Dębica deteriorated steadily. The Germans imposed further restrictions on Jewish movement; they looted Jewish property; and they demanded large contributions. The Judenrat established a communal kitchen to help needy people obtain warm food. However, at this time, most Jews were still allowed to reside in their own homes. Due to internal differences, the head of the Jewish Council, Tovia Zucker, was replaced by Yosef Traub.

From the beginning of 1941, discussions began between the Jewish Council and the local town administration regarding the establishment of a "Jewish residential area." The area chosen for the ghetto was in one of the poorest and most run-down parts of town near the marketplace.² Some Polish families were removed from this area to make way for the Jews. Most probably during the early months of 1941, about 2,200 Jews from Dębica were settled into the ghetto. Since the living space in the ghetto was inadequate, small wooden huts were built at the edge of the ghetto, each of which had to accommodate about 20 people.³

By the summer of 1942, the ghetto was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. Only individuals with special permits were allowed to leave the area. Jews caught outside the ghetto or in the process of smuggling food were shot in the Jewish cemetery. By July 1942, the influx of Jews from surrounding towns had brought the number of Jews in the ghetto to more than 4,000



A sign in German and Polish on the door of a Jewish business in Dębica, issued by Kreishauptmann Schlüter, announces the property's confiscation from its Jewish owners, March 9, 1942.

USHMM WS #49006, COURTESY OF YIVO

people. The Jewish Council was given the impossible task of finding housing for all the ghetto's residents. Due to the extreme overcrowding, sanitary conditions deteriorated. It became urgent for the ghetto residents to halt the spread of epidemic disease by organizing medical care and establishing an isolation hospital for the severely ill. Dr. Mantzer, Dr. Idek, and Dr. Tau treated the patients in this small hospital.

Even under the harsh conditions of the ghetto, some religious Jews managed to maintain an active underground yeshiva. Awareness of the expulsions from neighboring settlements increased anxiety among Jews in the Dębica ghetto, as they suspected that their turn would come soon. Some of the Jews working in factories outside the ghetto started to look for hiding places and attempted to make contact with non-Jewish acquaintances.⁴

The first large Aktion probably took place at the end of July 1942. One or two days before, many Jews from the neighboring villages and towns, including Sędziszów Małopolski, Ropczyce, Pilzno, Radomyśl Wielki, and Baranów Sandomierski, were brought into the Dębica ghetto, following Aktions conducted to clear those places of Jews. This was part of a large-scale deportation Aktion throughout Kreis Debica, during which up to 12,000 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp and murdered. Dębica was chosen as the main point of concentration because of its location on the main railroad towards Bełżec, as well as its status as the center of the Kreis. SS units, in collaboration with the Polish (Blue) Police, surrounded the ghetto and ordered the Jewish Council to collect all the work permits of the Jews, ostensibly for the purpose of renewing them. The Jews had to gather at the main square in the ghetto for the selection. The Jews were told that only the most essential and skilled workers would be issued new work permits; all the others were to be sent to work "in the east." Those without work permits were sent to a second collection point directly below the Każynca Lunka.⁵ Following the selection, Gestapo men, assisted by the Polish (Blue) Police and members of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), searched the houses in the ghetto, looking for any Jews in hiding. Those found were taken to the Jewish cemetery and shot immediately. The Jews who received valid work permits were ordered to return to their homes in the ghetto. Approximately 200 people were taken from the group to be deported to the "east." In fact, they were sent to Lisa Góra near the village of Wielice and shot.

Shortly after this initial selection, those Jews with new work permits were divided into three groups: one group was sent to work in the Messerschmidt aircraft factory in Rzeszów and the Heinkel aircraft factory in Mielec; another was transferred to the Pustków labor camp; and several hundred Jews remained in the ghetto. As a result of these selections, a group of approximately 2,000 Jews from the Dębica ghetto was sent along with several thousand of the Jews who had just arrived in Dębica from the surrounding towns to the Bełżec extermination camp.

Following this first large-scale Aktion, a number of Jews who had found refuge with Polish families or who had gone

into hiding returned secretly to the ghetto. The survivors of this Aktion worked hard, hoping that their useful contribution to the German war effort might save their lives. In the autumn of 1942, about 600 Jews were still registered in the Dębica ghetto, which was now reduced in size. The Jews went to work every day outside the ghetto, which was guarded externally by the Polish (Blue) Police. The official food rations for ghetto residents consisted mainly of a thin watery soup occasionally containing a morsel of potato or cabbage.⁶ Therefore, in spite of the danger, a number of Jews tried to barter items for food from non-Jews or scavenge vegetables by sneaking out of the ghetto. In November 1942, Kreishauptmann Schlüter (Dr. Auswald's successor) published a proclamation stating that as of December 1, 1942, any person giving shelter to Jews outside the enclosed camps would face the death penalty.⁷

On December 15–16, 1942, the Germans conducted another large-scale Aktion against the ghetto residents at Każynca Lunka. At this time, the ghetto was to be liquidated, and only those working for the railway factory were to be retained in what was now to be a forced labor camp in which the Jewish elder was the notorious Jewish policeman Immerglick. As a result, many Jews tried to obtain a spot there by bribing the new Jewish leadership.⁸ When the Aktion started, the railway factory workers were separated from the rest. Almost all the remaining people, including the families of the railway factory workers, were deported to Bełżec. During this Aktion, conducted mainly by members of the Ukrainian Sonderdienst (Special Police), the Jewish Police again assisted the Germans in the hope of saving themselves. Many Jews tried to escape from the deportation trains, but most were shot by the guards.

Some Jews who survived the Aktion tried to return to the forced labor camp, but the Jewish Police (at this time led by Immerglick) did not allow them inside. It was already an open secret that the German authorities planned to liquidate the Dębica forced labor camp soon. At the beginning of 1943, the last surviving Jews of the neighboring Jewish communities were brought to the camp. The number of inmates increased to approximately 1,600. One group of 50 "illegal" Jews was handed over by the camp leadership and shot immediately. Other Jews without valid permits fled into the Bochnia ghetto, where they shared the fate of its residents. All were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp in September 1943. The liquidation of the forced labor camp in Dębica started in April 1943. Up to then, the Jews had continued to work in the railway factory and in construction. At this time, the last camp inmates were transferred to a labor camp near Kraków or to other camps.⁹

As Soviet troops approached the area in 1944, the remaining labor camps were liquidated, and the prisoners, including a number of former inmates of the Dębica ghetto, were transported to a variety of forced labor and concentration camps further west. Some Jews survived by hiding with Polish families or fleeing to the woods. The precise number of Jews from the Dębica ghetto who survived until the end of the war is not known.

SOURCES Information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Dębica can be found in the following publications: Daniel Leibel, ed., *Sefer Dembitz* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Dembits be-Yisrael, 1960); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 119–124; and Irene Eber, *The Choice: Poland 1939–1945* (New York: Schocken, 2004).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Dębica can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/378); FVA (# 627); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.019M); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/89, 1294, 1597, and 2490; and O-3/705).

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NOTES

1. Reuven Siedlisker-Sarid, "The Murder of the Jews of Dembitz," in Leibel, *Sefer Dembitz*, pp. 141–155.
2. Eber, *The Choice*, p. 36.
3. Siedlisker-Sarid, "The Murder of the Jews of Dembitz," implies that the ghetto was established in the first months of 1941 but does not state this explicitly.
4. AŻIH, 301/378, testimony of Leonka Gertler, Kraków, 1945.
5. Siedlisker-Sarid, "The Murder of the Jews of Dembitz."
6. Eber, *The Choice*, p. 38.
7. Proclamation signed by Kreishauptmann Schlüter, Dębica, November 19, 1942, published in W. Bartoszewski and Z. Lewin, eds., *Righteous among Nations: How Poles Helped the Jews, 1939–1945* (London: Eastcourt, 1969), p. 643.
8. Siedlisker-Sarid, "The Murder of the Jews of Dembitz."
9. Ibid.

DOBROMIL

Pre-1939: Dobromil, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Przemyśl, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Dobromil is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) southwest of Lwów. By 1921, there were 2,119 Jews living in Dobromil, constituting 61.7 percent of the total population. German forces briefly occupied the town in September 1939. Following the Soviet attack on Poland on September 17, 1939, the town was incorporated into the Soviet Union. The Germans reoccupied Dobromil on June 28, 1941.

From the Security Police outpost in Jasło, the Germans transferred Gestapo officials Walter Augustin, Max Lehmann, and Paul Pettirsch to a branch of the Grenzpolizei-kommissariat (Border Police Office [of the Security Police]) that was set up in November 1941 in Dobromil. In addition, a German Gendarmerie unit and a Ukrainian police post were established there.

The first Aktion against the Jewish population took place on June 30, 1941. It was prompted by the discovery of the bodies of several hundred Ukrainians who had been killed by

the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) prior to the Soviet retreat. Einsatzgruppen report no. 24 of July 16, 1941, stated:

Eighty-two bodies, including four Jews, were found in the Dobromil jail. The Jews had been Bolshevik informers; they were eliminated as accomplices. Near Dobromil was an abandoned salt mine shaft 80 meters [262 feet] deep completely filled with bodies. Close by was a mass grave measuring 6 by 15 meters [20 by 49 feet]. The number of people killed in and near Dobromil amounted to several hundred. . . . The Russians and Jews had carried out the slaughter by extraordinarily brutal means. . . . In Dobromil, both men and women were killed with sledge hammers used to stun livestock.

In retribution, antisemitic sentiment among the Ukrainians provoked a pogrom in the town during the course of which Ukrainians set synagogues on fire and beat and robbed many Jews. Local Ukrainians rounded up several hundred Jews on the market square. Members of Einsatzkommando 6, headed by SS-Standartenführer Dr. Kröger, took away 132 of them and shot them at the salt mine shaft.¹ According to the Dobromil yizkor book, there were some 50 Jewish victims in total.

The Germans established a district Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Dobromil that was given authority over the other Jewish Councils in several nearby places, namely, in Chyrów, Rybotycze, and Nowe Miasto. The Dobromil Judenrat was subordinated to the Jewish Council for the Kreis based in Przemyśl.² The Judenrat included Joseph Miller, Leib Teitelbaum, and two attorneys, Reiner and Karton. The German authorities carried out the registration of Dobromil's Jews, and they were required to report for various kinds of forced labor, including street cleaning, gardening, and lumber work. The Judenrat was charged with organizing this Jewish labor. Many of the forced laborers were mistreated by the Ukrainian guards; there are reports that they hitched Jews to wagons as "workhorses."

In October 1941, the German authorities created a Jewish "residential area"—that is, an open ghetto—in Dobromil.³ The town's Jews were evicted from several parts of the town and were confined to an area around the old market square, most likely including Szewska and Salinarna Streets. From this time, any Jews caught leaving Dobromil without permission could be punished with the death penalty. Permission to move freely was granted solely to the Judenrat members, the Jewish Police, and some professionals employed by the Germans. In addition, garbage collectors officially could leave and enter the ghetto, but many of them were murdered by Ukrainian collaborators.

In November 1941, when pleading for support from the headquarters of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków, the local Judenrat wrote: "Our community, affected by two years of Bolshevik administration and changes, is unable to remedy our misery on its own." By December 1941, there

were 2,400 Jews living in the Dobromil ghetto, of which one third were in need of assistance.⁴

German regulations required that Jews wear an armband bearing an emblem of the Star of David. The Germans also confiscated most of the Jews' valuables and deprived them of many basic rights.⁵ This included prayers, which were conducted in secret in the house of Rabbi Zeydah on Szewska Street.

On February 21, 1942, the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen, which initially distributed 300 meals a day. One hundred were sold for 0.30 złoty per meal; the remainder were distributed free of charge.

In March 1942, on the orders of the Kreishauptmann in Przemyśl, the Judenrat staff was doubled from 5 to 10 members. At this time, its chairman was I. Koritan; his deputy was a man named Belemer.⁶ Between April 1942 and the ghetto's liquidation in July 1942, the Judenrat spent much of its energy unsuccessfully trying to open various workshops—especially one for knitted goods—to make the unemployed Jewish youth productive.⁷

In late July 1942, Jews living in the vicinity (including those in Nowe Miasto) were ordered to move to the Dobromil ghetto; for example, the Jews of Kwaszenica were informed of the transfer one week in advance. On arrival at the entrance gate, the Gestapo searched their belongings and confiscated most of them, along with any money. Next, the Germans selected 400 to 500 able-bodied men and separated them from other Jews in the ghetto. They were later marched to labor camps in Przemyśl.⁸

The liquidation of the ghetto took place on July 29, 1942, when 3,166 Jews were gathered at a stadium located near the railway station. From here, the Germans deported them by train to the Bełżec extermination camp. Several Jewish “specialists” remained in the town with their families. According to the yizkor book, as many as 500 Jews remained in Dobromil. This number included the Judenrat members Miller and Karton, as well as Jewish policemen, who bribed the Germans to let them remain. They were forced to dig their own graves before they were killed on November 24, 1942, at the Lichtman sawmill in Dobromil. The site was later ploughed over to cover any traces of the killings. A few hundred Jews who had hidden prior to the deportation Aktion were captured and killed in the course of 1942 and 1943.⁹ Only a small number of Jews from the town managed to survive.

SOURCES Relevant publications regarding the Jewish community in Dobromil and the ghetto there include Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 150–153, 232, 336; M. Gelbart, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-zekher Kehilat Dobromil ve-Nayshtut* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Dobromil ve-Nayshtut be-Yisrael, 1964); and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 317.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Dobromil can be found in the following archives:

AŻIH (211/360); BA-L (ZStL, 206 AR-Z 39/1960, 206 AR-Z 865/1971, SA 337, SA 566); DALO; GARF (7021-58-20); NARA: USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); VHF (e.g., # 2409, 32667); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. NARA, T-175, reel 232, Ereignismeldung UdSSR (EM) no. 24, July 16, 1941; LG-Tüb, Ks 1/68, verdict of July 31, 1969, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 714.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/360 (Dobromil), p. 1; *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 25, 1942.
3. GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 138.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/360, pp. 1, 5.
5. GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 138.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 25, 1942.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/360, pp. 17–25, 29–31.
8. VHF, # 32667, testimony of Marion Domanski-Erdman, 1997; # 2409, testimony of Michael Lewental, 1998.
9. GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 139.

DUKLA

Pre-1939: Dukla, town, Krosno powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Dukla is located 64 kilometers (40 miles) south of Rzeszów on the Jasiołka River. In 1921, the Jewish population consisted of 1,509 people, 72 percent of the total population. On the eve of World War II, the Jewish population of Dukla was about 1,650.¹

German troops occupied Dukla on September 8, 1939. By then, many Jews had already fled to the east, and some of them subsequently remained in what soon became the Soviet-occupied zone of Poland. From the start, German soldiers terrorized the Jews by shaving off the beards of religious Jews and seizing Jewish men for forced labor. During the first phase of the occupation, the Germans ordered those Jews who were not skilled laborers to cross the San River. A group of Jews obeyed this order, entering the Soviet zone, while others went into hiding, and only around 100, mostly more wealthy, families remained in the town. In 1940, the Soviet authorities deported many of the recent refugees from Dukla into the Soviet interior—so at least 100 of them survived the war.²

By early 1940, the Germans had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Dukla, which had to organize the daily quota of forced laborers.³ The Germans imposed various restrictions on the Jewish population. Jews had to register and wear the Star of David at all times. In addition, they had to obey a curfew and were forbidden to leave the town; and they were harassed, beaten, and subjected to random shootings. Most Jewish property was either seized and handed to non-Jews or became part of the many “contributions” demanded by the Germans from the Judenrat.⁴

In May 1941, 1,476 Jews were registered by the Judenrat in Dukla, reflecting the influx of a number of refugees from nearby villages and other towns in German-occupied Poland. At this time, 135 Jews worked as forced laborers on road construction and other tasks for the Germans.⁵ Many of the Jews in Dukla worked at the stone quarry about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside the town. The manager of the quarry, Karol Marcinkowski, treated the Jewish workers badly, beating the weaker ones, although he was susceptible to bribes. Until August 1942, these Jewish laborers lived in the town and marched to the work site every day in a column supervised by Chaskiel Goldman and Hersch Ehrenreich. The laborers worked 10 hours per day for only 15 or 20 zloty per week, plus meager rations comprising one loaf of bread and a little jam or sugar.⁶

In June 1941, a branch of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), headed by L. Werner, was established in Dukla. Its main task was to provide the Jewish population with medical supplies, financial aid, and child care. The public kitchen was run by the local Judenrat, which by 1942 was headed by Simon Stoff. To combat an outbreak of typhus in the region, the Jewish Council in Krosno issued instructions in December 1941 to the Jews in Dukla to bathe regularly with soap.⁷

In the spring of 1942, all the Jews in Dukla were concentrated into one specific area, which one source describes as an enclosed ghetto, although it may have remained open until August 1942.⁸ In mid-August 1942, the Gestapo based in Krosno, assisted by the Order Police, conducted an Aktion in Dukla shortly after the Aktion in Krosno on August 10, 1942. It is probable that Jews from the surrounding towns and villages, such as Jaśliska, were brought into Dukla just prior to the Aktion, as by this time the number of Jews is estimated to have been more than 2,000.⁹ On the morning of August 13, the Germans drove the Jews out of their houses to the marketplace (*Rynek*). Some of those who tried to hide or were too sick to move were shot on the spot. Then Marcinkowski participated in the selection of about 300 Jews, mostly boys and young men, to remain in Dukla as forced laborers. The remaining Jews were divided into two groups. The women and children, probably more than 1,000 people, were deported by train to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰ The elderly and the sick (about 400 people) were also separated and taken to a nearby forest, where they were shot, probably together with several hundred elderly Jews selected in Rymanów, Jaśliska, and other places. In total, the Germans murdered around 800 mostly elderly Jews at this time in the forest near Barwinek to the south of Dukla.¹¹

The 300 or so remaining Jewish workers were put into two Jewish forced labor camps in Dukla, established following the deportation Aktion. The labor camps belonged to the German construction firms of Artur Walde (Breslau) that had about 140 forced laborers and Emil Ludwig (Munich) with about 170, both established in mid-August 1942.¹² One survivor describes these two forced labor camps as the “ghetto,” which consisted of four or five buildings located in two different neighborhoods of the town that were guarded by the Polish (Blue) Police.¹³ In November 1942, the Artur Walde camp was liquidated, and the 200 or so Jewish workers there were

sent to another forced labor camp near Kraków.¹⁴ A short time later, probably in December 1942, the Emil Ludwig camp was dissolved, and the forced laborers were sent to Rzeszów.¹⁵ Only about 50 Jews from Dukla survived the German occupation in the camps or in hiding.

SOURCES Information on the history of the Jewish community of Dukla and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 111–114.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Dukla can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1757, 3236, and 3448); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reels 21 and 32; RG-50.002*0028; and RG-15.019M, reel 17); VHF (# 18425); and YVA.

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 111–112; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 21, 211/374, Sprawozdanie, May 31, 1941.

2. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 113–114. VHF, # 18425, testimony of J. Braun, erroneously dates this event in September 1941.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 21, 211/373.

4. VHF, # 18425. According to Braun, there was no Jewish Police in Dukla.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 21, 211/374, Sprawozdanie, May 31, 1941.

6. AŻIH, 301/3448, testimony of Rubin Bergman; and 301/1757, testimony of Adolf Nattel.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 21, 211/374–375, and reel 32, 211/615, Dringender Rundauftrag der Jüdischen Gemeinde Krosno, Abtlg. Gesundheit und Hygiene, December 16, 1941.

8. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 113–114.

9. AŻIH, 301/3448, gives the figure of 2,500 Jews; 301/1757, gives the figure of 2,200, noting that some came from the surrounding area.

10. Estimates for the number of Jews sent to Bełżec vary considerably, from ca. 1,600 given in *ibid.*, 301/1757, to only 300 in 301/3236, testimony of Mozes Kurzman.

11. *Ibid.*, 301/3448; 301/1757; A. Potocki, *Zydzi Rymanowscy* (Krosno: APLA, 2000), p. 169; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krosnieńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHwP, 1983), p. 35.

12. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 163; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, pp. 84–85. See also USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 21, 211/375, letter of ŻSS Kraków to Fa. Emil Ludwig, Dukla, October 15, 1942.

13. VHF, # 18425.

14. AŻIH, 301/3236; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 163.

15. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, p. 85. VHF, # 18425, dates the transfer to Rzeszów in June 1943.

DZIAŁOSZYCE

Pre-1939: Działoszyce, town, Miechów powiat, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Działoszyce, Kreis Miechów, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Działoszyce, województwo świętokrzyskie, Poland

Działoszyce is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) northeast of Kraków. In 1939, it is estimated that about 7,000 Jews lived there (80 percent of the total population).¹

German forces occupied the town on September 8, 1939. Refugees with relatives in Działoszyce returned from other towns (Zagłębie, Kraków, Pinczów, and Łódź). The German authorities enacted anti-Jewish legislation as soon as the fighting ended. Jewish shops and merchandise were confiscated, and the Jewish populace was forbidden to transact business. For most of the occupation, there was no permanent German police force stationed in the town, which somewhat diminished the daily pressure (and may be the reason many former residents returned from other areas). The German district authorities (office of the Kreishauptmann) were based in Miechów, about 25 kilometers (16 miles) away. By the winter of 1940–1941, the Jewish population of Działoszyce had reached 10,000, two thirds of them penniless refugees. Housing conditions were abysmal, with hundreds crowded into public buildings and institutions with no sanitary facilities or running water. Almost 1,000 people were crammed into the synagogue and adjoining Bet Midrash (study hall). The situation worsened in September 1941, when another 300 refugees were transferred to Działoszyce from Miechów.²

The Jewish Council (Judenrat) evolved from the leadership of the kehillah (Jewish community council), headed by Moshe Yosef Kruk. It served as an address for the Germans, implementing the unending flow of anti-Jewish orders and satisfying the appetites of the local officials. The members of the Judenrat were made personally responsible for enforcing all German orders. Among the most notorious extortionists were Kriminalobersekretär Bayerlein, head of the Gestapo office in Miechów, and others such as Schmidt, Vogt, Becker, and Reginer, as well as Gendarmes such as Kosko, Dachauer-Kornhäuser, and Schubert.³ They demanded numerous “contributions,” and everything of value had to be turned in: gold, silver, jewelry, foreign currency, radios, furs, and the like.⁴ The Judenrat’s basic strategy was that by fulfilling German demands they would delay or avert impending danger. One of the results was constant conflict within the community. Commenting on this situation, the yizkor book concludes: “[O]ne must always remember the factors involved in daily life, which caused the ordinary Jews to view it [the Judenrat] with suspicion. I am certain that in our town it functioned only in order to handle those difficulties produced by the times and the circumstances.”⁵

The Judenrat had to face the danger of epidemics and disease. Dr. Grambovsky was the only doctor in town, but in 1940 Dr. Dvora Lazar arrived from Kraków. In addition to overseeing medical services for 10,000 people, this heroic Jew-

ish physician established sanitary measures to head off epidemics and the spread of contagious diseases. Disinfection stations were set up, and a sanitation committee made rounds to fumigate buildings with sulfur and other disinfectants. In 1941, there were simultaneous outbreaks of dysentery, typhoid, and typhus, but they were somehow contained. There were many deaths, but the news was never reported to the German authorities, as they were known to take drastic measures in such instances. In November, the hospital that had been set up in Skalbierz to deal with patients from the two communities was transferred to Działoszyce.⁶

The Judenrat had to supply workers for various work tasks in and around the town. All men over age 14 were taken to labor camps or pressed into forced labor, digging ditches and sewage canals. The German labor chief, named Mucha, worked with the Judenrat’s labor department, headed by Mr. Hoffmann, to establish a rotation schedule for all able-bodied men. For many the meager pay was the only source of income. Families with more resources paid substitutes a few coins to replace them in the forced labor gangs. Periodically, German police would show up to seize a few dozen young people and send them to labor camps near Kraków or to work in the factories of the German firm Richard Strauch. Sometimes the Judenrat’s Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) were called on to enforce the demands for Jewish forced labor.⁷

The most extraordinary effort of the beleaguered community was the communal kitchen, which was established when the first refugees arrived. Members of the Zionist youth movements went door to door to collect funds, clothing, bedding, and items of furniture for them. At the beginning of 1940, one wing of the Bet Midrash was opened as a public kitchen and dining hall. At first only a few hundred refugees ate there, but over time it became the most important institution in town, providing a hot daily meal for thousands. Some of the food came from the rations allocated to the Judenrat by the authorities, but the rest had to be obtained by other means, legitimate or not so legitimate. The kitchen functioned for two and a half years, until the final liquidation of the community in the autumn of 1942.⁸

During the early years, some assistance was available from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), which continued to operate in Poland until the United States entered the war. In 1940, the AJDC supplied Passover matzot for Polish Jewry. Although travel was forbidden, two young men hired a wagon and got to Częstochowa to bring back the matzot.⁹

Some secondary sources refer to a “ghetto” in Działoszyce from March of 1940,¹⁰ but primary sources indicate that the Jews continued to live in their own homes right up to the main deportation Aktion in September 1942 and that no fence was ever constructed to contain the Jews. As already noted, due to the influx of many refugees, Działoszyce became a collecting point for Jews in overcrowded conditions from early 1940. A curfew was strictly enforced at night, and several accounts stress that “it was forbidden to go beyond the limits of the town.”¹¹ By 1942, leaving the town to barter with the

peasants was punishable by death. Nonetheless, many Jews felt compelled to leave the town to obtain a little extra food for their families, and some of them paid for this with their lives.¹²

Since the Jews gradually became subject to ever more stringent movement restrictions and harsh living conditions, some survivors have described Działoszyce as a kind of “open ghetto.” Szlama Leszman, who mostly lived outside Działoszyce, as a partisan with the underground resistance of the Polish Socialist Party, noted that the town was “abnormally overcrowded” with “people living in every attic and basement. . . . The poverty was dire and was accompanied by malnutrition, and this brought about an escalation of illnesses. The town was transformed into a huge Jewish ghetto.”¹³

In the spring and early summer of 1942, additional Jews were brought into Działoszyce from the surrounding villages, worsening the overcrowding. Despite the isolation, rumors about Aktyons in neighboring communities, such as Słomniki, began to spread during the summer of 1942.

On September 3, German armed units surrounded Działoszyce. On the next day, after a night of terror, everyone was instructed to pack a bundle of only 10 to 15 kilograms (22 to 33 pounds) of personal belongings, including work clothes, and report to the market square.¹⁴ After the marketplace filled up, horses and carts driven by peasants arrived. People too old or weak to walk to the train station were loaded onto the carts and taken straight to the cemetery. There they were shot with machine guns and buried in three mass graves, about 1,200 to 1,500 victims. Included in this group was the community's elderly rabbi, Itzhak Halevi Staslovsky. The others were taken by truck from the train station to a huge open field near Miechów, where Jews from other towns, including Książ Wielki and Wodzisław, were also assembled. By the following morning, there were approximately 15,000 Jews there. At noon the people were ordered into groups of 5, with young men sent to the left (about 2,000) and the rest to the right.¹⁵ The latter, Jews from Działoszyce as well as neighboring towns, were loaded onto cattle cars and taken by train to the Bełżec extermination camp. The younger group was sent, on the same train, to the Prokocim labor camp near Kraków.

Shortly after their arrival at Prokocim, the Germans sent the Jewish Police from Działoszyce back to the town to collect and clean up what was left behind after local Poles had looted the Jewish houses. When others heard this, they escaped from the camp and also returned. A few Jews who had survived the expulsion by hiding in neighboring villages also slipped into town, and the Germans even published announcements allowing them to return to their homes. By the end of October 1942, there were several hundred Jews in Działoszyce. According to Majer Zonenfeld's account, the Germans rounded up the remaining Jews living scattered in Działoszyce and moved them into the synagogue, and a small Judenrat was created. Now all movement was strictly forbidden, especially on the outskirts of the Jewish residential area. On November 3, German forces returned and began house-to-house searches. Some Jews were shot, the others deported.¹⁶

By the end of 1942, a few hundred Jews from Działoszyce were in the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp, but only a handful survived. A number of Jews from Działoszyce hid during the roundups and fled into the woods around Pinczów, where they formed Jewish partisan units together with other Jewish escapees. However, many of them were killed in February 1944 in a battle near Pawlowice.

SOURCES This entry draws mainly on the yizkor book for the town, *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce vebaseviva* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Menora, 1973). Moshe Beisky's article in *Sefer yizkor* provides the most comprehensive summary of the Holocaust period; he also testified at the Eichmann trial in 1961. Two relevant personal memoirs are by Eliahu Razel (Rozdział), *Alone and in Hiding*, trans. Susan Rosenfeld (Moreschet: Mordechai Anilevich Study and Research Center, 1994); and Joseph E. Tenenbaum, *Legacy and Redemption: A Life Renewed* (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project, 2005).

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Działoszyce under the German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/118, 1765, and 3260); FVA (# 159 and 169); IPN; ITS; USHMM; VHF; and YVA (# 10331, testimony of Alter Lendgarten, in English).

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NOTES

1. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 7.
2. Ibid., p. 33. Tenenbaum, *Legacy and Redemption*, p. 97, gives the figure of 12,000 Jewish inhabitants of the town due to the influx of refugees.
3. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 38.
4. Ibid., p. 35; Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, p. 30.
5. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 38.
6. Ibid., p. 34.
7. Ibid., pp. 35–36; Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, p. 28.
8. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 37.
9. Ibid., p. 25.
10. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 165; Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, eds., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (prepared originally by ITS in 1949–1951; repr., with new introductory matter, in Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 685.
11. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: State of Israel Ministry of Justice, 1992), p. 344, evidence of Dr. Moishe Beisky; Abraham Langer, “During and After the War,” trans. Zulema Seligson, in *Yizkor Book of the Jewish Community in Działoszyce and Surroundings* (Tel Aviv: Hamenora, 1973), pp. 380–387, available at JewishGen.
12. Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, pp. 33–34; Majer Zonenfeld, “In Działoszyce and the Camps,” trans. Sulema Seligson, in *Yizkor Book of the Jewish Community in Działoszyce*, pp. 365–387.
13. Szlama Leszman, “In the Polish Underground,” trans. Rochel Semp, in *Yizkor Book of the Jewish Community in Działoszyce*, pp. 298–303.
14. Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, p. 38; *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 40; AŻIH, 301/3260, testimony of Elias

Minz; and 301/1765, testimony of Gustaw Weinfeld; Tenenbaum, *Legacy and Redemption*, pp. 105–106.

15. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, p. 42; Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, pp. 42–43; Tenenbaum, *Legacy and Redemption*, p. 113.

16. *Sefer yizkor shel kehillat Działoszyce*, pp. 42–43; Razel, *Alone and in Hiding*, pp. 41–43, 50–51; Zonenfeld, “In Działoszyce and the Camps,” pp. 365–387.

FRYSZTAK

Pre-1939: Frysztak, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Frysztak is located about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were 1,322 Jews living in Frysztak.

Units of the German army occupied Frysztak on September 8, 1939, and soon began maltreating the Jews.

In November 1939, the Germans established a civil administration in the newly formed Generalgouvernement. Frysztak was incorporated into Kreis Jasło, within Distrikt Krakau. Regierungsrat Dr. Walter Gentz was the Kreishauptmann from February 10, 1941.¹ The Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK), commanded from 1940 to 1943 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Wilhelm Raschwitz, organized and carried out the large-scale anti-Jewish Aktions in Kreis Jasło. Stationed in Frysztak was a unit of German Gendarmerie that controlled the Polish (Blue) Police.

In the fall of 1939, the German authorities appointed a Judenrat in Frysztak, headed by a man named Baldinger. The Judenrat controlled a unit of Jewish Police. On April 29, 1940, the Judenrat in Frysztak was placed under the regional Judenrat for Kreis Jasło. Since all Jews aged 15 to 60 were required to perform forced labor, the Judenrat had to organize work details, as well as coping with refugees and distributing food. At the end of 1939 there were 1,466 Jews in Frysztak, includ-

ing 116 refugees; one year later, there were 1,581 Jews, including 202 refugees. The refugees arrived mainly from Śląsk, Kraków, and Łódź. Living conditions for Jews in Frysztak deteriorated rapidly. In 1940, 283 Jews received material aid; and 1,440 received some financial assistance. On September 25, 1940, the Frysztak Judenrat sent an urgent letter to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Kraków, warning of the imminent danger of starvation.²

On June 7, 1941, a branch of the JSS was established in Frysztak, headed by Jakub Braff. It provided help to Jews from Frysztak and Wiśniowa in Kreis Jasło and the Jewish community of Odrzykoń in Kreis Krosno. In September 1941, out of 1,080 Jews, 400 applied for aid, but the JSS could assist only 325 Jews.³

In April 1941, there were four labor camps around Frysztak, exploiting the labor of local Jews and Jews from Kraków. In mid-May 1941, about 1,000 Jewish forced laborers from the Warsaw ghetto arrived in Frysztak. On July 11, 1941, 150 Jews from Frysztak were sent to the Płaszów labor camp. From July to November 1941, there was a labor camp in Frysztak, located in two synagogues. Approximately 2,000 Jews from Warsaw were held there, supervised internally by a Jewish police force. The Jews worked on road construction and stone quarrying in Cieszyna. The guards mistreated and abused them. Due to overcrowding, typhus spread within the camp, and a number of inmates died. After its liquidation, the Germans probably transferred the surviving inmates back to the Warsaw region.⁴

Reports of the JSS in Frysztak indicate that the Germans had established a “Jewish residential area” (open ghetto) by January 1942. In December 1941, due to the spread of disease, the Germans prohibited Jews from leaving the town, which made it harder to obtain food. Jakub Braff reported that from early January 1942 the town was completely sealed off as a “Jewish residential area.” Signs placed around the town warned that Jews could not leave the limits of the town on pain of death. The only exception was for 250 Jews sent out daily to clear snow from the roads. In addition to refugees from other Polish towns, the Germans brought in Jews from the surrounding villages, shortly before the liquidation of the ghetto. In the spring of 1942, some 200 Jews from Jasło were moved to Frysztak. In total, there were about 1,800 Jews concentrated in Frysztak.⁵

In January 1942, the Frysztak branch of the JSS established a public kitchen, serving 300 dinners per day, which still failed to meet the demand. In May, it set up a separate cafeteria to feed 100 children, but another 100 went hungry. The JSS lacked the resources to sustain the public kitchens, obtain medical supplies, or assist about 100 Jews who had nothing to wear but rags. In 1942, the JSS made attempts to reestablish the town as a center of clothing production, in an effort to forestall further deportations to labor camps. About 100 Jewish tailors produced around 2,000 shirts and over 100 pairs of pants each day. However, in early 1942, the Kreishauptmann vetoed JSS plans to organize agricultural training for Jews.⁶

On July 2–3, 1942, Gestapo officers under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Raschwitz from Jasło organized the



Jewish children, some wearing armbands, walk along an unpaved street in Frysztak, n.d.

USHMM WS #76183, COURTESY OF ARCHIWUM DOKUMENTACJI MECHANICZNEJ

first deportation Aktion in Frysztak, assisted by units of the Order Police, Ukrainian, and Polish (Blue) Police. The head of the Frysztak Judenrat was instructed that all of the Jews in Frysztak must assemble in the cattle market between 5:00 and 6:00 A.M. Here the Germans took all their valuables. Certain craftsmen and younger people were selected from a previously prepared list to have their working papers stamped. Men aged 52 or older were loaded onto trucks. Those who could not walk fast enough were beaten. Women with more than two children were also put on the trucks, as well as some individual Jews to complete the transport of some 800 people. The Jews were taken to the Warzyce Forest, stripped naked, and shot into three mass graves, which were filled in by Poles working for the German construction service (Baudienst). Children were seized from mothers and murdered by smashing them against the trucks. The Aktion was completed by 3:00 P.M. According to Mieczysław Chabański, the Kreishauptmann even charged the Kreis Judenrat in Jasło for the cost of transporting people from Frysztak to Warzyce, for ammunition, and for cleaning the Jews' clothing.⁷

Following this Aktion, the Gendarmerie hunted down groups of Jews in hiding in and around Frysztak. On August 13, 1942, the Gendarmerie shot 10 Jews, including four children, in Frysztak and Twierdza.⁸ The final liquidation of the Frysztak ghetto took place on August 18, 1942. Some Jews were taken to the Rzeszów ghetto, and 35 Jews were sent to the Przemyśl ghetto after they had been used to clear up the area of the Frysztak ghetto. The rest of the Jewish population was taken to Jasło, and from there they were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp on August 19 and 20.⁹

As many as 100 Jews escaped the deportation Aktions, mostly by hiding in the surrounding forests. However, due to repeated searches and some denunciations by local Poles, only about 20 of them remained by the end of 1943.

A number of Poles risked their lives to help Jews. On July 3, 1943, the Germans shot several Poles in the villages of Markuszowa and Kozłówek for aiding Jews.¹⁰ Eugeniusz Niedziela and his family from Markuszowa were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for assisting the Weitz and Schmidt families, when they fled to the forests following the liquidation Aktions in Frysztak. Among others who helped Jews was Kasper Pilch from the village of Kozuchów, who assisted the Apfelbaum family from Frysztak, and also Michał Świętoń of Niewodna, who saved six members of the Resler family.¹¹

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Frysztak include the following: "Frysztak," in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 295–298; Itzhok Berglas and Shlomo Yahalomi-Diamand, *The Book of Stryzow and Vicinity*, trans. Harry Langsam (Los Angeles: "Natives of Stryzow Societies" in Israel and the Diaspora, 1990); and Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975).

Other works relevant to the history and persecution of the Jews in Frysztak include the following: Zofia Rusek and Danuta Skóra, *Spółeczność żydowska w dawnym Strzyżowie i okolicy—historia i wspomnienia* (Strzyżów, 2006).

Documents on the extermination of the Jews in Frysztak can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (JM 3968/5568401; 301/1952); BA-L (B162/14484); IPN (Dsn 13/74/73/"W" 452; Dsn 13/15/67/"W" 393; Dsn 13/216/73/"W" 717; Dsn 13/15/67/"W" 399; and Zh III/31/35/68); MOR (I/43b/V/H, GK 105z/A, t. 1; Bühler case, t. 74); OKBZH-Rz (II Ds 22/70; II Ds 58/68); USHMM (RG-10.027; Acc.1991.099; RG-15.019M, reels 10 and 17; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 22); USHMPA (# 76183 and 76184); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/3602; M-1/E/1690).

Joanna Śliwa

NOTES

1. BA-L, B162/14484 (II 206 AR-Z 827/63), verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 11–13; Dr. Gentz, who committed suicide in 1967, succeeded Regierungsrat Dr. Ludwig Losacker in this post.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 22.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., reels 3 and 22; RG-15.019M, reel 17; IPN, Zh III/31/35/68 and Dsn 13/216/73/"W" 717.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 22, JSS in Frysztak reports to the Presidium in Kraków on January 8 and 19, 1942; RG-15.019M, reel 17; and BA-L, B162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, p. 16.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 22.
7. AŻIH, 301/1952; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reels 10 and 17; BA-L, B162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, pp. 16–19; Mieczysław Wieliczko, *Żasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), p. 165; MOR, I/43b/V/H, GK 105z/A, t. 1, and Bühler case, t. 74.
8. IPN, Dsn 13/15/67/"W" 399. See also USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17; and IPN, Dsn 13/216/73/"W" 717, regarding the shooting of a group of Jews in July 1942.
9. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 297–298; Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską*, p. 181; BA-L, B162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, p. 19.
10. Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską*, pp. 199–200.
11. Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 544–545; Rusek and Skóra, *Spółeczność żydowska*, pp. 51–53; OKBZH-Rz, II Ds 58/68.

GŁOGÓW MAŁOPOLSKI

Pre-1939: Głogów Małopolski, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Głogow, Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Głogów Małopolski, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Głogów Małopolski is located 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) north of Rzeszów. There were 648 Jews in Głogów in 1921. On the outbreak of World War II, approximately 600 Jews were residing there.¹

The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) chaired by Symche Hiller. On December 17, 1939, a large group of refugees arrived, mostly from Łódź and Kalisz. A refugee committee established to relieve their situation organized a soup kitchen in the Bet Midrash, but the building was requisitioned shortly afterwards by the German military. From then on, the preparation of meals was divided between 11 private houses cooking approximately 150 meals daily.

In May 1940, the Judenrat reported 130 Jewish families in Głogów. The number of refugees stood at 104. By June 1940, the number of refugees had risen to 187, bringing the total number of Jewish residents to 806. A similar number, 800 Jews, was reported through November 1940.²

After the German army abandoned the school building in June 1941, a labor camp for approximately 100 Jews was established on its grounds. Both German and Jewish policemen guarded the camp. The prisoners worked cleaning the town, excavating earth, and working in the weapons magazines located in a forest, 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside of Głogów. The soldiers who guarded them mistreated the local Jews and extorted valuables and food supplies.

In September 1941, Jews from Raniżów and the surrounding villages of Staniszewskie, Zielonki, and Mazury were deported to Głogów (as well as to Sokołów Małopolski). Most of them were Jewish farmers, whose land the Germans planned to incorporate within their military training grounds. Deportees were permitted to take all of their belongings except for livestock.³

At this time, the German Landkommissar Twardon, residing in Kolbuszowa, ordered the Kolbuszowa Judenrat to move 25 Jewish families to Sokołów and Głogów. As a result, a number of farmers from villages surrounding Kolbuszowa (including Kupno and Przewrotne) were transferred to Głogów on October 14, 1941. Those refugees and deportees, who had settled in Głogów in 1939–1940, were simultaneously forced to relocate to barracks in Rzeszów.⁴

According to A. Potocki, a ghetto was established in Głogów on February 1, 1942. The Kreishauptmann's order to establish a net of ghettos in the Kreis was issued on December 17, 1941. In Rzeszów, the order was effective from January 10, 1942, with the closing of its ghetto; ghettos in the remainder of the Kreis were to be established by February 1, 1942.

Survivor Edith Kornbluth remembers that the Germans resettled the community to the most neglected part of the town. The ghetto was unfenced. As overcrowding was severe, the Kornbluth family had to share a room with three other families. Her father would sneak out at night to buy food from villagers. The men in the ghetto were subject to forced labor. The system of paying for substitutes to perform assigned labor was initially tolerated but subsequently became illegal.⁵



Edek Rebhum, head of the Jewish Police in the Głogów Małopolski ghetto, 1942. Rebhum was subsequently the leader of the Jewish forced labor camp in Głogów. Escaping from that camp, he joined Naftali Saleschütz's partisan group. He was later killed by the Poles.

USHMM WS #67241, COURTESY OF NORMAN SALSITZ

The Jews worked in forestry, agriculture, and road maintenance. A number of the laborers, according to another survivor of the ghetto, Martin Rosenberg, were deported to the Pustków forced labor camp. Rosenberg's family moved to the Głogów ghetto from Kolbuszowa to improve their living conditions and security.⁶

As of March 1942, the Schutzpolizei raids became more frequent and deadly. The following murders are registered: four men were shot in March 1942; then between May and June, another four persons, including a married couple, were murdered. The source, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni*, notes that some of these murders might have been committed within the ghetto.⁷

On May 2, 1942, *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that the number of Jews in Głogów had tripled since the beginning of the war, rising to 1,800. The most recent newcomers were a group of 300 Jews from Kolbuszowa, Raniżów, and Sokołów. There was no soup kitchen in the town, and the system of distributing newcomers to private houses had failed due to overcrowding. There were no epidemics, partially because the community maintained a public steam bath.⁸

Survivor Michel Kruger testified that in May 1942 a number of men were selected by the Germans for the Biesiadka labor camp.⁹

Two hundred Jews from the Sokołów ghetto were reportedly transferred to Głogów on Sokołów's liquidation, which most likely took place on July 27, 1942.

The ghetto in Głogów was also liquidated in late July 1942; the Jews concentrated there were deported to Rzeszów.¹⁰ The

Rzeszów ghetto was liquidated in the course of deportations to the Bełżec extermination camp that began in July 1942; its final liquidation took place in November 1942.

Some of Głogów's Jews were selected for the labor camp in the town's school. Since its establishment, the camp had been reorganized, holding approximately 120 Jews and Poles. The prisoners were tasked with maintaining the Głogów-Kolbuszowa road. During the camp's liquidation on October 25, 1942, the Jewish prisoners were sent to the Rzeszów ghetto.

SOURCES The following publications contain brief references to the destruction of the Głogów ghetto: Tadeusz Kowalski, *Obozy hitlerowskie w Polsce południowo-wschodniej, 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1973), pp. 103–104; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 179, 462; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 54–56; and Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” pt. 3, *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4 (1985): 89–90.

Archival sources can be found in AŻIH (210/339; 211/402); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-50.002*0140); and VHF (# 569, 12802, 15495, 39769, 43384).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 2, 1942.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/339 (Głogów Małopolski), pp. 1–3, 6–7, 23, 25; VHF, # 39769, testimony of Louis Kadlovski, 1998.
3. *Kolbuszowa Memorial Book*, available on the Web at www.jewishgen.org—a translation of I.M. Biderman, ed., *Pinkas Kolbushov* (New York: United Kolbushover, 1971), pp. 55–88.
4. Franciszek Kotula, *Losy Żydów rzeszowskich 1939–1945: Kronika tamtych dni* (Rzeszów: Społeczny Komitet Wydania Dzieł Franciszka Kotuli, 1999), p. 71; VHF, # 569, testimony of Edith Kornbluth, 1995.
5. USHMM, RG-50.002*0140 (Edith Kornbluth); VHF, # 12802, testimony of Wolf Finkelman, 1996; # 569.
6. VHF, # 15495, testimony of Martin Rosenberg, 1996.
7. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), pp. 52–53.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 2, 1942.
9. VHF, # 43384, testimony of Michael Kluger, 1998.
10. *Ibid.*, # 15495.

GORLICE

Pre-1939: Gorlice, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Gorlice is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) southeast of Kraków. The Jewish population of Gorlice consisted of more than 3,400 people on the eve of World War II in 1939.

The German army occupied the town on September 7, 1939. Almost immediately, the Wehrmacht started seizing Jews for forced labor and stealing their possessions.



Jewish women and girls repair shoes in a fenced-in yard in the Gorlice ghetto, 1941.

USHMM WS #05951, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

Despite many residents' flight on the outbreak of the war, the Jewish population of Gorlice increased during the first year of occupation. Jewish refugees from Germany had begun to arrive following the expulsion of Polish Jews just prior to *Kristallnacht* (November 9–10, 1938), and after the war started, many Jews from western Poland sought refuge in the eastern part of the country. By the fall of 1940, the Jewish population of Gorlice had grown to 4,000, with another 1,500 living in the smaller surrounding villages.

In the fall of 1939, the German authorities confiscated Jewish workshops and businesses, placing them into fictional “trusteeships” under the direction of local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) or German managers. For a few months, they allowed smaller Jewish shops to remain open, but women ran them, as the men stayed out of sight to avoid being rounded up for forced labor.¹

In March 1940, the Germans established a seven-man Judenrat headed by Dr. Henryk Arnold, a local lawyer and Zionist leader. Dr. Jakub Blech, also a lawyer, served as his deputy.² On April 29, 1940, the Gorlice Judenrat was placed under the jurisdiction of the regional Judenrat in Jasło. A Jewish auxiliary police force was also established. The Judenrat was instructed to organize forced labor details, which were made up of requests for between 100 and 300 men per day, and this brought an end to the random kidnappings. Around 200 Jews were sent to work at two sawmills run by the German firm HOBAG under a German manager named Girtner. The Jewish forced laborers were supervised by Jewish policemen and a Werkschutz (factory guard) detachment; some Poles worked there as well, and they helped Jews by giving them additional food. Among the finished items produced by HOBAG were wooden planks used for the construction of barracks and coffins to transport German soldiers killed in action. Some Jewish forced laborers worked at a factory for making tar paper, owned before the war by a Jew named Fessel, and others worked on road construction projects in the town, for which they received only some soup and the right to receive food coupons.³

The German Landkommissar based in Gorlice was an official named Alfred Koch, who was subordinated to the Kreis-

hauptmann in Jasło (initially Dr. Ludwig Losacker, and then from February 1941, Dr. Walter Gentz). From March 1940, an outpost of the Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, or GPK) in Jasło was established in Gorlice. From December 1941 until March 1944, Kriminalassistent (later Kriminalsekretär) Ernst F. was in charge of this office, assisted by his deputy, Otto Friedrich. In Gorlice there was also a detachment of about 8 or 10 German Gendarmes (Order Police), which also commanded a larger force of local Polish (Blue) Police.⁴ In 1940, the German authorities instituted a system of hostage taking. As recalled by the survivor Joseph K.: “Ten Jewish men were named as hostages, and their names were posted on placards all over town. Should anything happen to a German, those ten men would be executed.” The hostages changed every 14 days. This system was already in operation in February 1940. Joseph K.’s father was one of those named among the list of 10 hostages posted on June 8, 1940. The hostages were taken on the orders of the Kreishauptmann, Dr. Losacker. Poles were sometimes also named among the hostages.⁵

The Judenrat organized a soup kitchen to support the many Jews in need. In 1940, a medical clinic was opened, but there were no Jewish doctors left in Gorlice. However, a local Polish doctor, Dr. Otański, “put aside his antisemitic convictions” and, at great personal risk, tended the Jewish sick. A Jewish refugee doctor from Kraków, Dr. Feldmaus, arrived in 1941. In the fall of 1940 two dental clinics were in operation. When epidemics broke out in late 1941 or early 1942, a small Jewish hospital was opened.⁶

Despite economic privation, the Jews of Gorlice were able to obtain food smuggled in from neighboring Slovakia, about 30 kilometers (19 miles) away. In July 1941, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, the new Kreishauptmann, Dr. Gentz, ordered the delineation of a ghetto area on the edge of town. About 160 impoverished Jews were expelled from Gorlice to Bobowa. On August 7, another group was shipped to Biecz, Bobowa, and two other towns. By October 1941, the Germans had established the ghetto in Gorlice, which at first remained open. The ghetto consisted of two separate sections located south of the market square (*Rynek*), which lay outside the ghetto. There was the Dworzyska area: composed of the present-day Mickiewicz, Nadbrzeźna, Stroma, and Strażacka Streets. This was separated by Mickiewicz Street, which remained open for non-Jewish traffic, from the Garbarnia area of the ghetto: composed of the present-day Nadbrzeźna, Legionów, Rzeźnicza, and Ogrodowa Streets. In total, there were about 3,500 Gorlice Jews residing in the ghetto, plus a growing number of refugees.

The ghetto was guarded by Ukrainian police and later also by Polish police, supervised by the local Gestapo and Gendarmerie. According to Polish sources, some of the Polish policemen were also members of the Polish Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*) commanded by Sergeant Jan Fereński (“Sęp”), and these men abetted the smuggling of food into the ghetto. The Jewish Police was issued with wooden bats made by HOBAG to maintain order inside the ghetto. Its commander, a tailor named Keller, is named in some sources as having been an in-

formant of the Gestapo, who kept a close eye on the activities of the Jewish Police.⁷

The space allocated for the ghetto was gradually decreased, and as of February 1942, it became an enclosed ghetto. In addition to the overcrowding (10 to 15 people to a room), there were shortages of food, clothing, and fuel for heating. Disease broke out, and the death rate climbed. During the severe winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to turn in their fur garments, including the fur hats worn by pious Jews. Some burned their furs to keep them out of German hands. Anyone caught disobeying the order was shot, as was the case with at least one family.⁸

During 1942, the situation in the ghetto deteriorated considerably, and the Judenrat eventually became less cooperative with the German authorities. On January 3, 1942, the Security Police shot about 20 Jews on the streets, allegedly to prevent the spread of typhus. On April 25, 1942, the Germans shot another 70 Jews, who were members of Zionist organizations. In the spring of 1942, Jews expelled from villages in the surrounding area started to arrive in Gorlice. Rumors of the impending liquidation of the ghetto began to spread. The Judenrat initiated a program to train people as tailors. By June, about 350 people were employed making clothes. A workshop for youngsters aged 13 to 20 enabled 100 of them to become employed making toys and house slippers.

On July 22, 1942, the German authorities ordered all men to assemble on the town square. Several hundred Jews were selected and were sent to labor camps in Płaszów, Pustków, and Frysztak or to the aviation factory in Mielec. At about this time the Germans demanded a “contribution” from the Jews. When people did not deliver the required amount, Germans broke into their dwellings and took money and valuables by force. At the beginning of August, Jews from Bobowa and Biecz were brought back to the ghetto.

In mid-August 1942, the Germans organized a major Aktion against the ghetto. First, the German authorities demanded another large contribution of 250,000 złoty. Then during the night of August 13–14 (or according to some sources, on August 16–17), the Germans, assisted by Ukrainian and other auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto, and all Jews were again ordered to report to the town square.⁹

Many hid in attics and cellars. The German-led forces combed the area, and anyone discovered in hiding was shot on the spot. Some 200 Jews were selected from the square and sent to the Płaszów camp. Perhaps several hundred Jews—the elderly, the sick, and the children—together with a similar group from the Bobowa ghetto were taken by truck to the Garbacz Forest in Stróżówka, forced to undress, lined up next to open pits, and murdered. The members of the Judenrat, the Jewish Police, and their families were shot next to Gestapo headquarters. The “essential” workers at HOBAG and the tar paper factory were excluded from the roundup. The rest were taken to sheds on the grounds of a shoe factory near the train station. Here they were held without food or water for three days and then put onto 60 freight cars destined for the Bełżec extermination camp. In total, about 2,500 Jews perished in this Aktion.¹⁰

About 700 Jews were left in the enclosed ghetto. These included the roughly 100 “essential” workers, others who were assigned to clean up the ghetto, and some agricultural workers. Also among them were some “illegals,” people who had hidden during the roundup. About 50 were caught and sent to the Garbacz Forest to bury the corpses. They never returned. Another selection took place at which 250 people were ordered to step forward. Anyone who refused was shot. The rest were shipped to Bełżec. On September 14, the ghetto was finally liquidated, when a few hundred more Jews were put on the train to Bełżec. Only the 70 working for HOBAG and the 30 at the tar paper factory remained. They were locked up on the grounds of these factories. On January 6, 1943, the 70 HOBAG workers were sent to the labor camp at Muszyna, and the 30 from the tar paper factory were taken to the camp at Rzeszów.¹¹

In August 1968 the regional court in Nürnberg-Fürth sentenced two former officials of the GPK in Gorlice, Otto Friedrich and Paul Baron, to life imprisonment for shooting Jews in Gorlice on a number of separate occasions in 1942 and 1943.¹²

SOURCES Publications on the Jewish community of Gorlice and its fate during the Holocaust include the following: M.Y. Bar-On, ed., *Sefer Gorlice; Hakehillah bivinyanah uviburbanah* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Residents of Gorlice and Its Vicinity in Israel, 1962); Władysław Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy* (Gorlice: W. Boczoń, 1998); and Abraham Weiss and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 93–97. Extracts from a survivor testimony taken by the Fortunoff Video Archive (FVA) can be found in Joshua M. Greene and Shiva Kumar, *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

Documents on the persecution and annihilation of the Jews of Gorlice can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1113); BA-L; FVA (# 61); IPN; ITS (R 50/Z 34); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 10); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 96; and Bar-On, *Sefer Gorlice*, p. 237.
2. AŻIH, 301/1113, testimony of Izrael Buchsbaum and Mojsesz Hirschfeld; and Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy*, p. 135.
3. Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy*, pp. 138–139.
4. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 3 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 688, pp. 170–171.
5. Greene and Kumar, *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*, p. 48. A facsimile of the poster dated June 8, 1940, is reproduced on page 50. Another such poster, dated February 17, 1940, is reproduced in Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy*, p. 143.
6. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 96; Bar-On, *Sefer Gorlice*, pp. 237–238.
7. Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy*, pp. 144–145.
8. Bar-On, *Sefer Gorlice*, pp. 237–240; *JuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 688, p. 171.
9. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas Hakehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 96.

10. Ibid., pp. 96–97; AŻIH, 301/1113. Boczoń, *Żydzi Gorliccy*, pp. 148–156, dates the ghetto liquidation Aktion from August 17–20, 1942. Zabierowski Stanisław, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), p. 185, cites 700 Jews from Gorlice and Bobowa murdered in the Garbacz Forest but dates it on August 13, 1942.

11. AŻIH, 301/1113.

12. *JuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 688, pp. 167–195.

GRYBÓW

Pre-1939: Grybów, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Grünberg, Kreis Neu-Sandez, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Grybów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Grybów is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. In 1921, the Jewish population was 847 out of a total population of 2,931.

In September 1939, before the arrival of the Germans, many Jews fled to the east into what soon became the Soviet-occupied zone. Some remained there, while others returned to Grybów, once the fighting had ceased. A week after the outbreak of war, German forces arrived in Grybów and immediately began to kidnap Jews for forced labor. Most were put to work repairing roads and bridges damaged in the fighting. The German authorities imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures, including the levying of “contributions,” limitations on the movement of Jews, and the requirement to wear identifying markings.

At the end of October 1939, the town became part of Kreis Neu-Sandez, administered by Kreishauptmann Dr. Reinhard Busch. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). One of its main tasks was organizing the daily quota of Jewish forced laborers. In the first months of 1940, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was formed. As the economic plight of the community



Spectators watch as a Polish woman is led through the town square in Grybów by two Jews wearing armbands, n.d. The sign around her neck states, “For selling merchandise to Jews.” She is supposedly being taken to a killing site.

USHMM WS #79062, COURTESY OF ŻIH, IMIENIA EMANUELA RINGELBLUMA

worsened, the Judenrat extended material assistance to those in need. The local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) opened a public kitchen. By the fall of 1940, there were 1,320 Jews in Grybów (including 191 refugees). More than 500 Jews were receiving assistance from the JSS.¹

In the fall of 1940 and the first half of 1941, the German authorities ordered that Jews living in the villages and smaller towns in Kreis Neu-Sandez must move to the larger towns of Nowy Sącz, Stary Sącz, Mszana Dolna, Limanowa, and Grybów. As a result, a number of refugees arrived in Grybów from Łabowa, Tylicz, Librantowa, Muszyna, Krynica, and other places, almost all in need of support.² The local branch of the JSS sent an urgent plea to the central office of the JSS in Kraków for assistance in absorbing these additional refugees.

At the end of 1941, there was an increase in the number of people being kidnapped and sent to forced labor camps. In March 1942, the JSS sought to establish a workshop and develop a training program for young people, in the hope that this might provide some protection from the roundups for the labor camps.

At the beginning of 1942, the Germans banned the Jews from streets occupied by non-Jews and forced them to live on a few narrow streets of their own scattered throughout the town, establishing a form of open ghetto. The Jews had to build paths and steps to get from one street to the other without encroaching on non-Jewish boundaries.³

At the time of the formation of the open ghetto in early 1942, a Polish woman, Sukonawa, was caught selling milk to a Jewish woman. As a punishment, the Polish police forced Sukonawa to dance with a Jew in the marketplace on Sunday afternoon, as the Christians were returning home from church. As a result, most Poles became too scared to trade with the Jews, and the shortages of food in the ghetto worsened considerably.⁴ At this time the public kitchen increased its assistance to the needy, and the Judenrat opened a clinic to try to prevent outbreaks of disease.

In April 1942, the head of the Gestapo in Nowy Sącz, SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Hamann, received instructions from the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Kraków to arrest and shoot all Jews in the Kreis known to be Communists or to sympathize with them. In response, Hamann obtained an old membership list for the Poalei Zion (left-wing Zionist) movement and ordered that all those on the list be arrested with the assistance of the Jewish Councils and Jewish Police. When it was reported that the Jewish Police in Grybów had been able to arrest only about 20 people from a much longer list, Hamann traveled in person to Grybów on the morning of April 28. On his arrival he confronted the head of the Judenrat, Samuel Neugroschl, and ordered that he be shot together with four other members of the Judenrat and five members of the Jewish Police. The 20 or so Jews arrested in Grybów were sent to the prison in Nowy Sącz and were shot along with other Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Nowy Sącz shortly afterwards.⁵

At the beginning of August 1942, the German authorities demanded another large contribution from the Judenrat in

Grybów.⁶ The Gestapo office in Nowy Sącz planned the “re-settlement” of the Jews from Grybów on August 16, 1942. Just prior to this date, the Germans ordered Poles in the Construction Service (Baudienst) to dig a large ditch behind the wooded hill in Biała Niżna close to the Dominican monastery about 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) to the northeast of Grybów. At 6:00 A.M., on the morning of August 16, the Jews were assembled on the market square with the assistance of the Jewish Police. On the basis of a list prepared by the Judenrat, Hamann checked that all the Jews were present and then participated in the selection of about 300 sick and disabled Jews, who were sent to one side. Another group of 34 Jews employed at the Hobag-Werke in Grybów were given special passes and sent off to their work site.⁷

After placing their house keys into baskets as ordered, the remaining 1,200 or so Jews capable of walking were escorted by the Jewish Police 21 kilometers (13 miles) in the heat of the sun to the enclosed ghetto on Kazimierz Street in Nowy Sącz. Those selected as unfit were loaded onto five trucks and taken to the killing site at Biała Niżna, which was cordoned off by men of the Gendarmerie. The Jews were made to undress, and members of the Gestapo under Hamann’s supervision shot them in groups of 5 using machine pistols, as they lay facedown in the mass grave.⁸ Some Poles observed the gruesome scene at the site of the mass shooting while sitting on their rooftops.⁹

At the end of August 1942, the occupiers deported most of the Jews in the Nowy Sącz ghettos to the Bełżec extermination camp. Some of those from Grybów who were capable of work were sent to various labor camps, including those in Rytro, Rożnów, and Sędziszów Małopolski.¹⁰

Only very few Jews from Grybów and its vicinity managed to survive the German occupation, either in various camps or by hiding on the “Aryan” side.

SOURCES Both yizkor books for Nowy Sącz contain some information in relation to Grybów: Shlomo Zalman Lehrer and Leizer Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz* (Southfield, MI: Targum, 1997); and Rafael Mahler, ed., *Seyfer Sants* (Tel Aviv: Sandzer landsmanshaftn, New York, 1970). Other relevant published sources include Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 100–103; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 269–484 (LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/65, verdict against Heinrich Hamann and others).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Grybów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1338, 1703; 211/437-440); IPN (ASG, sygn. 10, k. 428); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 24); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 103.
2. Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der*

Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 99. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 308, dates the clearance of the border area in the first half of 1940. Also see Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, pp. 743, 769.

3. Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tszanz*, p. 311.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 311–312.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 312; *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 357. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo nowosądeckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), p. 44, lists seven of the victims, including Samuel Neugroschl. This source dates the Aktion on April 24, 1942.

6. AŻIH, 301/1703, testimony of S. Kaufer.

7. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 389–391.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 390–391; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów: Województwo nowosądeckie*, p. 13.

9. Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tszanz*, p. 312.

10. AŻIH, 301/1703.

JASIENICA ROSIELNA

Pre-1939: Jasienica Rosielna, village, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: initially Kreis Sanok, then Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Jasienica Rosielna is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) west-southwest of Przemyśl. Approximately 500 Jews were living there in 1939.

German forces occupied Jasienica Rosielna around September 10, 1939. There is no information regarding the first months of the occupation other than that a small number of Jews from Krosno were resettled there, either in late 1939 or in 1940.¹

The German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which in the spring of 1940 included Osias Majerowicz as the chairman, Dawid Sicherman, Majer Balser, and Leib Sindel. By December 1940, Dawid Sicherman had taken over the Judenrat's leadership.² The date when the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was organized is unknown; however, it included Natan Balcer and Izrael Beer Weitz.³

In May 1940, there were 386 Jews living in Jasienica, including 46 refugees, mostly from Kraków and Upper Silesia. The Jasienica Judenrat, however, also administered a much larger Jewish population in the so-called Domaradz Collective Community that included nearby villages in which 750 Jews lived. The largest of the settlements was Domaradz, located 6 kilometers (4 miles) from Jasienica and boasting a population of more than 100 Jews. By the end of 1940, the number of Jews in Jasienica itself had risen to 430 (88 families).⁴

By the spring of 1940, most of Jasienica's Jews had already been deprived of their means of income and were left to support themselves by selling their furniture and clothing. In the autumn of 1940, a number of men were employed in road construction, earning 3 złoty per day, yet part of these meager wages was deducted to support those unable to work. Many were conscripted daily for forced labor in and around Jasienica. Not a single Jewish-owned shop remained open.⁵

As the authorities considered Jasienica a village—not a town—its Jews were not eligible for ration cards. Welfare organizations did not provide assistance because the community could not afford to open a soup kitchen, and this was a prerequisite for the provision of financial support. A soup kitchen was in fact opened briefly; but according to the Judenrat, its maintenance did not make much sense, as it was too difficult for the widely dispersed needy Jews to walk every day all the way to Jasienica for a single meal. The Judenrat's position was that the community would benefit more from the distribution of groceries instead.

With time, the Judenrat's correspondence with the main welfare institutions American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization reveals its increasing frustration, due to the continued denial of assistance. The severity of the situation may have led the JSS headquarters in Kraków to establish a branch in the smaller village of Domaradz at the beginning of 1942 despite its never having established a kitchen. The branch, chaired by Izydor Nattel, supervised the organization of welfare in six settlements, including Jasienica, where the soup kitchen was reopened in January 1942. Willi Halpern was the kitchen's manager.⁶

In March 1942, a number of Jasienica Jews worked in a labor camp in Bzianka (near Strzyżów). The Judenrat provided money for their sustenance.⁷

On June 24, 1942, 550 Jews from the area north of Brzozów were resettled to Jasienica. Among others, the resettlement included Jews from Domaradz, Hłudno, Barycz, Golcowa, Gwoźnica, Blizne, Przysietnica, Wesoła, Wola Jasieniicka, and Orzechówka (mostly in the Domaradz and Nozdrzec Landgemeinden). This meant that approximately 250 of the newcomers were brought in from settlements that were not included in the original Collective Community. The number of Jews in Jasienica rose to approximately 1,000 or 1,100.

The Gestapo and the Polish police usually conducted the resettlements to Jasienica. The Jews were usually given only minutes to pack, so many of them arrived with few or no belongings.

The ghetto in Jasienica Rosielna was set up on June 27, 1942.⁸ In many cases, about 15 people shared a room, and some had to sleep in the streets. People slept both night and day, in shifts, or in sitting positions.⁹

The JSS branch was transferred from Domaradz to Jasienica on the establishment of the ghetto and included Izydor Nattel (chairman), Mechel Scherer, and Abraham Willner. With financial help from Krosno for the resettled, the soup kitchen continued serving meals, while children and the sick were getting some milk. Krosno also provided Jasienica's ghetto with some medicine and sent a Jewish doctor to examine the poor free of charge. A Sanitation Committee was established. The public bath was open every other day. Jasienica's Jews were also vaccinated for typhus.¹⁰

Immediately following the ghetto's establishment, on either June 29 or 30, 1942, able-bodied men had to register. Soon small groups of Jews went to Jaśliska, Dynów, Bachórz,

and Wola Wyżna. In Jasienica itself, approximately 60 men labored in fieldworks at a nearby manor, on road works, and at a quarry.¹¹

The hardest labor was in Jaśliska, where laborers walked 28 kilometers (17 miles) each day to cut beech trees in a forest. A survivor recalls running 8 kilometers (5 miles) mostly uphill. Although workers were treated humanely, the daily quota set by the company management was impossible to fulfill. Divided into teams of three, the workers were to gather 5 cubic meters (177 cubic feet) of wood daily. Within the two weeks they spent in Jaśliska, the laborers received so little food that the Jasienica JSS had to furnish them with rations, clothing, and blankets. Laborers in Bachórz worked 12 to 13 hours daily. Laborers suffered from hunger in each of the camps. A number were released early due to malnourishment.¹²

At the end of July 1942, the Brzozów authorities—"in principle"—agreed to open workshops in the Jasienica ghetto. Tentative orders were placed but were to be fulfilled using their own materials. The Arbeitsamt registered 140 women who were then engaged in the small-scale production of straw goods.¹³

In early August, the ghetto was effectively closed, as the JSS chairman Nattel reported increased restrictions on movement: "The delivery or purchase of any food [outside of the ghetto] was precluded entirely."¹⁴

The liquidation of the Jasienica Rosielna ghetto was conducted on August 12, 1942. That morning, Gestapo men and Ukrainian policemen from Krosno surrounded the ghetto. Seven Jews were reportedly killed while the community was being chased out of their homes. Young girls and teenagers were taken on trucks to the Iwonicz train station; there are no sources reporting their fate. Some 645 women, children, and elderly were shot in the Jewish cemetery. The execution lasted from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M., with only a one-hour break. The victims were buried in a mass grave.¹⁵

SOURCES Brief information on the Jasienica Rosielna ghetto can be found in the following publications: Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 65–66; and Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), p. 107 (Domaradz) and pp. 220–221 (Jasienica Rosielna).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Jasienica Rosielna can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/375 [AJDC Jasienica Rosielna]; 211/466 [JSS Jasienica Rosielna]; 301/2045 and 301/4536 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS Jasienica Rosielna], reel 25, and [JSS Korespondencja z Jakubem Sternbergiem], reel 10, 211/154–156; and RG-15.084M [Relacje], # 2045 and 4536); VHF (# 3503); and YVA.

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 66. However, the entry on "Krosno," pp. 82–83, indicates a relocation to Jasienica in November 1941.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/375, pp. 1–2, 17.

3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS Korespondencja z Jakubem Sternbergiem), reel 10, 211/154, p. 60.

4. Ibid., pp. 1, 20–22; for the names of the family heads in Jasienica, see pp. 15, 17–20; and Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS Jasienica Rosielna), reel 25, 211/466, pp. 3, 9.

5. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/375, pp. 2, 9, 21–22.

6. Ibid., pp. 4–6, 9, 10–11, 21–22; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 20 and 24, March 22, April 8, and June 7, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, pp. 4, 6.

7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 22, 1942.

8. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 204; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 221 (Jasienica Rosielna).

9. AŻIH, 301/2045; and VHF, # 3503.

10. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 8 and July 29, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, pp. 11–12, 16, 18.

11. AŻIH, 301/2045; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 29, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, pp. 10–11, 19, 22; and Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 66.

12. AŻIH, 301/2045; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, pp. 21–22.

13. AŻIH, 301/2045; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, pp. 22–23.

14. VHF, # 3503; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 25, 211/466, p. 27. According to Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 66, the laborers were sent to Kraków-Podgórze on the day of the deportation.

15. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krosnieńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), p. 52; Czesław Czubyrt-Borkowski, ed., *Przewodnik po upamiętnionych miejscach walk i męczeństwa 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Wydawn. "Sport i Turystyka," 1988), p. 394. Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 66, dates the liquidation on August 11, 1942. According to Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 204, those who were not killed in Jasienica were transported in the direction of Krosno.

JASŁO

Pre-1939: Jasło, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jasło, center of Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jasło, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Jasło is located about 94 kilometers (58 miles) west of Przemyśl. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, around 3,000 Jews were living there, among a total population of some 10,000 people. At the end of 1939 and in 1940, some 3,000 Jews were resettled into Kreis Jasło from western Poland, which increased the town's Jewish population considerably.¹

On September 8, 1939, German armed forces occupied the town. At the end of October, Jasło was incorporated into Distrikt Krakau within the Generalgouvernement. Jasło became the administrative center of Kreis Jasło. Regierungsrat Dr. Ludwig Losacker was the first Kreishauptmann, from the end of 1939; Regierungsrat Dr. Walter Gentz succeeded him in this post on February 10, 1941.²

Alongside the office of the Kreishauptmann, the Germans established in Jasło a German Gendarmerie force, the Polish



A Jewish couple wearing armbands stand in front of a sign in the Jasło ghetto. The sign, bearing skull and crossbones, says, "Ghetto." USHMM WS #38496, COURTESY OF SHALOM FOUNDATION: GOLDA TENCER-SZURMIEJ COLLECTION

(Blue) Police, and a Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK), which was commanded from 1940 to 1943 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Wilhelm Raschwitz. The GPK (composed of Security Police) organized and carried out the Aktions against the Jews in Jasło and the surrounding areas.

On September 22, 1939, on the orders of the occupying forces, Polish firefighters burned down the synagogue. The Germans also demanded 40,000 złoty as a "contribution" from the Jews and took 150 notable Jews hostage in the prison as leverage. After this sum was paid in full, they released the hostages on September 25.³ From the start of the occupation, German soldiers and officials robbed Jewish shops and houses with impunity. Jews were also compelled to perform forced labor. At the end of October 1939, the German authorities ordered all Jews to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David and established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Jewish Council in Jasło served from April 29, 1940, as a central council of Jewish elders coordinating the operations of the 16 Jewish Councils operating in Kreis Jasło.⁴

Jakub Herzig has described how the president of Jasło's Judenrat and some of its members lived well while most Jews went hungry. According to Herzig, a minority of the Judenrat acted decently, but they lacked power.⁵ Despite this criticism of some corruption and favoritism, the Jewish Council did undertake several measures to alleviate the suffering of the Jews, including the many refugees in Jasło. It organized a soup kitchen, an orphanage, a hospital, and also in December 1940, a school for 300 children.⁶

Sometime during 1941, probably before May,⁷ Dr. Gentz ordered the Judenrat to establish a Jewish quarter (*jüdisches Wohnbezirk*) or open ghetto on a few of the poorest streets of

the town, around the old marketplace, Targowica. Here, the Jews were crammed together in overcrowded houses under terrible conditions. Until the end of 1941, Jews could leave the area each day to buy goods from the local Poles. But on December 20, 1941, the ghetto was transformed into a closed area, surrounded on all sides by walls or a fence with only one exit that was closely guarded. Thereafter, Jews could not leave the ghetto without a special permit issued by the German authorities; signs placed around the ghetto warned violators that the punishment was death.⁸

At the end of December 1941, all Jews in the ghetto were ordered to hand over their fur coats and other fur articles of clothing. Refusal to comply was also punishable by death. The food rations issued to the Jews were totally inadequate, containing only a minimal amount of low-grade meat, a little bread and jam—but no fat or milk. Hunger and malnutrition accompanied by other diseases caused the Jews to become desperate. Some were compelled to sneak out of the ghetto in search of food despite the great risks involved.⁹

At the time of the "fur Aktion" (Pelzaktion), in the winter of 1941–1942, a number of Jews were shot by members of the GPK, allegedly for withholding fur items. Other Jews were shot for leaving the ghetto without permission. In February 1942, the GPK shot about 50 Jews who had been allowed to return from Eastern Galicia to Jasło in the fall of 1941. Shortly after this, Dr. Maria Zucker, a Jewish physician who had been permitted to live outside the ghetto because of her treatment of wounded German soldiers, was arrested on the orders of the mayor. Her husband was among those who had returned from Eastern Galicia. She was denounced for alleged defeatist remarks about the Germans, who executed her at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁰ In the spring of 1942, about 200 Jews were sent to the nearby town of Frysztak to perform forced labor. The GPK subsequently arrested the families of these Jews in Jasło in July 1942 and shot them in the forest.¹¹

In the summer of 1942, the German authorities began to liquidate the ghettos in Kreis Jasło. On August 18, 1942, Dr. Gentz ordered the Judenrat to assemble the Jews on the Targowica marketplace. At this time, German, Ukrainian, and Polish police had already surrounded the ghetto. As these forces searched the empty ghetto, any Jews that were uncovered were either shot on the spot or escorted to the marketplace. At the Targowica, the Jews were searched for any valuables. A selection was conducted, and about 200 Jews capable of work were sent to one side to assist with cleaning out the ghetto. Those unfit for travel were then loaded onto trucks and taken to the forest of Warzyce to be shot. As the deportation trains had not arrived in time, the remaining 2,000 to 3,000 Jews were escorted up the hill to the monastery of "Wizytka," part of which had been converted into a barracks. One or two days later, these Jews were escorted to the railway station and loaded onto trains destined for the extermination camp in Bełżec together with other Jews from the nearby towns of Frysztak and Żmigród Nowy.¹²

By 1943, only about 100 people were left in the remnant ghetto; they were then sent to a labor camp for Jews in Szebnie.¹³ Some Jews, such as Jakub Herzig, went into hiding or

attempted to live on the Aryan side. They had to fear blackmailers or other people who might denounce them, and they could not survive without the assistance of non-Jews. Several people from Jasło have been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem for their assistance to Jews, including Helena Kosiba, who helped Jakub Herzig by regularly supplying him with food and helping him to leave Jasło once he had acquired false identification cards.¹⁴

As the Germans prepared for their retreat at the end of 1944, they began to destroy the town systematically. Very little of the town remained when the Red Army captured Jasło in January 1945.

On December 5, 1972, the local court in Arnberg, Germany, passed sentence on three former members of the GPK in Jasło who in 1942–1943 had participated in the persecution and murder of Jews in the town. One of the accused was found not guilty; Walter Augustin received a sentence of two years; and his other co-defendant was sentenced to five and a half years in prison.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish population of Jasło can be found in the following publications: M.N. Even-Hayim, *Toldot yebudei Jasło; me-resbit bityashvutam be-tokh ha-ir ad yemei ha-burban al yedei hanatzim* . . . (Tel Aviv: Jasło Society, 1953); Jakub O. Herzig, *Jasło* (Montreal, 1954); Jakub O. Herzig, *My Wanderings in the War* (Montreal, 1955); *Jasło oskarża* (Warsaw, 1973); M. Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw, 1974); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 207–213; and Jakub O. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community in Poland from its Beginnings to the Holocaust,” translated by Rabbi Leila Berner and published by Adam and Jack Herzig (available at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH; BA-L (ZStL, II 206 AR-Z 827/63 [B 162/14484]); IPN (ASG, sygn. 58, k. 51); ITS; USHMM (RG-15.073M, reel 1, 222/1, financial register of the Jewish Council in Jasło, 1941–1942; and Acc.1995.A.770); VHF; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 87–109.

2. BA-L, B-162/14484 (II 206 AR-Z 827/63), verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 11–13; Dr. Gentz committed suicide in 1967 while under investigation for crimes in Jasło.

3. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community.”

4. *Gazeta Żydowska* (German newspaper in Polish that served as the propaganda instrument of the German authorities in the Generalgouvernement), December 13, 1940, # 42.

5. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community.”

6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 13, 1940, # 42; USHMM, RG-15.073M, reel 1, 222/1, financial register of the Jewish

Council in Jasło, 1941–1942—this register includes expenses for these communal institutions.

7. Martin Weinmann, ed., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 686; ITS, R 50/Z 55.

8. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community”; BA-L, B-162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 14–15; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 205.

9. BA-L, B 162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 14–15.

10. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community.”

11. BA-L, B-162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 15–16.

12. Ibid., pp. 22–24; Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach*; USHMM, RG-15.073M, reel 1, 222/1, financial register of the Jewish Council in Jasło, 1941–1942—the last entry is for the end of July 1942.

13. *Jasło oskarża*, p. 95; Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach*, p. 185.

14. Herzig, “Jasło: The Birth and Death of a Jewish Community”; Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 378.

JAWORNIK POLSKI

Pre-1939: Jawornik Polski, village, Rzeszów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jawornik, Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jawornik Polski, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Jawornik Polski is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) southeast of Rzeszów. There were 328 Jews living in Jawornik and its vicinity on the eve of World War II. Several neighboring settlements had an average population of a few dozen Jews.

The Wehrmacht entered Jawornik on September 10, 1939. Wehrmacht forces were permanently stationed in Jawornik due to the presence of Red Army forces just across the San River, following the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland. Wehrmacht officers occupied the town hall, while soldiers were quartered in a barracks built next to it, as well as in private homes.

By the end of 1939, the new authorities had appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Jakób Schneid as its president and Markus Beck as his deputy.¹

By the end of the summer of 1940, the Reichshof Kreishauptmann had ordered 40 deportees from other parts of Poland to be resettled from Rzeszów to Jawornik. In December 1940, the Jewish community of Jawornik and its vicinity consisted of 350 Jews. This number remained more or less constant, increasing only by another 50 in May 1941. Some of the newcomers were housed outside of Jawornik with the better-off Jewish peasants, mostly comprising holders of small plots in neighboring settlements. Newcomer families were rotated between different households so as to distribute the burden of their care more evenly. A Jewish committee for social aid was

set up on the deportees' arrival. In January 1941, its members were Judenrat deputies Markus Beck, Bernard Mohl, Chaim Teitelbaum, Israel Turner, and L. Magiet.²

The committee's aid proved to be inadequate; for example, its expenses for May 1941 show that out of its 137 złoty budget, 90 złoty went towards the salaries of the committee's three paid employees; 12 złoty was spent on office maintenance; and 10 złoty went to office supplies. The remaining 25 złoty is registered as "other expenses." If it were spent on the refugees' needs, it would provide each of them with only 0.50 złoty of aid per person, which at the time could buy only a single meal.

The same month, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), headquartered in Kraków, was established in Jawornik Polski. A committee including the Judenrat's president Schneid as the chairman, Israel Turner, and Chaim Bessen governed it. The JSS staff was unpaid and was helped by 10 volunteers. The committee never opened a soup kitchen. A little cash, clothing, and groceries (mostly potatoes, flour, and kasha) were dispensed whenever aid was sent by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) or the JSS.

Apart from this activity, the Jawornik JSS refused even to attempt to organize any kind of help themselves, not only because of lack of funds but also because its staff was unpaid. In August 1941, when spurred by Kraków to set up a soup kitchen for children, the JSS committee replied that there were "not enough children" in Jawornik. As the community had no access to medical assistance, Kraków offered to send a doctor to visit Jawornik, to which chairman Schneid replied: "[E]veryone is in the best of health, so those doctors do not have to visit us." In March 1942, the chairman again reported no disease among Jawornik's Jews.³

By May 1941, only one Jewish-owned shop remained open; and none of the craftsmen were operating their businesses. Between March 1940 and July 1941, 40 Jews labored permanently either in Jawornik itself or within the gmina's borders. Out of a total of 355 registered members of the Jawornik community, 310 were "without occupation" during this time. Between August and November 1941, only 12 to 13 Jews were laboring. Occasionally, the Germans would request much larger numbers of workers. There is no information as to the nature of their work or its compensation. However, the JSS did not bear any of their labor costs, nor did it provide sustenance for the laborers, as was common in other Jewish communities.⁴

From December 17, 1941, Kreishauptmann Dr. Heinz Ehaus ordered the establishment of Jewish quarters in Kreis Reichshof, setting dates for them to be closed. In Rzeszów, the closing order was effective on January 10, 1942, whereas for the remainder of the Kreis, it was February 1, 1942. Soon after the latter date, Jawornik, or at least that part populated by Jews, was recognized as a ghetto, and the inhabitants were forbidden to leave on pain of death.

By April 1942, land belonging to Jewish peasants in the vicinity had been expropriated. The JSS in Kraków instructed its Jawornik branch to research whether the Jews could be employed in agriculture, but by April 25, 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Rzeszów had ordered all Jews living in the

vicinity—approximately 200 people—to resettle within Jawornik's town limits. The number of Jews in the ghetto, however, did not change, as these peasants had been included previously in JSS statistics. As the Judenrat's chairman Schneid put it, the peasants "arrived in such a condition that they were unable to afford even a single breakfast."

Just days later on April 30, 1942, a registration of Jewish men aged 12 to 60 was conducted. A transport of an unspecified number of laborers left Jawornik on May 4, 1942, for the Biesiadka labor camp near Mielec. The Jawornik JSS made an effort to send weekly food packages to the camp.

In Biesiadka, Jews and Poles, separated from each other, were conscripted to cut beech trees for the German Fischer company and assist the Müller company to transport them to Mielec by truck. Jewish laborers were treated as prisoners and worked under the supervision of guards. Kolis, the commander of the Jewish camp in Biesiadka, often shot individual laborers. Laborers received a modest meal before and after work.

Upon the men's departure from Jawornik, a registration of young women was also conducted, and a number of them were tasked with beautifying the village. The few able-bodied men who remained in Jawornik worked on road construction.⁵

The last correspondence concerning the Jawornik JSS is dated May 23, 1942. The ghetto's liquidation took place in late June 1942. A brief description can be found in the Ringelblum Archives, as well as in the Polish Court Inquiry about Executions and Mass Graves of October 1945, although neither document uses the term "ghetto." The Ringelblum Archive states that while collecting the Jews on the market square by chasing them out of their houses, nine Jews were murdered. They were shot by the SS and police at the following locations: on the river bank, in the field, and on and around the market square. Apart from Chaja and Malcia Spiegel, who were both 20 years old, the other victims were 48 to 90 years old. Jewish residents buried the victims in separate graves in the Jewish cemetery. The remaining Jews, including the Judenrat, were sent to the Rzeszów ghetto.⁶

The Jawornik Judenrat is mentioned in another record in the Ringelblum Archives, which refers to overdue taxes that all inhabitants of the Rzeszów ghetto were due to pay by June 26, 1942 (in accordance with a June 19, 1942, order by Kreishauptmann Ehaus). In the evening of June 26, 15 Judenrat members (5 from Rzeszów and 10 from various liquidated ghettos whose residents had just been brought to Rzeszów, including Jawornik) were shot, allegedly for not having paid these overdue taxes.⁷

In July 1942, the Jews of Jawornik, along with other Jews concentrated in the Rzeszów ghetto, were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁸

Six Jews who were discovered in an empty house in Jawornik were reportedly shot in August 1942 by SS and police forces for "hiding from the ghetto." All of them, including the four-person family of the tradesman Mozes Springer and his son's fiancée, were buried at the Jewish cemetery in a mass grave.⁹ On September 13, 1942, German Gendarmes shot five or six Jews in the Wola Rafałowska settlement. The Polish

woman Rozalia Socha who had given them shelter was executed in punishment next to her house two months later. On September 16, 1942, the Gestapo shot three Jewish men and also a Pole, Wojciech Patroński, for hiding them. All were murdered in the Buczyzna Forest in the settlement of Szklary. In November 1942, the Germans discovered a bunker occupied by Jews hiding in the forest of Handle Szklarskie. A captured Jewish woman reportedly gave away the names of nine Poles who had helped the fugitives. In all, nine Poles and seven Jews were shot.¹⁰

SOURCES Brief descriptions and references can be found in the following publications: Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 71–72; and Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 206–207; Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” pt. 3, *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4 (1985) and pt. 4, *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (1988).

Relevant archival information can be found in AŻIH (Ring I/472; 211/475 [JSS]; and 210/380 [AJDC]); IPN (ASG); and USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and RG-15.079M [Ring I/472, also as ARG I/1/35, DVD 2]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/475, pp. 1, 9.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/380 (Jawornik Polski), pp. 2–3; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/475, pp. 1, 22, 58.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/475, pp. 1, 4, 7–10, 35, 53, 58.
4. Ibid., pp. 9–10, 24, 36, 39.
5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 26, 1942; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/475, pp. 57–58, 60.
6. USHMM, RG-15.079M (ARG I/1/35), p. 7; RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 11, pp. 594–595; and Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 26, 211/475, p. 61.
7. Ibid., RG-15.079M (ARG I/1/35), p. 5.
8. Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” pt. 3, p. 99.
9. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 11, p. 593.
10. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw, 1984), p. 185; Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” pt. 4, pp. 103–104; Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 72.

JEDLICZE

Pre-1939: Jedlicze, village, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: initially Kreis Jasło then Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Jedlicze is located about 140 kilometers (87 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. In 1921, there were 232 Jews living in Jedlicze.

Following the German occupation of the village in September 1939, Jews were forced to clean the Wehrmacht's stables and quarters—the latter situated in a local school. They were “paid a few cents” for their work. According to survivor Bernice Feit, during Rosh Hashanah in 1939, the Gestapo raided the village, conducting strip-searches of women as they searched for hidden valuables. It was on this occasion that the Germans burned all the books in the synagogue.¹

Other survivors, however, emphasize that the occupation of Jedlicze was largely peaceful. Henry Adler stated that thanks to his cousin's familiarity with the Gestapo men who oversaw Jedlicze, through “business transactions and bribery . . . [it was possible to ensure that] nobody touched the town.” Jewish stores were closed. Regular searches of Jewish houses were conducted, but in most instances, the occupants remained unharmed.²

A Judenrat chaired by Izrael Lambik was set up at the beginning of 1940; Szymon Friss, a refugee from Katowice, replaced him in the summer of 1942.

By May 1940, there were 300 Jews (75 families) in Jedlicze, including 27 refugees from Germany and Upper Silesia.³

More refugees arrived from Kraków in the summer of 1940. By mid-September of that year, they were the largest group of newcomers, totaling 65 persons. Lambik described the group as follows: “Nearly all of them are in need of relief, because the rich would not come to such a small place.” By February 1941, there was a total of 385 Jews in Jedlicze. In April 1941, the Judenrat reported to Kraków “that due to the deportations from Jasło, we are experiencing a great population influx, such that we cannot cope.”⁴

The date on which Jedlicze's ghetto was established is not known. Unfenced, it remained open to the extent that its inhabitants did not feel restrained. Survivor Menasche Wolf describes the situation in 1941 as follows: “We lived in the same houses. There were no restrictions so to speak . . . like ghettos, but we were confined to our houses. . . . They managed without doing anything, still to keep you in the house [such that you did] not go too far.” A Jewish police force was organized.⁵

A children's day-care service was opened on August 1, 1940. The *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that in the summer of 1941, two teachers were instructing all 60 children “in accordance with the program of the public school in Jasło,” as well as providing limited food rations.⁶

Throughout the town's occupation, up to 50 men aged 16 to 50 regularly had to perform forced labor. Many labored in an oil refinery on the outskirts of Jedlicze. Others walked daily 10 kilometers (6 miles) to Krosno to build the Sanok-Jasło road or dig ditches for electricity and water pipes at a military airfield in Krosno. A column of laborers would leave at 5:00 A.M. every day, only to return in the evening. After the Germans constructed barracks at the airfield sometime in 1941, laborers remained there permanently and consequently were not allowed even to visit Jedlicze. In August 1941, 20 men were reported as laboring outside the gmina.⁷

In July 1941, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was set up in Jedlicze with the Judenrat chairman Izrael

Lambik as president. It also included Józef Reiss (deputy) and Samuel Felber. Shortly thereafter, the JSS opened a soup kitchen; however it was repeatedly closed due to insufficient funds. The JSS branch itself was closed in September 1941. Its members continued to work unofficially, but with little efficacy. In August 1941, there were 485 Jews living in Jedlicze.⁸

The Kreishauptmann ordered the concentration of the rural Jews of the Kreis in towns and ghettos by June 24, 1942. According to the Krosno JSS, 120 Jews from the Chorkówka collective gmina were given only one hour on this day to pack their belongings for resettlement to the Jedlicze ghetto. Survivor Stephen Feld recalls, however, that residents of other settlements were notified by the Judenrat's chairman, who went around informing all Jewish inhabitants that they had three days to transfer to Jedlicze. The newcomers were placed with the town's Jewish families and in the synagogue.⁹

The last information on the number of ghetto residents is from the July 1, 1942, issue of *Gazeta Żydowska*, reporting a population of 512 Jews, including 210 deportees to Jedlicze. One week later, the same source reported that a total of 170 Jews had been resettled to Jedlicze. At this time, 35 children were being taught Hebrew, Judaism, arithmetic, and bookkeeping.¹⁰

Using the false pretext of labor registration, the Germans rounded up Jedlicze's Jewish population and liquidated the ghetto—most likely—in the first half of August 1942. In the night preceding the liquidation, German and Ukrainian forces surrounded the village. The following morning, the Jewish Police helped to gather ghetto residents on the market square. Each person was allowed to take up to 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of luggage. Old people were then rounded up to be shot. Women, children, and those who could not present an *Arbeitskarte* (work card) were held at the market, then loaded onto wagons and taken to the Krosno ghetto.¹¹

Among the 80 people who were spared from deportation to work in the oil refinery were the new Judenrat chairman Friss and his wife. After another selection was conducted later that day, only 40 men and 3 women with children remained. They were given two large houses in which to live. Only those Jews working in the refinery could stay there; however, several escapees hid in the attic. After a surprise search by the Gestapo, refinery laborers “got scared because they endangered them.” In December 1942, the remaining laborers were informed by the Germans that they would be evicted and placed in another home; in fact, all were deported to the Rzeszów ghetto.¹²

SOURCES Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich i Muzeum Regionalne PTTK im. Adama Fastnachta w Brzozowie, 1993), p. 35, states that all but 40 Jews were deported on July 7, 1941, to the Jasło ghetto. None of the sources used in this entry confirm such an early date for the transfer of the community.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/381 [AJDC]; 211/477, 211/615 [JSS]; 301/1373 [Relacje]; USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 7037, 24020, 25078, 34731, 34789).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 7037, testimony of Bernice Feit, 1995.
2. Ibid., # 24020, testimony of Henry Adler, 1996; and # 34789, testimony of Menasche Wolf, 1997.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/381 (Jedlicze), pp. 1–3, 5; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 14, 1941; AŻIH, 301/1373, testimony of Rena Kant, 1946.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/477 (Jedlicze), pp. 6, 26, 33; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/381, pp. 9, 12, 21–22.
5. AŻIH, 301/1373; VHF, # 34789.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/477, p. 40.
7. VHF, # 34789; and # 24020; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/477, pp. 17, 30, 53.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 14, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/477, pp. 38, 41, 50, 53, 59, 66, 68, 72.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/615 (Krosno), p. 52; VHF, # 7037.
10. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 1 and July 8, 1942.
11. VHF, # 34731, testimony of Stephen Feld, 1997; AŻIH, 301/1373.
12. VHF, # 25078, testimony of Mala Niewodowski, 1996; and # 24020; AŻIH, 301/1373.

JODŁOWA

Pre-1939: Jodłowa, village, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Jodłowa, Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Jodłowa, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Jodłowa is located 29 kilometers (18 miles) southeast of Tarnów. There were 301 Jews living in Jodłowa in 1921.

After the German occupation, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Jodłowa at the beginning of 1940. Salamon Kanarek served as its chairman and Abraham Pariser as his deputy. In November 1940, there were 30 refugees from Kraków and Łódź in the village. By February 1941 the number of refugees had risen to 50. They were housed with local Jews, 1 to 2 persons per family. The total number of Jewish families in Jodłowa stood at 72. A self-help committee that the Jasło Judenrat had ordered to be established in Jodłowa was at this time “closed.”¹

According to survivor Jack Pariser, no Germans were permanently stationed in the village, and a unit of Polish (Blue) Police maintained order. The community was usually aware of German visits, as the Jews had to provide laborers or money. During one of the first raids, Jodłowa's Jews were forced to remove the Torah from the synagogue and walk on it. Jewish businesses were confiscated, but a majority of the Jews were engaged in agriculture and were able to keep their land and livestock until the very end. Pariser stated that with the exception of a few punitive Aktions the Jews lived peacefully in Jodłowa until the summer of 1942.²

Mieczysław Wieliczko, historian of Kreis Jasło, established that the process of ghettoization in the Kreis was completed in 1941. One of the ghettos created around that time was in Jodłowa. The open ghetto most likely included the village square and remained unguarded and unfenced.

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in the village on July 21, 1941. Its three members were: the Judenrat chairman Kanarek, a teacher Manes Guttman (deputy), and Salamon Kohn. Guttman was in charge of child care. At that time, there were 120 Jewish children aged 1 to 18. Of that number, 50 (aged 6 to 14) were selected for child care—that is, additional food, physical education, singing, needlework, and some form of education “to prevent illiteracy.” A Dr. Laja was employed by the Judenrat to attend to the children’s medical needs. In the summer of 1941, a soup kitchen was opened in Jodłowa.³ The JSS branch was closed again by September 15, 1941, due to “minimal” activity.⁴

In September 1941, there were 345 Jews in Jodłowa. The community was vaccinated for typhus at this time.⁵

As reported by A. Rubin, in February and March 1942, a number of men were selected for labor camps in Mielec and Pustków. Survivor Jakób Schenker testified that in June 1942, 50 men were sent to the latter.⁶

According to child survivor Regina Rueck (born 1935), her family and possibly a number of other Jodłowa Jews were deported to the Brzostek ghetto, most likely in 1942. They were allowed to take clothing and bedding and were quartered in Brzostek’s synagogue.⁷

Most sources date the ghetto’s liquidation on August 12, 1942.⁸ On August 11, SS troops came to the village and paid a short visit to the Polish (Blue) Police. The Polish policemen warned the Jewish community that the Germans planned to shoot all of them on the following day, after reporting to the village square for supposed transfer to a larger ghetto. News spread among the families who lived around the square, as well as to those who lived outside the Jewish quarter. Survivors Schenker and Pariser estimate that over 100 Jews escaped that night; close to 30 survived the war.⁹

In the course of the liquidation, 21 to 25 Jews were shot at various points in the village en route to the place of execution. Another 160 to 180 people were taken to a forest next to the village of Przeczyca and shot.¹⁰ Members of the Baudienst (Construction Service) in Jasło were forced to dig the graves for Jodłowa’s Jews. Two witnesses from among this group (Jan Rączka and Władysław M.) testified that the victims were led in groups of 10 to the grave and forced to undress. Standing by the grave, they were shot one by one in the back of the head.¹¹

SOURCES The following sources include references to the destruction of Jodłowa’s Jewish community: Mieczysław Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), pp. 131, 148, 182–184; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 73–74; Czesław Czubyrt-Borkowski, ed., *Przewodnik po upamiętnionych miejscach walk i męczeństwa: Lata wojny 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Sport i Turystyka, 1980), p. 482; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 195–196.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/387, 211/472, 211/495, 301/1694, 301/1778, 301/4697, 301/7164); IPN-Rz (OKBZH-Rz, 549); USHMM

(Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.019M [Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos]; RG-50.493*0107); and VHF (# 9514).

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NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 5, 1941; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/495 (Jodłowa), p. 1; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/387 (Jodłowa), p. 1; VHF, # 9514, testimony of Jack Pariser, 1995; USHMM, RG-50.493*0107 (testimony of Jack Pariser).

2. Rose Pariser Schwartz testimony (HRC-1043), in Joseph J. Preil, ed., *Holocaust Testimonies: European Survivors and American Liberators in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), p. 112; VHF, # 9514; USHMM, RG-50.493*0107.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/495, pp. 2, 5–7, 11–12, 15, 29–30, 32.

4. Ibid., p. 19; Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/472 (Jasło), p. 36.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, September 5, 1941; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/495, p. 13.

6. AŻIH, 301/1694, testimony of Jakób Schenker, n.d.

7. Ibid., 301/4697, testimony of Regina Rueck, 1945.

8. Other sources date the liquidation in July 1942; e.g., *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo tarnowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1984), pp. 96–98, dates the liquidation of the ghetto on July 16, 1942; Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, pp. 73–74, on July 1, 1942.

9. VHF, # 9514; AŻIH, 301/1694; USHMM, RG-50.493*0107.

10. USHMM, RG-15.019M (Court inquiries about executions and mass graves in districts, provinces, camps, and ghettos), reel 10, sygn. 10, p. 179 (Przeczyca) and p. 186 (Jodłowa).

11. AŻIH, 301/7164, testimony of Jan Rączka, 1993; and 301/1778, testimony of Chaim Spett, 1946; excerpts of testimony by Władysław M., in Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 183–185; IPN-Rz, OKBZH-Rz, 549, zeznania Stanisława Janigi, pp. 107–108, as cited in Elżbieta Rączy, *Pomoc Polaków dla ludności żydowskiej na Rzeszowszczyźnie, 1939–1945* (Rzeszów: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej-Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2008), pp. 152–153.

KALWARIA ZEBRZYDOWSKA

Pre-1939: Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krakau-Land, and Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Kraków. There were approximately 700 Jews living in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska on the eve of World War II.¹ Fleeing the Germans’ advance in September 1939, most of the Jews sought shelter in Mielec and Lwów. Those who returned shortly afterwards found their homes destroyed and stores robbed.

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A *Volksdeutscher* (ethnic German) and local pharmacy owner named Kunze was appointed as the town's Kommissar. Soon afterwards, Kalwaria's Jews were forbidden to travel without a permit, even to nearby Kraków, where many of them conducted trade. Then their businesses were taken over by German trustees, while Jews, according to the local Jewish Council (Judenrat), were "prohibited to engage in any trade or craft." Nonetheless, records show that 17 craftsmen were permitted to run their workshops and also to employ an additional 10 Jews.

Either in late 1939 or early 1940, a German Stadtkommissar, Leopold Holtz, who was an elderly war veteran and invalid, replaced Kunze. Despite his hostility to the Jews, Holtz was—as one of the survivors described it—"open to bribery"—"everything had a price." Due to bribes, the community was allowed to bake matzot and sell it; such payments were likewise mandatory for the reception of food rations, to which the town's Jewish inhabitants were already entitled.²

Kraków's Kreishauptmann ordered the creation of a 12-member Judenrat in February 1940. The only two known names are those of the chairman, Baruch Rand, and his deputy, Dr. J. Breit, who most likely joined the Judenrat in 1941.³

The local court's prison was located at 9 Mickiewicz Street, where it held prisoners from Kalwaria and Skawina for short periods. There were also German policemen, Gendarmes, and Wehrmacht personnel, as well as a Polish (Blue) Police detachment stationed in Kalwaria.

By August 1940, a large number of refugees had arrived in Kalwaria, many from Kraków and Miłówka.

That summer, 70 Jews worked in road construction. On average, a total of 140 Jews labored on roads throughout 1940, 40 of them in Kalwaria itself and the remainder in its vicinity.

A school for young children opened in 1940, where a Hebrew teacher taught classes both in Hebrew and Polish.⁴

By March 1941, a clinic supervised by Dr. Breit was constructed on the premises of the Judenrat's headquarters at 9 Zebrzydowice Street. Breit also supervised a sanitation committee charged with the improvement of flats and yards. Although tuberculosis was on the rise in the first months of 1942, there were no reports of other contagious diseases in Kalwaria. Severely sick Jews were treated in the hospital of the Banifratrów Monastery in Kalwaria. It was at this time that the Judenrat operated a soup kitchen for the poor and refugees.⁵

On April 4, 1941, Kraków's Kreishauptmann Höller announced a list of towns and gminas where Jews were allowed to live; Kalwaria was one of them. The original deadline for resettlement—April 25, 1941—was delayed until May 18, 1941, and Jewish farmers were excluded.

An unknown number of Jews from Kalwaria's vicinity responded to the resettlement order and moved to Kalwaria, where they were housed en masse.⁶ The newcomers were mainly residents of the villages of Zebrzydowice and Brody. Upon their arrival, Holtz imposed further restrictions on Jewish residence in Kalwaria. All those Jews living along the main streets with windows overlooking the street had to move to apartments facing the backyards or onto side streets.⁷ At the end of May 1941, 1,069 Jews were registered in Kalwaria.⁸

During the second half of 1941, the town's Jews were permitted to walk the streets of Kalwaria for only two hours a day. Soon afterwards, a curfew was imposed, and all roads were closed to the Jews. To maintain communal contacts, they created passageways through the courtyards from house to house.

As it was probably never officially declared, the date of the ghetto's establishment is unknown; however, according to survivor Israel Scharf, going to the villages in 1941 to buy food meant "risking [one's] life," because "the minute that you pass beyond the town's perimeters, the Polish Police shot right away." He further claims that several Jews were shot for leaving the town.⁹ Another survivor, Leon Ebel, however, recalls taking off his armband and going to nearby Brzeźnica by bike to obtain food but does not mention any danger involved in leaving Kalwaria.¹⁰

By May 1941, 42 Jews from Kalwaria had been sent to the Pustków labor camp. Another 70 labored in the vicinity, and approximately 50 in Kalwaria proper worked on pulling down old houses. The number of Jews the local Arbeitsamt required for labor changed frequently, as did their assignments; for example, by autumn 1941 most of the women aged 12 to 45 and men aged 12 to 60 were employed as seasonal laborers in agriculture on surrounding estates.¹¹

On July 1, 1941, a branch of Kraków's Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Kalwaria to take over the provision of welfare from the Judenrat. The Judenrat president, Rauch, chaired the committee together with Dr. Breit and a man named Ohrenstein.¹² With diminishing resources, the soup kitchen was soon serving approximately 200 meals a day and was thereby forced to cancel free meals and charge everyone. Soon afterwards, a tax was introduced on the ghetto inmates, as voluntary donations had dried up.

By October 1941, the JSS had opened a so-called garden for poor children aged 6 to 12. It was located on the premises of the ambulatory; the latter was soon transferred to the premises of the Judenrat. Activities were organized for about 80 children for three hours a day.¹³ By the end of January 1942, the number of ghetto inhabitants had risen slightly to 1,093. Records show that all laborers had returned from the labor camps, resulting in a total of 250 Jews employed in Kalwaria.

The date of the Germans' order for the transfer of Jewish farmers to Kalwaria is unknown; according to Leon Ebel, who moved there from Brzeźnica, it occurred at the beginning of 1942.

According to Scharf, the situation of Kalwaria's Jews changed in March 1942, when "Jewish labor became a hot item" and German companies were in constant search of free Jewish labor. At this time, Kalwaria's Jews were being rounded up, jailed for a short time, and then sent to build the Płaszów labor camp. Those who could find employment in Kalwaria were, in theory, exempted. By mid-August 1942, an estimated 100 Jews had been sent to Płaszów in three separate transports; it is known that the June transport consisted of 60 Jews. The local community was charged with providing the laborers with food and clothing.¹⁴

On Kommissar Holtz's orders the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was set up either at the end of June or the beginning of July 1942.¹⁵

In the first days of August 1942, Holtz informed the ghetto residents that they would be resettled to a work camp in two or three weeks. Having heard about similar reports from other towns, the Jews became suspicious of the Germans' plans.¹⁶ Other sources suggest that the community paid a contribution to try to prevent their deportation.¹⁷

On August 12, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska ghetto, taking up to 1,000 Jews (among them a large number of refugees) to the Skawina ghetto. The latter was liquidated in turn on August 29–30, with most of the inhabitants being sent to the Bełżec extermination camp, while some able-bodied individuals were transferred to the Płaszów labor camp; the Germans separated out the elderly and children in Skawina and shot them in a nearby forest. About 550 of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's Jews died in the Holocaust.¹⁸

SOURCES The fate of the Jewish community in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is mentioned in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 315–318; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 589–590; E. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim," *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 87–109, here p. 92; and *Gazeta Żydowska* (1941–1942).

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (301/599 [Relacje] and 211/505 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 27 [Kalwaria Zebrzydowska]); and VHF (# 2480, 11651, and 17120).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 27, 211/505, p. 2.
2. VHF, # 17120, testimony of Israel Scharf, 1996; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, pp. 1–2.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 13, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, p. 30.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, pp. 1–3.
5. Ibid., pp. 2, 40–41; *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 13 and June 24, 1941.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 23, 1941.
7. Ibid., June 24, 1941; VHF, # 17120.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, p. 2.
9. VHF, # 17120.
10. Ibid., # 11651, testimony of Leon Ebel, 1996.
11. Ibid., # 17120; *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 24, August 29, and September 28, 1941, and January 9, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, pp. 2–3.
12. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 25, 1941, and January 9, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, pp. 1–3.
13. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 21 and November 9, 1941, and January 9, 1942.

14. VHF, # 17120; # 11651; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 5 and August 12, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 27, 211/505, p. 57.

15. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 5, 1942.

16. VHF, # 17120.

17. Ibid., # 2480, testimony of Dorothy Fields, 1995.

18. AŻIH, 301/599, testimony of Zofia Głowacka Hradowa, 1945.

KAŃCZUGA

Pre-1939: Kańczuga, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kanczuga, Kreis Jaroslau, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kańczuga, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Kańczuga is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Przemyśl. There were 948 Jews living there in 1939.

On occupation, Kańczuga's Jews received German permission to remain in their town, while many other communities in the vicinity were forced to relocate to the Soviet-occupied regions of Poland. In June 1941, the Kańczuga branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) reported 810 Jewish residents.¹

Jews living in 11 nearby villages were part of the collective community called Kańczuga-Land (Kańczuga-wieś), with headquarters in Żuklin, located less than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from Kańczuga. Sometime before 1941, 250 members of this predominantly farming community were stripped of their land. Their Judenrat, chaired by a man named Mörsel, continually requested JSS assistance, emphasizing that Kańczuga-Land was "entirely separate" from Kańczuga. In its last letter to the JSS headquarters in Kraków, dated October 2, 1941, the community was reportedly caring for 18 refugees.²

In May 1942, the Kańczuga JSS described the situation as follows: "Since January 1942, the Jews in the Kreis are restricted in their movement. One must not leave [Kańczuga] and as a result the situation of our community has worsened by 100 percent." Survivor Moses Zellerkraut also noted in his brief testimony that "the Jews cannot leave the town."³

The ban on Jewish freedom of movement in and out of Kańczuga meant that, in effect, an open ghetto was established, bounded by the town's limits; this reflected also the general pattern of ghetto establishment in Kreis Jaroslau during the course of 1941–1942. According to *Sefer Lantsut*, the head of Kreis Jaroslau, Georg Eisenlohr, issued an order on December 18, 1941, forbidding the Jews from leaving their places of domicile on pain of death. "Domicile" was defined as an urban or rural community, a village, or lodging place. The order went into effect on January 1, 1942. It is very likely that the Kańczuga-Land community was transferred to Kańczuga town, as it was common procedure to concentrate the rural Jewish population in nearby towns; however, no archival documentation could be located to confirm this. In October 1941, the Kańczuga JSS issued its final report, giving the Jewish population as 808 residents. This record was made several months before the likely transfer of the Kańczuga-Land Jews.⁴

There is a little information available on the fate of Kańczuga's Jews during the occupation. Most of them occupied Węgierska, Świętej Barbary, and Długa Streets. Szmiel Westreich was the chairman of the Judenrat. Westreich also chaired the JSS branch set up in December 1940, which also included Abraham Turm (secretary) and Aron Freund. The JSS office was located on 79 Długa Street. In mid-September 1941, 17 Jews were rounded up and transferred to the police prison in Jarosław.⁵

During 1940–1941, there were only three cases of typhus registered. In March 1942, the community was vaccinated for typhus. There was no Jewish doctor in Kańczuga. As of May 1942, 60 Jews were employed in nearby Przeworsk; each day they would return for the night to Kańczuga.⁶

Survivor Jakub Kesstecher, who moved to Kańczuga in June 1942, testified that there were three large expropriations imposed prior to the liquidation of the community. In July 1942, the Germans began issuing Jewish identity stamps. Only those who received special stamps were to be spared from deportation. At first 350 documents were stamped, yet a subsequent registration reduced the number to 100. After the last registration, conducted on July 28, 1942, only four families were permitted to stay in Kańczuga.⁷

Secondary sources report that Kańczuga's liquidation took place on either August 1 or 8, 1942. According to Kesstecher, the community was deported to a transit camp in Pełkinie, where a number of men were selected for labor camps, children and the elderly were shot, and the remainder were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. Kesstecher, however, does not mention the murder of 246 Jews at the community cemetery in Siedlecza (3 kilometers [1.9 miles] south of Kańczuga), as noted by other primary sources. This may be because the shooting, which took place over three days (around August 12), was conducted after the departure of most of the Jews to Pełkinie. Prior to their execution, Jews were held in an unfinished synagogue in Kańczuga. There were also 20 Jews registered as shot between August and October 1942. The bodies were buried in a private garden on Węgierska Street.⁸

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Fay Walker and Leo Rosen, *Hidden: A Sister and Brother in Nazi Poland* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), pp. 51–149; and N. Kudish and M. Walzer-Fass, eds., *Sefer Lantsut* (Tel Aviv: Irgune yots'e Lantsut be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1963), pp. xxxiv–xxxix.

The following archival sources refer to the fate of the Jewish community in Kańczuga during the Holocaust: AŻIH (301/4922, 301/4955); and USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/523–524; RG-15.019M [ASG]; RG-02.050).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/523 (Kańczuga), pp. 1–3; RG-02.050 (Fay Walker), “My memories, 1939–1945 testimony.”

2. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/524 (Kańczuga—wieś z siedzibą w Żuklinie), pp. 1, 5–6, 8, 11, 14.

3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/523, p. 51; AŻIH, 301/4955, testimony of Moses Zellerkraut, 1945.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/523, p. 33.

5. Ibid., pp. 1–3, 16, 23; AŻIH, 301/4955.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/523, pp. 46, 51.

7. AŻIH, 301/4922, testimony of Jakub Kesstecher, 1945.

8. Ibid.; USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 11, file 511 (Kańczuga); and file 513 (Siedlecza); *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo przemyskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), pp. 45–46.

KOŁACZYCE

Pre-1939: Kołaczyce (Yiddish: Koloshtitz), village, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kolaczyce, Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kołaczyce, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Kołaczyce is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) north of Jasło. The Jewish community occupied a southern neighborhood of the town called Blich (Beilich). According to the archives of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), 203 Jews were residing there on the outbreak of World War II.¹

The first chairman of the Judenrat (Jewish Council), established in December 1939, is unknown. Survivor Felicia Passal wrote in her memoir that in 1941 her brother, Itzek Fessel (22 years old), chaired the Judenrat.²

The Jews assigned for forced labor would pick up tools each morning from the Judenrat and return them upon completion of their labor. In August 1941, the daily quota of laborers was 25.

A six-man Jewish Police unit was organized. One of its assignments was to supervise Jewish labor. There was also a five-man Polish (Blue) Police unit supervised by the German Schutzpolizei.³

In January 1941, after the Kreishauptmann announced the transfer of a number of deportees to Kołaczyce from Kraków, the Judenrat requested the assistance of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). Kołaczyce's Jews had to convert their Bet Midrash into living quarters for the newcomers.⁴

According to Mieczysław Wieliczko, historian of Kreis Jasło, the process of ghettoization in the Kreis was completed in 1941. One of the ghettos established around that time was in Kołaczyce. The date when Jews from surrounding villages were ordered into the ghetto is unknown, but this transfer included Jewish residents of Sowin and, most likely, also Bieździedza.

Sowin Jews were given 24 hours to move into the ghetto. Survivor Thelma Krugman testified that the Germans designated a small area for the ghetto. Her grandfather committed suicide, as he did not want to move there. Krugman's large family was unable to find housing within the ghetto and received German permission to live outside of its limits in a rented house that was a 10-minute walk from the ghetto. Krugman recalls that one person from each family was forced

to report to the Judenrat regularly for assignment to forced labor, which usually consisted of street cleaning.

Up to 14 Jews were executed for leaving the ghetto without permission, probably just before its liquidation in August 1942.⁵

Sowin native Genia Krüger (born 1935), whose family was one of those transferred to Kołaczyce, testified: “The Germans would come to the ghetto every week, take away 10 Jews and order the Jews to give them a lot of money [for ransom]. When people did not have the money, they would kill them [the hostages], or they would take the money and kill them anyway.” On those occasions, the Germans would gather all the Jews and usually order them to sweep the streets.⁶

On July 21, 1941, a branch of the JSS was established in Kołaczyce with Isak Boryl (chairman), Lipa Sperber (deputy), and Bernard Silber.

According to a Judenrat census, the community numbered 298 Jews—including 82 deportees—in August 1941. Out of eight pre-war workshops, only four were still operating (two glaziers, a tailor, and a maker of the upper parts for shoes). According to the Judenrat, a soup kitchen was operating from April 1 until June 25, 1941, and again from August 15, serving 120 breakfasts and dinners. One of the Kraków deportees, Henryk Blunstein, however, reported to the JSS headquarters in Kraków in September 1941 that no soup kitchen had yet been opened in the village. The JSS branch in Kołaczyce was liquidated by the officials in Kraków on September 15, 1941, and all its members were dismissed. Nevertheless, the JSS archives show two transfers (October 4 and 15, 1941) for a total of 600 złoty to be spent on food in Kołaczyce.⁷

In May 1942, the *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that the refugees in Kołaczyce were from Żywiec and Kraków; the most recent group had been transferred from the Jasło ghetto. A large number of them lived in the synagogue. On April 1, 1942, a registration of men (aged 16–60) for forced labor took place. On April 20, 15 men were assigned to agricultural work. A soup kitchen, established specifically for their benefit, distributed free breakfasts and dinners. The Jewish Police, who supervised the laborers, also helped in the kitchen.⁸

According to Wieliczko, Jews from the nearby Brzostek ghetto and a number from surrounding villages were brought to Kołaczyce on August 12, 1942. Following a selection, some were sent to a labor camp in Jasło. Several people were shot during the ensuing liquidation of the ghetto. Others (as many as 260 people) were transported by the Germans to the Podzamcze Forest (also referred to as the Kowalowy Forest) near the village of Krajowice and were shot the same afternoon. Members of the Gestapo from Jasło supervised the mass shooting.⁹

Members of the Baudienst (Construction Service) in Jasło were forced to dig the graves for the Kołaczyce Jews. Two witnesses from the Baudienst (Jan Rączka and Władysław M.) testified that the Jews were gathered in a clearing. In groups of 10, the victims were led to the grave and forced to undress. Standing by the grave, one by one, they were shot in the back of the head. Rączka, a native of Kołaczyce, recognized among the victims the families of Waldman, Rosner, Kraut, Rand, Szlam,

and others. Salka (née Wald) was pregnant. Baudienst workers were made to disguise the grave by planting trees on top of it.¹⁰

SOURCES The following sources include references to the Kołaczyce ghetto: Mieczysław Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), pp. 131, 148, 182–184; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), p. 78; Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 183–185; Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 238.

Archival sources include AŻIH (210/413, 211/551, 301/4698, 301/7164); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 40037).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/551 (Kołaczyce), p. 9; Felicia Passal, *In Quest for Life* (Warsaw: Ypsilon, 1994), p. 22.

2. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 25, 1941; Passal, *In Quest for Life*, p. 71.

3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 27, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/551, pp. 8–9.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/415 (Kołaczyce), p. 1.

5. VHF, # 40037, testimony of Thelma Krugman, 1998; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krośnieńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), pp. 74–75.

6. AŻIH, 301/4698, testimony of Genia Krüger, 1945; 301/7164, testimony of Jan Rączka, 1993.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/551, pp. 5, 8–9, 11–15, 18; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 25, 1941.

8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 27, 1942.

9. *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 74–75; AŻIH, 301/4698.

10. Extracts of Władysław M. testimonies in Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 183–185; AŻIH, 301/7164.

KOLBUSZOWA

Pre-1939: Kolbuszowa, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Kolbuszowa is located about 150 kilometers (93 miles) east-northeast of Kraków. On the outbreak of World War II, around 2,500 Jews were residing in the town.

Following the German invasion on September 1, 1939, many Jewish refugees arrived in Kolbuszowa. Upon capture of the town, about two weeks later, German soldiers began kidnapping Jews for forced labor and searching Jewish homes for valuables. At this time, many Jewish homes were burned down and looted.

In the fall of 1939, Gestapo men arrived in Kolbuszowa and took several Jews hostage, threatening to kill them if the

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A group of Jewish forced laborers pose with shovels in Kolbuszowa, March 9, 1940.

USHMM WS #01472, COURTESY OF NORMAN SALSITZ

Jews did not leave town within a few days. A number of Jews fled to the Soviet-occupied zone, but several days later the evacuation order was rescinded, and some Jews who had left returned. In mid-November, German soldiers requisitioned most of the Jews' remaining food and merchandise.¹

In December 1939, Jews over the age of 12 were required to wear white badges bearing a blue Star of David. Initially the penalty for noncompliance was a 100 złoty fine, but subsequently the death penalty was introduced for this offense.

On January 25, 1940, the Germans established a *Sonderdienst* (Special Police) unit in Kolbuszowa, composed mainly of young ethnic German men. The German police soon found it difficult to find the 150 to 200 Jewish forced laborers demanded daily. So a Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) was established in March 1940, headed by Dr. Leon Anderman. The Jews were registered and performed forced labor in rotation. The payment for a replacement was initially a loaf of black bread and later only half or a quarter of a loaf. The *Judenrat* also paid bribes to the Germans to halt the ransacking of Jewish homes, to release detained Jews, and to obtain permits for Jewish train travel. It raised funds by taxing the Jews.²

In July 1940, all Jews aged 12 through 60 were registered and issued work cards. On September 9, German officials selected 50 Jewish men to be sent to the forced labor camp in Rzeszów. Two months later, the *Judenrat* arranged for their release. In November another roundup occurred; this time 80 Jews were chosen for forced labor in Pustków.

In June 1941, *Landkommissar* Twardon arrived in Kolbuszowa. On June 12, he ordered the resettlement to Rzeszów of Jews living in the market square. This measure decreased the Jewish population prior to the establishment of a ghetto. On June 13, Twardon gave the Jews only 48 hours to move into the ghetto, which was located in the poorest section of town, where 700 Jews and 90 Poles resided. Now the Poles were relocated to make space for 1,100 additional Jews in this area. The ghetto was bordered on the east by the river, on the west by *Sędziszów* Street, and on the north by the "Golden Row."

It did not include the market square, where Jewish shops were transferred to Poles.³

For the relocation, the Jews lacked transport and feared not making the deadline. On the second day, the German police increased the panic by beating up any Jews they encountered. That night they surrounded the ghetto and arrested 26 Jews, including most of the *Judenrat*. Efforts were made to obtain the release of Dr. Anderman, with the involvement of some Polish notables, but Twardon refused, and a new *Judenrat* was formed with Paszek Rappaport at its head.⁴

Soon afterwards, the new *Judenrat* raised the money demanded to purchase the return of those Jews who had been relocated to Rzeszów. The arrested Jews were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Within a short time, most were killed, and the Gestapo insisted the families sign statements confirming the alleged cause of death.⁵

In the ghetto, clothing and shoes were made from old rags and scraps of wood. Hunger was severe. The *Judenrat* established a public kitchen, where many Jews received their only meal of the day. Smuggling into the ghetto was accomplished through permits to travel outside, arranged by Rappaport for a high price. The *Judenrat* and a few of Rappaport's friends obtained permits, enabling them to smuggle in food, kerosene, soap, wood, and other needed items, at the risk of their lives.⁶

On January 5, 1942, posters were put up around the ghetto, signed by *Kreishauptmann* Dr. Heinz Ehaus, prohibiting Germans and other "Aryans" from entering the ghetto without a special pass.⁷ This measure probably resulted from a fear of the spread of typhus. In January 1942, the Germans demanded that the Jews surrender all fur items on pain of death.

In February 1942, the Jewish Police was established, to assist the *Judenrat* with its functions. *Landkommissar* Twardon enacted many new decrees, such as forcing Jews to shave their beards and demanding a ransom of 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of gold for the lives of 15 Jews. On April 28, 1942, the Gestapo arrested and shot more than 20 Jews according to a list prepared by a Ukrainian informant, who served in the police. When Twardon learned that 3 Jews had only been wounded, he sent his doctor to see them—he uncovered the wounds and left the men to die.⁸

The murdered Jews were buried in mass graves in the Jewish cemetery. However, their family members dug up the corpses and put a knife in each right hand to symbolize revenge before reburying them in family plots.⁹

Three days later the Gestapo demanded various luxury items, including silk stockings, wool for suits, and canaries in cages. If the items were not produced by evening, another execution was threatened. As they could not be found in the ghetto, several Jews sneaked out and bought the items at high prices from Poles. When the Gestapo men were satisfied the demands had been met, they left.¹⁰

Conditions steadily deteriorated as starvation increased. New decrees were issued, and shootings became commonplace. Jews believed that to remain in the ghetto, they must be productive. Therefore, a cooperative workshop was established in

the ghetto synagogue. After an inspection of the workshop, the Germans announced that the workers and their families could remain in Kolbuszowa.

In June 1942, Kreishauptmann Ehaus made repeated financial demands of the Jewish communities in the Kreis, which had to be paid within one week. If payment was incomplete, members of the respective Judenrat were murdered, corresponding to the deficient sum. Each time, the various Judenrat members were summoned to Rzeszów to hand over the money. According to Naftali (Norman) Salsitz's account, Kolbuszowa was the only Judenrat that managed to pay each sum in full, and therefore suffered no losses to its Judenrat.¹¹

After the executions, Ehaus announced that all Jews in the Kreis would be evacuated to Rzeszów by June 25–27. Panic and fear spread through the ghetto, as the residents quickly prepared for their departure. In preparation, the Judenrat used its remaining flour to bake one loaf of bread for every person.

On June 25, 1942, approximately 100 SS men encircled the ghetto and then drove the Jews out of their houses to the gates. All the Jews' possessions were loaded onto peasants' wagons, leaving no space for the Jews, so that everyone had to go on foot, escorted by the German and Polish police. On arrival in Rzeszów, the peasants demanded payment for the transportation, threatening otherwise to steal the Jews' possessions.¹²

The second evacuation the next day was much smaller but conducted in the same manner. Afterwards, thousands of peasants poured in to take property from the abandoned Jewish homes. A token sum was paid to make it appear that this was not looting. Only three Jews remained in the ghetto to run the cobbler's cooperative, making suits and boots for the German police.¹³

On June 28, 1942, Twardon went to Rzeszów and ordered a group of Jewish men to return to Kolbuszowa to dismantle the ghetto houses. The men were housed in the Bet Midrash, now called the "Kolbuszowa Labor Camp." Some Kolbuszowa Jews were sent from Rzeszów to the Jasionka labor camp, where most were murdered or died of starvation. The other Kolbuszowa Jews in Rzeszów were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.

A few Jews survived in hiding, in the camps, or as partisans in the forests. Some survivors were murdered by Poles when they returned home, and many emigrated soon afterwards.¹⁴ The Jewish community of Kolbuszowa was not reestablished after the war.

SOURCES Much of this entry is based on the detailed account by Naftali Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," in I.M. Biderman, ed., *Pinkas Kolbishov* (New York: United Kolbushover, 1971), pp. 56–88; a more personalized account by the same author (after he changed his name) is Norman Salsitz, *Against All Odds: A Tale of Two Survivors* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1990), which adds some further details. Other relevant publications include Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 329–331; and Czesław Pilichowski

et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 237.

Documentation concerning the fate of the Jews in Kolbuszowa during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/545-546); IPN (ASG, sygn. 58, p. 64); USHMM (e.g., RG-50.030*0199; RG-15.019M); USHMPA (WS # N64876); VHF (# 3331 and 16458); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 56–60.
2. Ibid., pp. 60–63; see also USHMM, RG-50.030*0199, interview with Norman Salsitz, May 15, 1990.
3. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 66–67; Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, p. 125. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, file no. 58 (Rzeszów województwo), p. 64, indicates the ghetto was established in September 1941, on Piłsudski and Piekarski Streets, covering an area of 500 square meters (598 square yards).
4. VHF, # 16458, testimony of Max Notowitz.
5. Ibid.; Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, pp. 167–168.
6. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 67–69.
7. USHMPA, WS # N64876, Polizeiliche Anordnung, signed Dr. Ehaus, January 5, 1942.
8. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 74–75; Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, p. 193.
9. USHMM, RG-50.030*0199.
10. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 75–77; Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, p. 196.
11. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 77–79.
12. Ibid., pp. 79–81; Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, p. 207.
13. Salsitz, "The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa," pp. 81–82.
14. USHMM, RG-50.030*0199.

KORCZYNA

Pre-1939: Korczyna, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: village, initially in Kreis Jasło, then from November 1941, Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Korczyna is located 5 kilometers (3 miles) northeast of Krosno. There were 796 Jews living in the town of Korczyna in 1921.

After the German occupation of Korczyna in mid-September 1939, various German military units were garrisoned in the town for several months. During their stay they requisitioned Jewish houses and forced Jews to work for them as servants. They frequently searched Jewish homes and stores, beating the owners and taking whatever they liked.

In March 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, with J. Rubin as the chairman and Salomon Horowitz as his deputy. Jakob Sprung, Chaskel Lutman (or Lautmann), and Raffael Rachwall were also members.

According to the town's yizkor book, Korczyna's Jews were asked to choose their representatives. Apparently, the chairman Rubin and his assistant "Lewitman" (probably Lautmann) disappointed the Jews of Korczyna, as they "took matters into

their own hands and ignored the rest of the Judenrat.” They received a salary from the Germans and had to implement German instructions. Those who failed to pay a monthly tax imposed by the Judenrat had their possessions (e.g., Shabbat candle holders, pillows, clothing, etc.) confiscated by the Jewish Police. The Judenrat asked the Germans for help on occasion. Arrestees were sent to the Krosno prison; there were also cases when Jews were shot in Korczyna.¹

By April 1940, the Judenrat had opened a soup kitchen serving three meals daily. The poorest received them for free, while others paid 20 to 30 groszy per day.

By September 1940, there were 20 refugees from Kraków, 17 from Łódź, and 15 Jewish families from Germany living in Korczyna. On March 27, 1941, the Krosno Landkommissar ordered the transfer of 119 Jews from Krosno to Korczyna. The same day, the Jasło Kreishauptmann also directed 22 Jews there from Jasło. On April 8, 1941, 75 more Jasło Jews were transferred and housed with the other recent arrivals in Korczyna. Most of them were refugees from Łódź. At this time, a total of 50 refugees from Kraków were living in the village.

In May 1941, a two-man Jewish police force was established. One of the policemen, Naphtali Kirschner, would forewarn the community of raids by the Polish police. In June 1941, Jewish-owned stores were confiscated.²

A local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was set up in Korczyna in July 1941 to provide relief for the town's poor and refugees. It included chairman Salomon Horowitz, Jakub Sprung, and Izrael Isak Denn. The branch was liquidated in September 1941. The reasons for its liquidation included insignificant aid delivered, the small size of the Jewish population, and infighting among its members. For example, Horowitz requested the dismissal of Sprung and Denn as their “age and appearance” made them “unfit for the job.”³

An unfenced ghetto located around the market square of Korczyna was set up in November 1941.⁴ Poles—most likely—were not evicted from the ghetto grounds and continued to share some houses with the Jewish population. For example, during the ghetto's liquidation, survivor Rosa Walker and her son Hendrik did not report to the market square, “instead hiding in the attic of the house they lived in, which belonged to [a Pole] Stanisław Pudło.”

In January 1942, the German authorities ordered the Jews to surrender all their fur garments or face the death penalty. The Jews responded and brought even their old worn-out fur hats to the Judenrat, who passed them on to the Germans. Two days later, the Germans searched the Jews' homes to check for concealed items, but they found nothing, and the town suffered no casualties.⁵

It is not clear who was in charge of the ghetto's security. According to the yizkor book, Jews were forbidden to leave the Korczyna ghetto by March or April 1942. The Germans posted signs indicating the limits of the Jewish area. Jews could walk to Godele Gutwein's house, to Herz Halpern's house, to Mangel Street, to the pharmacy, and to Pszysłowski's house. Any Jew caught outside this demarcated area faced

the death penalty.⁶ A. Potocki mentions that a man was shot for leaving “the ghetto” before this, in December 1941. Also, a 38-year-old, Lejb Korb, is registered as having been shot by the police in November 1941; the precise reason why he was killed, however, is not known.⁷

Survivor Aron Neubarth, who moved to the ghetto when rural Jews were brought in (in June 1942), testified that Korczyna's Jews were allowed to leave the ghetto only for organized labor assignments. Those who were assigned to work at an airfield or on road construction in Krosno would gather daily in the market square, then march from Korczyna unescorted. In the evening they would return to the ghetto—again unescorted. Otherwise, Jews were afraid to leave the ghetto and rarely attempted to sneak out.⁸

By January 1942, the ghetto had 700 Jewish inhabitants. Forced labor continued; approximately 80 men then walked daily to Krosno for snow removal. They were paid a small compensation and given a hot meal by Krosno's Jewish community. The sanitary commission continued to check Jewish households for signs of contagious diseases, finding none. In May 1942, Jews aged from 6 to 60 years old were vaccinated against typhus. Dr. Bucholz attended to the sick.⁹

The concentration of the rural Jews of the Kreis in ghettos began on June 24, 1942. By that date, the number of Jews in Korczyna had reached 1,200. The JSS branch was reopened on June 28, 1942, most likely due to the increase in the number of ghetto inmates. The reorganized branch was now led by a refugee from Kraków, Aleksander Choczner, with assistance from Wolf Gleicher and pharmacist Jakub Lewaj. They kept the soup kitchen open and organized a day care in the ghetto for 55 children aged four to nine.

All Jews aged 14 to 60 were obliged to work at this time. Women and young girls performed agricultural labor. In June 1942, Korczyna's Jews were ordered to pay overdue taxes, allegedly outstanding from when the war started.¹⁰

On July 30, 1942, 300 Jews, who were composed of deportees from Łódź who were living in Krosno, were moved to Korczyna. Due to the lack of lodging, most of them were quartered in the town's synagogue. Their hygiene was so poor that the JSS ordered free-of-charge hair clipping, shaving, and bathing for all newcomers.¹¹

The ghetto was liquidated on August 12, 1942.¹² Korczyna's Jews were ordered to report to the market square. The Germans possessed a list of all the inhabitants and their addresses. House searches for those in hiding were conducted, while the remaining Jews were sitting in the square. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, trucks took old and sick Jews to the vicinity of Wola Janicka, where they were then shot. The *Rejestr miejsc*, however, reports that on the same day the SS and the Gestapo shot several dozen Jewish families in the Wawrzyce Forest; some of their names are available.¹³

As for the remainder of the ghetto's inmates, women and children were deported to Krosno on trucks, while men walked there under the escort of Ukrainian auxiliary forces.¹⁴ On August 14, 1942, Korczyna's Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.

Out of 140 Jews who were selected to remain and labor in Korczyna, 70 were taken to the Krosno ghetto. In December 1942, they were transferred together with the remaining Jews of that ghetto to the ghetto in Rzeszów and then dispersed among various camps.

SOURCES The following publications include information on the Korczyna ghetto: Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich i Muzeum Regionalne PTTK im. Adama Fastnachta w Brzozowie, 1993), p. 35; Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 326–328; and Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 652.

The yizkor book *Korczyna; sefer zikaron* (New York: Committee of the Korczyna Memorial Book, 1967) contains information on the German occupation, and a translation by William Leibner is on the Web at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/korczyna.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/471, 211/472, 211/570, 211/650 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); and VHF (# 38834).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 2, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/471 (Jasło), p. 42; *Korczyna; sefer zikaron*, pp. 84–86.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/570 (Korczyna), pp. 1–3, 7, 9–12, 28; *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 2, 1941; *Korczyna; sefer zikaron*, pp. 86, 95–96.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/570, pp. 25, 45; 211/471, p. 42; and 211/472 (Jasło), p. 36.
4. Ibid., RG-15.019M (ASG, Korczyna), reel 10, pp. 90–91. Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica*, dates the ghetto's establishment in the spring of 1941.
5. *Korczyna; sefer zikaron*, pp. 96–97.
6. Ibid., p. 97.
7. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krosieński* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1983), p. 77.
8. VHF, # 38834, Aron Neubarth, 1998.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 30, May 29, and August 7, 1942.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/615 (Krosno), pp. 52, 55; and 211/271, p. 1; *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 7, 1942.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/271, pp. 10, 12.
12. Ibid., RG-15.019M (ASG, Korczyna), reel 10, pp. 90–91.
13. *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 151–152.
14. VHF, # 38834.

KRAKÓW

Pre-1939: Kraków, city and województwo center, Poland;
1939–1945: Krakau, Kreis center, Krakau-Land, and Distrikt

Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kraków, powiat center, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Kraków is located about 290 kilometers (180 miles) south of Warsaw. In 1931, the Jewish population of the city was 56,800.

On September 6, 1939, the German army entered Kraków. At the time of the invasion, many men, Jews and non-Jews alike, fled the city, often with other family members. However, German bombing and the rapid advance of the Wehrmacht forced many to return to the city.

Anti-Jewish Aktions and measures began immediately. German soldiers kidnapped Jews for forced labor, humiliated them in the streets, and also arrested and killed some of them, seemingly at random. Jewish homes and businesses were looted. Between October and December 1939, Jewish homes were searched by the German occupiers, and a curfew was decreed. Anyone caught disobeying the curfew could be shot. German officials exploited the searches to steal or confiscate items that were illegal for Jews to possess, such as gold, jewelry, and foreign currency.

On September 8, 1939, all Jewish enterprises were required to be marked with a Star of David. Also at this time, Jews were removed from breadlines. A survivor, Mieczysław Staner, recalls: "In Kazimierz, the old Jewish quarter of Cracow, Orthodox Jews were dragged out of their homes into the streets to be beaten by the drunken SS troopers and tortured sadistically by having their beards torn out or being set on fire, to the amusement of the offenders and horror of the onlookers."¹

On September 13, 1939, all Jewish synagogues and prayer houses were closed. On the holiest day of the Jewish year, Yom Kippur, Jews were required to fill in antitank ditches. Shortly afterwards, in October 1939, the Jews of Kraków were registered by the Municipal Registration Offices "on special registration forms marked with a yellow band."²

On October 26, 1939, Generalgouverneur Hans Frank ordered the Jews subject to forced labor and instituted special Jewish labor battalions.³ In November and December, almost all Jewish schools were closed and Jewish teachers also



Jews forced to construct a wall around the Kraków ghetto, 1941.
 USHMM WS #39064, COURTESY OF IPN

dismissed from non-Jewish schools. Jewish families responded by organizing clandestine classrooms, where parents or private tutors taught children in small groups.⁴

In November 1939, a census conducted by the Judenrat counted 68,482 Jews in Kraków and a few neighboring places (including Skawina, Prokocim, and Borek Fałęcki).⁵ In December 1939, a 24-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formally recognized in Kraków by the German authorities. It had already been established in September at the request of SS-Oberscharführer Paul Siebert, who ordered Marek Bieberstein, a teacher and public activist, to become its head. The vice president was Dr. Wilhelm Goldblat. The Judenrat offices were located at 41 Kraków Street. Subsequently in the ghetto the Jewish communal leadership had its offices at the corner of Limanowski Street and Rynek Podgórski.⁶ The Germans held the Judenrat personally responsible for carrying out all their demands, and the Jewish community was ordered to obey the Judenrat.

From December 1, 1939, all Jews above age 12 were required to wear a Star of David on their right arm. A curfew was instituted for Jews from 9:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M. From January 1, 1940, Jews were forbidden to change residence without permission, and by the end of January, Jews were no longer allowed to travel by rail.⁷ Despite these restrictions, the number of Jews in Kraków continued to increase, as refugees arrived, especially from those parts of Poland incorporated into the Reich. In January and February 1940, Jewish businesses were seized, and a trustee institution was set up to organize their transfer to Germans and ethnic Germans, with businesses of lesser value being given to Poles or Ukrainians.

In April 1940, Hans Frank determined that his capital city of Kraków should become the “most Jew-free city” in the Generalgouvernement. He ordered that the vast bulk of Kraków’s more than 60,000 Jews be expelled and dispersed among smaller towns and villages in the Distrikt, while only about 10,000 Jews were to remain as indispensable skilled workers.⁸ To implement these instructions, Stadthauptmann Dr. Carl Schmid announced on May 18 that by August 15 the Jewish population was to be reduced to 15,000 workers and their families.⁹ To encourage Jews to leave, those who left voluntarily were permitted to take their possessions with them. By June 1, the Jewish population in Kraków had declined to 54,517.¹⁰ Many Jews left for Warsaw, Bochnia, Kielce, and other places.

In July 1940, the forcible removal of the Jewish population of Kraków commenced. Only those Jews able to obtain permits indicating that they were economically necessary to the Germans could remain in the city. At the end of August, several thousand Jews who could not obtain permits were forced to leave the city, being allowed to take with them only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of possessions. By the beginning of October the population of the city had declined by about 50 percent.

Stadthauptmann Schmid decided to do his part to decrease the Jews in town by ordering the arrest of Dr. Bieberstein. During the mass expulsions, Bieberstein attempted to bribe the authorities to allow more Jews to remain in Kraków.

He was arrested, and after his release 18 months later, he was sent to the Płaszów forced labor camp, where he died in 1944. The second chairman of the Judenrat was Dr. Ahron Artur Rosenzweig.

Between October and December 1940, there was a slight increase in the city’s Jewish population, as some Jews who had fled to the surrounding areas returned to Kraków. To inhibit this, Dr. Otto Wächter, governor of Distrikt Krakau, issued an order on November 25, 1940, banning all Jews without special permits from residing in the city.¹¹ Deportation transports to a number of smaller towns in Distrikt Lublin had commenced on November 12, 1940. Almost 10,000 Jews from Kraków were dispatched to Distrikt Lublin on more than 40 transports up to March 20, 1941.¹²

On March 3, 1941, Governor Wächter, citing sanitary, economic, and police considerations, announced the establishment of a Jewish residential district, a ghetto, in the poor Kraków suburb of Podgórze. Jews had until March 20, 1941, to move into the designated area, which lay on the left bank of the Vistula River. Furniture and other items, which could not be taken into the new accommodations, had to be offered first to the Trustee Office (Treuhand-Aussenstelle Krakau) and could only be sold freely once released by that office.¹³ The relocation period was extended to the end of April 1941, when the last Jews were moved into the ghetto. In the weeks following the decree, thousands more Jews fled Kraków to avoid enclosure in the ghetto. Approximately 15,000 Jewish workers resided in the ghetto area, and another 2,500 officially lived outside the ghetto walls.¹⁴

The ghetto area stretched from Rynek Podgórski to the end of Limanowski Street and from Józefińska Street to Plac Zgody to the foot of Krzemionki Hill. In all, it consisted of 15 streets, 320 houses, and a total of 3,167 rooms. During April 1941, a wooden fence and a 2- to 3-meter-high (6.6- to 9.8-foot-high) wall, evoking the look of Jewish gravestones, were erected around the ghetto, and doors and windows facing the Aryan side of the ghetto were ordered to be bricked up.¹⁵ The main entrance gate at Rynek Podgórski “was ornamented with a huge blue Star of David and a sign in German, but written using Hebrew letters, spelling ‘Jüdische Wohnbezirk’ [Jewish residential area].”¹⁶ In addition to this main entrance, there were entrances at Lwów Street, at Plac Zgody, and two entrances on Limanowski Street. A trolley ran through the ghetto, but it was forbidden to stop there.

Initially, the Jews were able to enter and exit the ghetto more or less whenever they chose; however, this freedom was short-lived, as just a few weeks later the ghetto gates were closed, and Jews needed permits to enter and exit the ghetto. The ghetto was guarded by German and Polish (Blue) Police externally, as well as by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) internally. The Jewish Police had been established by the Gestapo in the summer of 1940 and was headed by Simcha Spira, a glazier by trade, who had been a religious man before the war.¹⁷ The Jewish Police in Kraków subsequently earned a bad reputation for its inhumanity to other Jews, including participation in German roundups.

Other ghetto institutions included health-care services. One survivor reported: “Three hospitals were within the walls of the ghetto, the General Hospital located on the corner of Józefińska and Węgerska streets, the Epidemic Hospital on Rękawka Street, and the Hospital for the Disabled and Psychologically Ill on Plac Zgody.”¹⁸ There was also an old-age home and an orphanage.

The ghetto also had a German labor office, which set wages at 4 to 5 złoty per day, the cost of 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of bread. Approximately 60 percent of the ghetto residents worked outside the ghetto walls, in various factories, at the airfield, or cleaning offices for German officials. Each worker needed a permit to leave the ghetto, and this required a monthly identity card renewal. There were also several factories inside the ghetto. Some were traditional factories such as the “Madritch Uniform Factory” in the former “Optima” chocolate factory, which was owned by an Austrian industrialist and member of the SS. Madritch saved many Jews during the war. The more famous Oskar Schindler also used Jewish labor in his Kraków factory, which became a Nazi subcamp and thereby saved 1,098 Jews.

Others worked in home-based enterprises, such as making brushes, which they then sold in bulk to the Germans. There were also a number of private business operations, which relied on the ability of Jews to enter and exit the ghetto with their products.

Various cultural and religious activities continued within the ghetto. Zionist groups organized secret study groups, and at least three synagogues and other religious study houses remained in use. There was even a café on the corner of Limanowski Street and Rynek Podgórski offering live music, including the Rosener Players, and the ghetto pharmacy served as a place where people could read official and underground newspapers and discuss daily problems.¹⁹

In October and November 1941, conditions deteriorated further as 27 smaller communities around Kraków were incorporated into the city, and an additional 5,000 Jews from these places were forced to move into the ghetto. In December 1941, the receipt and sending of postal packages was forbidden. Then in January 1942, Jews were ordered to surrender their furs under penalty of death. Some people destroyed their furs rather than hand them over. Others stood in the freezing cold to hand over their furs at the designated building on Limanowski Street. Altogether some 8,000 fur items were collected.

In 1941 and the first half of 1942, there were repeated arrests and roundups of Jews in the ghetto. Some had their names put on lists by Jewish Police chief Spira or by a Jewish Gestapo agent named Szymon Szpic, and they were deported to Distrikt Lublin, as the ghetto was too overcrowded. Others were taken away by the Gestapo directly.²⁰

The German Security Police conducted the first mass deportation to the Bełżec extermination camp from Distrikt Krakau, following an Aktion in the Kraków ghetto on June 1–8, 1942. Between March and May of 1942, the Kraków Jews were registered. Those who had trades were given stamps on their identification cards (*Kennkarten*), whereas those who were

unemployed or had white-collar professions were denied the stamp. During the mass deportation in early June, those without the stamp were rounded up and deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.²¹ Approximately 150 Jews were shot during the Aktion, including the poet Mordechai Gebirtig.²² In total, some 7,000 Jews from Kraków were deported at this time.

On June 7, 1942, in preparation for the final roundup of the Aktion, a registration was conducted in the offices of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS). Those Jews needed as workers received a blue card stamped by the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) attached to their identification cards. Those who did not receive a blue card were taken to the Optima factory courtyard, from which they were deported to Bełżec the next day.²³ During the June Aktion of 1942, the head of the Judenrat, Rosenzweig, refused to cooperate with the deportations. As punishment, he and his family were sent to Bełżec. He was replaced by the third and final Judenrat leader in Kraków, Dawid Gutter.

Shortly after the June Aktion, on the orders of Stadthauptmann Rudolf Pavlu, who had succeeded Schmid in September 1941, the ghetto was reduced considerably in size.²⁴

Jewish resistance organizations conducted activities both outside and within the ghetto. Various pre-war youth groups reconnected after the initial invasion and began training their members in weapon usage, implementing mutual assistance programs, and engaging in a variety of underground activities. Important among these groups were Akiva, a pre-war religious Zionist pioneer youth movement, led by Adolf “Dolek” Liebeskind, and Ha-Shomer Ha-Za’ir, a pre-war Socialist Zionist youth movement, led by Zvi “Heshek” Bauminger. The underground groups were organized into cells of five and engaged in various actions. They eventually merged in the autumn of 1942 into the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (Jewish Fighting Organization, ŻOB), which had been formed in the Warsaw ghetto.

The resistance fighters killed off Gestapo informants, stole German uniforms being produced in the ghetto, and



Group portrait of members of a Jewish resistance group, Jewish Fighting Organization (Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa, or ŻOB), led by Juda Lieber. The group was involved in the attack on the Cyganeria Café on Szpitalna Street that resulted in the deaths of seven German officers.

USHMM WS #65857, COURTESY OF ŻIH, IMIENIA EMANUELA RINGELBLUMA

carried out other acts of resistance. Outside the ghetto walls, they set fire to the German garage at Grzegórzki, which at the time was full of Organisation Todt vehicles; threw grenades into an officers' mess; carried out directed assassinations; and attacked German checkpoints.²⁵ The largest attack, carried out on December 22, 1942, was the bombing of the Cyganeria and Esplanada Cafés. In the aftermath of these operations, the hiding place of the ghetto fighters was discovered, and those captured in the bunker were tortured. In the end, some of the arrestees revealed the locations of others, and the underground organization in the Kraków ghetto was severely disrupted.²⁶

The second major deportation Aktion occurred on October 28, 1942, when at least 6,000 Jews were sent to their deaths, and another 600 were killed on the spot. One survivor described the deportation of the children from the orphanage on Józefińska Street: "SS soldiers arrived at the orphanage in trucks and herded all the children into them, piled on top of each other. The younger ones and the babies were thrown inside through the windows of the trucks, onto the children already inside. Their screams were heard from afar, reaching all corners and breaking hearts, but apparently they never reached the heavens."²⁷ Two hospitals and an old-people's home were also completely cleared during this Aktion, which was directed by SSPF SS-Sturmbannführer Willi Haase, who by then had succeeded Julian Scherner in this post.²⁸

Following the Aktion, the ghetto area was again reduced. Then on December 6, 1942, the remnant ghetto inhabitants were divided into two sections: Ghetto A, for those who were able to work, and Ghetto B, for those unable to work. The final liquidation of the Kraków ghetto, personally supervised by Haase and carried out by SS-Sturmführer Amon Leopold Goeth, began on March 13, 1943. The able-bodied from Ghetto A, at least 8,000 people, were marched to the Płaszów labor camp. The remaining people, including all the inhabitants of Ghetto B, were either murdered in the ghetto or transported to their deaths, with some 1,000 being sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp, where all but 15 men and 26

women were sent straight to the gas chambers.²⁹ Following this, the Judenrat members also were sent to Płaszów, where Gutter was murdered on his arrival.

Only around 2,000 Jews from Kraków survived the German occupation.

A number of postwar trials dealt with crimes committed in Kraków. Amon Leopold Goeth, the infamous commandant of the Płaszów forced labor camp, was extradited to Poland, where he was tried in 1946. He was found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed by hanging.

SOURCES Information on the fate of Kraków's Jews during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Arieh L. Bauminger, *The Fighters of the Cracow Ghetto* (Jerusalem: Keter Press, 1986); Aleksander Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* (Kraków: Wydawn. Literackie, 2001); Anna Jodłowiec-Dziedzic, *The Holocaust of Cracow Jews 1939–1945* (Kraków: Historical Museum of the City of Kraków, 2004); Felicia Karay, *The Women of Ghetto Krakow* (Tel Aviv, 2001); Anna Pióro, *The Cracow Ghetto 1941–1943: A Guide to the Area of the Former Ghetto* (Kraków: Historical Museum of the City of Kraków, 2005); Roman Pytel, "Destruction of the Jewish Community in Cracow," in *Memorial Journal in Honor of Jews from Cracow Perished 1939–1945* (New York: New Kraków Friendship Society, 1967); Aleksander B. Skotnicki, *Oskar Schindler in the Eyes of Cracovian Jews Rescued by Him* (Kraków: Wydawn. AA, 2008); Katarzyna Zimmerer, *Zamordowany świat: Losy Żydów w Krakowie 1939–1945* (Kraków: Wydawn. Literackie, 2004); *Proces ludobójcy Amona Goetha* (Kraków: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce, 1947).

Relevant published memoirs and documentation include Tadeusz Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987); Malvina Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto and the Płaszów Camp Remembered* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1989); Mieczysław Staner, *The Eyewitness* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo "Hagada" and Argona-Jarden, 1999); Zvi Barlev-Bleicher, *Would God It Were Night: The Ordeal of a Jewish Boy from Cracow—Through Auschwitz, Mauthausen, and Gusen* (New York: Vantage Press, 1991); and *Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish Family's Correspondence from Poland*, introduced and edited by Christopher R. Browning, Richard S. Hollander, and Nechama Tec (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: AAN; APKra (e.g., collection 450); AŻIH (e.g., 211/583-596, 218, 301, and 302 collections); BA-BL (e.g., R 52III/22); BA-L; IPN (e.g., NTN 39-47); NARA; USHMM (e.g., RG-02.107, 143, 168; RG-15.026M [Records of the Generalgouvernement]; RG-15.072M [Jewish Council in Kraków, mostly 1939–1940]; RG-15.098 [Stadthauptmann der Stadt Krakau]; Acc.1998.A.0248); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/22).

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A group of Jewish men is assigned to clear out the homes of the deported, following a deportation Aktion in the Kraków ghetto, ca. 1942. USHMM WS #07120, COURTESY OF ARCHIWUM PAŃSTWOWE W KRAKOWIE

NOTES

1. Staner, *The Eyewitness*, p. 7.
2. UNWCC, *Law Reports of Trials of War Criminals* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1992), p. 119.
3. *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete*, no. 1 (1939): 1. For an English translation,

see Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1973), p. 524.

4. Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto*, p. 17.
5. Andrzej Chwalba, *Dzieje Krakowa, Kraków w latach 1939–1945*, vol. 5 (Kraków, 2002), p. 95.
6. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 16; Staner, *The Eyewitness*, p. 9.
7. For a more extensive list of restrictions, see *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 667a, pp. 350–354.
8. Hans Frank, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen*, ed. Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer (Stuttgart: DVA, 1975), p. 165 (entry of April 12, 1940).
9. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 32.
10. Zimmerer, *Zamordowany świat*, p. 40.
11. Pytel, “Destruction of the Jewish Community”; YVA, M-1/E/22, testimony of Josef Kohs, February 13, 1946.
12. USHMM, RG-15.072M (AŻIH), 218/1, comprehensive list of Jewish transports from Kraków, 1940–1941; see also David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2003), pp. 141–144.
13. Wächter Verordnung, Betrifft: Bildung eines jüdischen Wohnbezirkes in der Stadt Krakau, March 3, 1941, in *Krakauer Zeitung*, March 6, 1941, reprinted in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 118–120.
14. Tatiana Berenstein, ed., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), p. 111; Pytel, “Destruction of the Jewish Community.”
15. Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 4; Pytel, “Destruction of the Jewish Community.” *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, p. 355, gives a more detailed description of the ghetto area.
16. Staner, *The Eyewitness*, p. 9. Compare with caption on p. 477.
17. Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto*, p. 39.
18. Staner, *The Eyewitness*, p. 11.
19. Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 12.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–38.
21. Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto*, p. 43.
22. Bauminger, *The Fighters of the Cracow Ghetto*, p. 27.
23. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 23 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 619a, pp. 80–81; Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto*, p. 47.
24. Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 62; Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 67; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, p. 356.
25. Bauminger, *The Fighters of the Cracow Ghetto*, pp. 67–68.
26. Moshe Singer, “Jewish Resistance Movement in Kraków,” in *Memorial Journal in Honor of Jews from Cracow Perished 1939–1945* (New York: New Cracow Friendship Society, 1967).
27. Barlev-Bleicher, *Would God It Were Night*.
28. On the October Aktion, see, for example, *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, pp. 370–376; and Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, pp. 69–82.
29. Pytel, “Destruction of the Jewish Community”; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, p. 377; Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), p. 354, entry for March 16, 1942.

KROSNO

Pre-1939: Krosno, town, Jasło powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: initially Kreis Jasło, then from November 1941, center of Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Krosno is located about 152 kilometers (94 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were about 2,500 Jews living in Krosno and another 5,870 in the neighboring towns and villages.

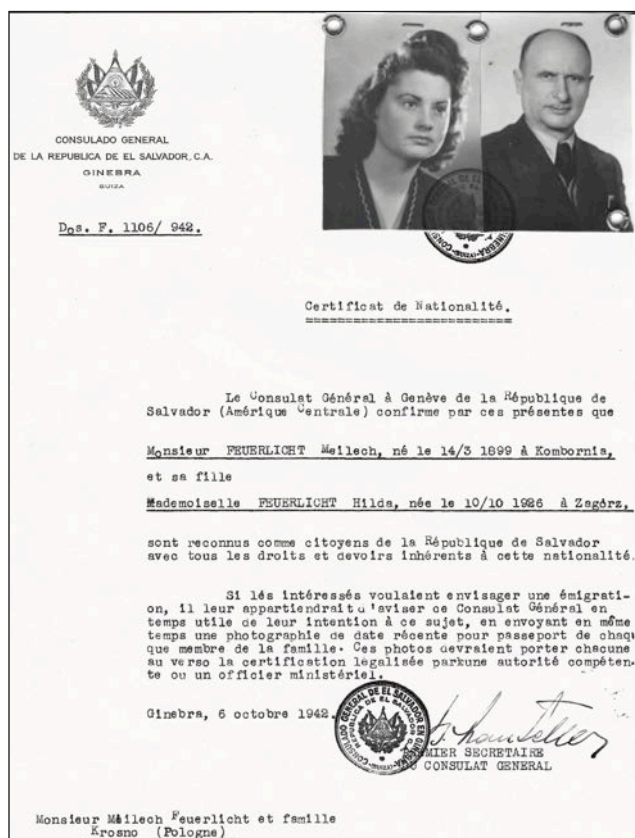
In the first days of World War II, some of Krosno's Jews fled east into what soon became the Soviet-occupied zone of Poland. At the same time many Jewish refugees from western Poland also arrived in Krosno. The German army occupied Krosno on September 9, 1939, and soon a program of mistreatment, plunder, and murder began. A Gestapo office was set up in the town, headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Gustav Schmatzler (sentenced to death by the Special Criminal Court in Rzeszów after the war) and his deputy SS-Obersturmführer Ludwig von Davier. Other officials included SS-Untersturmführer Stengler (Stentzler) and Oskar Bäcker. From October 1939 to May 1940, Walter Thormeyer and Albert Schulz served in the Grenzpolizei (Border Police) unit in Krosno.¹

At the end of 1939 or in early 1940, the Germans appointed a Judenrat headed by Juda Engel, who was assisted by his deputy Moshe Kleiner. The chairman was viewed favorably by most Jews. The Judenrat was required to provide forced laborers, consisting mainly of impoverished refugees, to work at the military airport in Krosno and at a labor camp in Frysztak. The Judenrat paid the workers small wages out of contributions collected from wealthier Jews, who were exempted from forced labor. Several Jews worked at an oil refinery in Jedlicze, and about 160 Jews worked in factories.

In December 1939, there were about 500 resettled Jews in Krosno (400 of them having been expelled from Łódź), along with about 400 local Jews, who were all in need of support. According to a subsequent report, by April 1941, another 600 Jews had been resettled there from Kraków. At that time, there were about 1,400 Jews in need of support in Krosno. In June 1941, the Krosno branch of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established under the leadership of Juda Engel and later of Samuel Rosshandler. Up to the end of 1941, the *shammes* (or sexton) Silberberg organized a shelter in the synagogue for arriving refugees.²

As of June 22, 1941, there were 2,072 Jews in Krosno: 1,187 women and 885 men. Of these, 172 were 60 years of age or older, and 395 were under 12 (including 84 infants of less than 3 years). Only 544 Jews were capable of working (26.3 percent).

As of mid-November 1941, there was no Jewish district in the town, which the chairman of the Judenrat ascribed to his own efforts. Jewish stores remained open. The Judenrat ran a school for Jewish students; it also maintained a shelter for refugees, a community kitchen that distributed about 200 meals a day, and a shelter for about 12 elderly single women. Until 1942, the Jews of Krosno were allowed to live in



Unauthorized Salvadoran citizenship certificate issued to Meilech Feuerlicht and his daughter, Hilda, by Salvadoran diplomat George Mandel Mantello, while they were held in the Krosno ghetto, October 6, 1942. Addressed to Mr. Meilech [*sic*] Feuerlicht and family, Krosno [Poland], the text reads:

"Certificate of Nationality

The Consulate General at Geneva of the Republic of Salvador [Central America] confirms by these presents that

Mr. FEUERLICHT Meilech, born the 14th of March 1899 at Kombornia
And his daughter

Miss FEUERLICHT Hilda, born the 10th of October 1926 at Zagórz,

Are recognized as citizens of the Republic of Salvador with all the rights and obligations inherent to this nationality.

If the applicants would like to consider emigration, it is up to them to notify the Consulate General in time of their intention on this subject, at the same time sending a recent photograph for the passport of each family member. Each of these photos must carry on the reverse the legal certification by a competent authority or a ministerial officer."

USHMM WS #87320, COURTESY OF ENRICO MANDEL-MANTELLIO

their pre-war homes, but the Germans imposed a curfew and prohibitions on schooling and religious observance; in addition, food could only be obtained at certain times and places.³

Up to November 1941, Krosno was part of Kreis Jasło, but following the incorporation of Distrikt Galizien within the Generalgouvernement, in the summer of 1941, Krosno became the center of its own Kreis. In November 1941, the Germans permitted 85 Jews to return to Krosno from Distrikt Galizien, which until June 1941 had been under Soviet occupation. On November 19, 1941, about 100 Jews from Krosno

were sent to the nearby towns of Brzozów, Jasienica Rosielna, Jasło, Korczyna, Rymanów, and Żmigród Nowy. In December 1941, the Jews were ordered to surrender all fur items of clothing on pain of death.

At the end of July or the beginning of August 1942, the Germans demanded a "contribution" from the Judenrat, claiming that it would postpone their resettlement. The Jews managed to collect the money, although they were also providing assistance to the Strzyżów Judenrat.

On August 10, 1942 (the Jewish mourning day Tisha B'Av), the first deportation Aktion took place. Members of the Security Police, Order Police, and Waffen-SS, as well as Polish and Ukrainian auxiliary police units, surrounded the town. The Germans conducted a selection and issued work permits to young and able-bodied Jews. About 120 Jews, mainly the sick and disabled, were taken away to a forest and shot, and about 1,000 Jews were sent by train to the Bełżec extermination camp. Afterwards, the Germans conducted thorough searches for any Jews in hiding.⁴

The sources unanimously agree that there was a ghetto in Krosno, but the recollections of survivors contain some contradictions. One survivor recalls that in May 1942 the Germans ordered the preparation of a ghetto area. The ghetto was to be located in four or five houses on Franciszkańska Street. Jews were allowed to exit the ghetto only with a permit. One Polish policeman and one Jewish policeman guarded the gate.⁵ While some survivors recall it as an open ghetto, others describe walls surrounding the ghetto.⁶ Some survivors claim that the ghetto was guarded, and one needed a permit to leave the ghetto to go to work; others claim that the ghetto was only a sleeping area for workers, and it was possible to sneak in and out.⁷ Finally, a number of survivors recall that the Krosno ghetto was established the night after the first deportation Aktion on August 10, 1942.⁸

The trial verdict of the court in Bonn concludes that on the night of August 10, 1942 (after the Aktion), the Germans established the Krosno ghetto for the remaining Jews. It was an enclosed ghetto guarded on the outside. The ghetto was in the shape of an L and was located around the Franciszkańska Square, on Franciszkańska and Spółdzielcza Streets. There were two entrances to the ghetto: on Sienkiewicz Street and near the Franciscan Church. Between 300 and 600 Jews inhabited the ghetto, and Moshe Kleiner was appointed the new head of the Krosno Judenrat.⁹

According to a report by the Krosno Jewish community dated November 8, 1942, there were 950 Jews in the Krosno area, and they performed forced labor in German factories or quarries.¹⁰

The Krosno ghetto was liquidated on December 4, 1942 (on a Friday, the first day of Hanukkah). Members of the Security Police, Order Police, and Waffen-SS, as well as Polish and Ukrainian auxiliary police, surrounded the town. The Germans ordered the remaining Jews (about 300) to assemble at Franciszkańska Street. The entire population of the ghetto, with the exception of 25 people, was sent to the Rzeszów ghetto. The area of the ghetto was searched thoroughly, and any Jew found in hiding was shot on the spot.¹¹

In the years from 1942 to 1944, the Germans shot a number of Jews who were caught in the Krosno region. In the spring of 1942, the Germans shot 6 Jews, including 4 children. Jews captured after the liquidation of the ghetto were shot inside the synagogue. Around March 1943, 7 children were shot on the street, and their parents were burned alive in one of the former Jewish houses. In 1943, between 100 and 120 Jews from Krosno and its vicinity were shot by the Germans at the Jewish cemetery on Zawodzie Street. Some Poles, such as the priest Jan Zarzecki, helped Jews by providing them with places to hide.¹²

SOURCES Publications dealing with the history and murder of the Jews in Krosno include the following: “Krosno,” in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 329–331; “Krosno,” in Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Libra, 2004); Elżbieta Rączy, *Ludność żydowska w Krośnie 1939–1946* (Krosno: Muzeum Rzemiosła w Krośnie, 1999); Jakob Breitowicz, *Through Hell to Life* (New York: Shengold Publishers, 1983); and Alexander B. White, *Be a Mensch: A Legacy of the Holocaust* (Scottsdale, AZ: A.B. White, 2004).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Krosno can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2832, 301/4924); BA-L (B 162/14505); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124, reels 31 and 32; RG-15.019M; RG-50.002*0047; RG-50.042*0017; RG-02.056; Acc.2002.335.1); VHF (# 1559, 4113, 4364, 9987, 12530, 12730, 12852, 19762, 20714, 22642, 28197, 28463, 28534, 29310, 30456, 33925, 37309, 38152, 38834, 43099, 44867, 45836, 46267, 48091, 50973, and 51382); and YVA.

Joanna Śliwa

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4924, testimony of Dawid Melamed; 301/2832, testimony of Helena Bruder Szmidt Kenig.

2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 31: “Aufruf—Odezwa” [Appeal of the Jewish Community of Krosno], December 22, 1939; Krosno Jewish community to AJDC in Kraków, April 20, 1941; Krosno Jewish community to JSS in Kraków, April 4, 1941; letter from JSS Kraków to Juda Engel of Krosno, June 10, 1941; JSS Kraków to Mojżesz Wiesenfeld of Krosno, June 11, 1941; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 32, Samuel Rosshandler to JSS Kraków, April 16, 1942.

3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 31, report of the visit to Krosno, November 14–16, 1941; “Regulations concerning attendance of the CENTOS School,” December 18, 1940; VHF, # 12730, testimony of Salek Beim; # 38152, testimony of Sol Willner.

4. White, *Be a Mensch*, pp. 93, 96–98; Itzhok Berglas and Shlomo Yahalomi-Diamand, *The Book of Stryzow and Vicinity*, trans. Harry Langsam (Los Angeles: “Natives of Stryzow Societies” in Israel and the Diaspora, 1990), p. 242; “Krosno,” in Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, pp. 329–331, *Galicia and Western Silesia*; “Krosno,” in Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 83; BA-L, B 162/14505, verdict of LG-Bonn, 8 Ks 1/72, pp. 14–15.

5. VHF, # 4113, testimony of Alexander White; White, *Be a Mensch*, p. 89.

6. VHF, # 4364, testimony of Abraham Herson; # 12852, testimony of Enoch Trencher.

7. Ibid., # 28534, testimony of Manny Spindler; # 48091, testimony of Rosa Lichter.

8. VHF, # 29310, testimony of Paul Thaler; # 45836, testimony of Richard Wehrman; # 12730, testimony of Salek Beim; # 9987, testimony of Shlomo Berger; # 38152.

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, woj. Rzeszów, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” no. 91; AŻIH, 301/2832; Breitowicz, *Through Hell to Life*; BA-L, B 162/14505, verdict of LG-Bonn, 8 Ks 1/72, pp. 15, 20–22.

10. USHMM, RG-15.019M, woj. Rzeszów, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” no. 92; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 32, Krosno Jewish community to JSS Kraków, November 8, 1942.

11. Ibid., RG-15.019M, woj. Rzeszów, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” no. 91; BA-L, B 162/14505, verdict of LG-Bonn, 8 Ks 1/72, pp. 15–16, 20, 22–23.

12. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 10, woj. Rzeszów, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” no. 234.

ŁAŃCUT

Pre-1939: Łańcut, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Landsbut, Kreis Jaroslau, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łańcut, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Łańcut is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) west of Jarosław. There were 2,753 Jewish residents in Łańcut in 1921, constituting 30 percent of the total population.

On September 22, 1939, the German authorities occupying Łańcut ordered all Jews to leave the town in the direction of Jarosław and cross the San River, which they presumed would serve as the new German-Soviet border after the latter’s attack on Poland on September 17. The expulsion was to be implemented on the following day. On September 24, 1939, the Germans combed the neighborhoods in search of those who had stayed behind, loading them onto trucks with no luggage and driving them to the other bank of the San. However, some of the Jews, who had left on their own initiative, settled along the way in nearby villages, hoping to be able to return to Łańcut.¹



Jews are forced to dig graves before a killing Aktion in the Łańcut ghetto, which coincided with the ghetto’s liquidation, August 3, 1942. USHMM WS #98754, COURTESY OF GFH

In the first days of October 1939, the Germans announced that those Jews remaining could stay in Łańcut on condition that they register with the authorities. According to survivor R.L., they were allowed to remain in their own houses but forbidden to leave Łańcut, which meant that effectively a form of open ghetto was established, bounded by the town's limits. R.L. does not state exactly when the movement of Łańcut's Jews was restricted in this way.² Historian Czesław Pilichowski states that the Germans established a ghetto at the end of 1939. According to *Sefer Łantsut*, however, this probably occurred much later, when all the remaining communities in the Kreis were ghettoized. According to this source, the head of Kreis Jaroslau, Georg Eisenlohr, issued an order on December 18, 1941, forbidding the Jews from leaving their places of domicile on pain of death. "Domicile" was defined as an urban or village community, a village, or lodging place. The order went into effect on January 1, 1942.

In October or November 1939, the Germans designated Marcus Pohorille to serve as the chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). His staff included Luzer Marder, Shlomo Greenbaum, Leizer Fass, Wolf Gutman, Moshe Sigel, David Rosenblum, Hayyim Leib Kornblau, Isaac Weinbach, and Israel Gersten. Rachel Sapir was the Judenrat secretary.

The Judenrat summoned one person from each Jewish family once a week for forced labor—primarily cleaning assignments. There was no soup kitchen, but each of the wealthier families had to provide for at least one poor person two days a week. Subsequently, there were only a few sporadic cases of typhus and dysentery.

Some of the Jewish houses in Łańcut were torn down to create a *Planty* (small recreational area with trees). In the winter of 1939–1940, the Jews were ordered to wear armbands with a Star of David emblem. They were excluded from economic life; accordingly, all 150 Jewish-owned shops were closed, and by January 1940, their remaining property had to be registered.

Early in 1940, the Germans ordered all Jews performing forced labor to be registered. Of the total of 900 Jewish residents at the time, at least half were newcomers, most of them having been expelled from the western parts of Poland incorporated into the Reich. Of that number, 157 were between the ages of 14 and 60 (i.e., 17.4 percent) and were obliged to report for forced labor. The majority of the deportees were from Łódź, Kalisz, and also some from Piotrków Trybunalski inside the Generalgouvernement.³

The Jewish Social-Self Help (JSS) committee for Kreis Jaroslau was established in Łańcut at the end of 1940, rather than in the Kreis center of Jarosław, in which very few Jews remained after similar expulsions in late September 1939. The JSS committee included two Judenrat members—M. Pohorille and L. Fass—as well as Shmelke Westreich of Kańczuga. In December 1940, the JSS estimated 6,000 Jews were left in the Kreis, of which the largest community was in Łańcut, amounting to 1,300 people (including 400 deportees).⁴

After the Germans attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a significant number of Łańcut Jews who had been ex-

pelled into Eastern Galicia returned. These people were forced to register and pay 100 złoty.

Diana Greenbaum, the daughter of one of the Judenrat members who returned to Łańcut from Lwów in January 1942, testified that, on the whole, the community lived in peace at that time and somehow managed their lives. It was even still possible to get meat from a ritual slaughterer.⁵

At the end of 1941, Łańcut's mayor Bernard Bonnek started to persecute those Jewish returnees who had lived under Soviet occupation and had not registered on their return to Łańcut. Suspecting that many of them had collaborated with the Soviets, the mayor had 20 of them arrested and interrogated for alleged membership in the Communist Party or for being commissars; this group was later released and sent to work. Of another group of 24 returnees who were arrested, 23 were shot at the Jewish cemetery after only a few months in captivity.

Another major round of arrests of several dozen Poles and Jews was conducted on March 20–23, 1942 (or possibly in February 1942). At the same time, the Judenrat was summoned to the Gestapo; only Greenbaum, Marder, and Weinbach showed up, while the other members hid. These three were arrested along with six Jews who had been randomly picked up after the Judenrat members refused to select 10 hostages. Six of those arrested were reportedly shot in the prison courtyard, and the remainder were executed in July 1942. The resultant panic that arose among the returnees caused many to register with the authorities.⁶

Gestapo officials from Jarosław carried out most of the executions. N. Dzibulski, N. Kritzinger, and N. Kirschner are reported as having taken part in several of them. The most feared, Kokut, a member of the Łańcut German Gendarmerie, was discovered in 1957 in Czechoslovakia and extradited to Poland, where he was sentenced to death.

The new Judenrat was chaired by a lawyer, Rubin Nadel, and included Moshe Siegel, Joel Perlmutter, Mottel Kern, David Rosenblum, Hayyim Leib Kornblau, and Israel Milrad. Naphtali Reich was its secretary. According to Diana Greenbaum, the new Judenrat was made up of young people who "had no esteem in the town" and "didn't enjoy high regard" among the Jews. The Judenrat imposed various charges on the Jews, and when the Germans ordered it to collect allegedly overdue taxes in July 1942, this was conducted "in a relentless manner."⁷

From early in 1942, all Jewish men were forced to work. As news arrived of the resettlement of Jews from other towns, most people tried to secure work in road construction or in German enterprises, as such employment appeared to offer the best safeguard against being deported.⁸

On July 15, 1942, the Gestapo ordered all of Łańcut's Jews to gather at the playing field of a local high school (*gymnazium*) to have their identification cards (*Kennkarten*) stamped. Only those with stamped cards were allegedly to be spared from the resettlement, which was set for August 1, 1942. The Gestapo chief in Jarosław, Schmidt, chaired this special commission. In the end, the stamps did not make any difference. Some of

those who attempted to escape to the countryside during this period were caught and shot.⁹

Jews still living in the countryside around Łańcut appear only to have been brought into the town at the last minute. For example, according to Józef Leichter, a Judenrat messenger only informed the Jewish population in Medynia Głogowska one night in advance that they would have to evacuate to the Łańcut ghetto on the following morning, August 1, 1942. Some Jews from that village were ordered to move to the Rzeszów ghetto.¹⁰

On the day of the Łańcut ghetto's liquidation (August 1, 1942), all its Jewish residents were transferred either by horse and buggy or on foot to a transit camp in Pełkinie (14 kilometers [9 miles] away). The Germans selected this former Soviet prisoner-of-war (POW) camp as the place to concentrate the Jews of the Kreis. From there, the elderly were taken to a nearby forest and shot; the others were loaded onto trains and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. The young and able were dispatched to various labor camps.

A group of approximately 60 young people and the members of the Judenrat were sent back to Łańcut for work. They were able to move back into their apartments and help those who had survived the expulsion by hiding in Łańcut. They were then transferred to the Sieniawa ghetto, on September 17, 1942. The Sieniawa ghetto existed until May 4, 1943. Most of its residents worked in labor camps in forestry.¹¹

Georg Eisenlohr, the Kreishauptmann in Jarosław, was extradited in 1947 to Poland by the French authorities and sentenced in 1948 to five years in prison by the court in Kraków. He died in prison on March 27, 1951.

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 287; Martin Gilbert, *Holocaust Journey: Traveling in Search of the Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 203; and N. Kudish and M. Walzer-Fass, eds., *Sefer Lantsut* (Tel Aviv: Irgune yots'e Lantsut be-Yiśrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1963), pp. xxxiv–xxxix.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/657 [JSS]; 301/840, 301/891, 301/1501, 301/2745, 301/4939 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1501, testimony of Diana Greenbaum (Grinbaum), 1946; 301/840, testimony of R.L., n.d.

2. Ibid., 301/840.

3. Ibid.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/657 (Łańcut), pp. 15–16.

5. AŻIH, 301/1501.

6. The sequence of events with regard to the arrests of returnees from the former Soviet-occupied zone—as well as various details—differs in the following sources: Kudish and Walzer-Fass, *Sefer Lantsut*, p. xxxvi; AŻIH, 301/840. According to AŻIH, 301/1501, Diana Greenbaum's father was the

only Judenrat member who reported to the authorities and was arrested.

7. AŻIH, 301/1501.

8. Ibid., 301/4939, testimony of Ignacy Fliegel, 1945.

9. Ibid., 301/1501; 301/840.

10. Ibid., 301/891, testimony of Józef Leichter, 1944; 301/2745, testimony of Zalman Birenfeld, 1947.

11. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG Sieniawa), reel 17, p. 46; AŻIH, 301/840; and 301/1501.

LESKO

Pre-1939: Lesko (Yiddish: Linsk), town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Sanok, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Lesko is located about 208 kilometers (129 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. The 1921 census reported 2,338 Jewish residents, constituting 61.4 percent of the population.

In the first days of September 1939, Lesko received large numbers of refugees fleeing eastward, away from the advancing German troops. Among the newcomers there were 200 to 300 Jewish deserters from the Polish army. According to Leon Finver, a survivor, the local youth set up a self-defense group whose goal was to obtain civilian clothes for these deserters to prevent the Germans from sending them to prisoner-of-war (POW) camps on their capture of the town, which occurred on September 10, 1939. During the ensuing short-lived German occupation, Jews were apprehended for cleaning jobs.¹

In accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Lesko became a border town with German and Russian guards on opposite ends of the bridge over the San River. Most of the Jews found life at least bearable under Soviet rule.

The situation changed radically at the end of June 1941 when the Germans recaptured Lesko, following their invasion of the Soviet Union. A Ukrainian militia and a prison to hold short-term male arrestees were soon established. By October 1941, the Sanok Kreishauptmann had taken over the administration of Lesko, as it became incorporated into Distrikt Krakau. From the very beginning of the occupation, the Germans seized religious Jews and shaved off their beards. They sporadically shot people in the streets for no reason. According to the testimony of survivor Renee Stern, unlike in other parts of the Generalgouvernement, the Jews of Lesko were not required to wear armbands with the Star of David—or at least this regulation was not enforced in Lesko.²

The new German administration ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with a notary named Teich as its chairman. According to Jaffa Wallach, the Judenrat mainly looked out for its own interests more than those of the entire community. Its tasks included the collection of contributions imposed by the Germans.³

A Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) committee independent of the Judenrat was established in Lesko following the German occupation. By August 1941, the soup kitchen was serving 400 meals daily. It closed within a month, however, and when it

reopened in mid-October, it was only able to distribute 200 bowls of soup per day. To help as many of the needy as possible, the JSS only issued meals to individuals on alternate days. The kitchen was financed by the Kraków central office of the JSS, by donations from local Jews, and by the Judenrat. By November 1941, there were 2,260 Jews living in Lesko (684 families). At that time, the Judenrat was reporting cases of people swelling up from hunger. The only Jewish shop operating sold stationery. Dr. Nathan Wallach attended Lesko's sick.⁴

There is no information on Jews performing forced labor in the town; however, registrations of men aged 18 to 50 were conducted at the town hall, and a number were conscripted to build labor camps in the vicinity. According to one source, there were also roundups of young males who were never heard from again.⁵

As of December 12, 1941, the Sanok Kreishauptmann restricted the residency of Jews in the Kreis to those who were registered prior to June 22, 1941. All those who had arrived after that date were ordered to leave the Kreis. There is no information on how this impacted the population of Lesko; however, by April 1942, the number of Jews had changed very little, that is, to 2,300.⁶

A ghetto was established in Lesko in the spring of 1942, and an estimated 200 Jews were shot during the ghetto's existence. Renee Stern, whose family had to leave their market square lodging, said that Jews were being transferred "in bunches" to the town's outskirts. Residents were forbidden to leave the ghetto, but there is no information as to whether it was closed or guarded. Peasants who were free to move around often came to the ghetto to sell or barter food. There were cases of contagious diseases. In 1942, the Judenrat reported spending a significant amount of its funds on burials (700 złoty monthly, as compared with 150 to 250 złoty per month in 1941).⁷

When welfare donations dried up in May 1942, the Judenrat imposed forced contributions. The stationery shop remained open, and a second Jewish shop—a grocery—had just received permission to operate. Nine workshops were still open (two barbers, four tailors, two tinsmiths, and a haberdasher). The Judenrat reported that the remainder of Lesko's Jews lived by selling their belongings or from welfare support. Despite the poverty, the soup kitchen continued serving meals. A day-care center for 46 children aged 4 to 15 had opened by July 1942, serving three meals per day.⁸

A large-scale transfer of Jews to Lesko from throughout Kreis Sanok began in June 1942—for example, those from nearby Cisna (31 kilometers [19 miles] south of Lesko) were expelled to Lesko on June 20, 1942. The transfer was unannounced and conducted by German and Ukrainian police units. Cisna's Jews were marched to Lesko-Łukawica, where the newcomers were forced to surrender any money exceeding 20 złoty, which was then handed over to the Lesko Judenrat.⁹

By mid-July 1942, the Judenrat reported that 365 expellees had arrived, whereas in total some 1,600 new arrivals from the entire Kreis were expected. Regarding the Jewish communities that were transferred to Lesko, only a few locations are known, including Wola Michowa, Baligród (15 kilometers

[9 miles] south of Lesko), and Kalnica (or Kalica). The Judenrat supervised the accommodation of the newcomers. A carpentry workshop was opened to make bunk beds, chairs, and tables for them. The soup kitchen was expanded, serving almost 900 meals per day.¹⁰

On September 4, 1942, the Sanok Kreishauptmann, Dr. Class, announced that the deportation of all the Jews of the Kreis would commence the next day, and he warned the non-Jewish population that any assistance rendered to the Jews would be punishable by death.¹¹

According to Jaffa Wallach, all Jews—with the exception of the Jewish doctor—were "imprisoned in their own houses" prior to the deportation. On September 6, 1942, the ghetto residents were free to go out until nightfall when they were to return and be ready for their departure to the Zasław labor camp 6 kilometers (4 miles) northeast of Lesko, where they were to work in a paper factory. Following a selection, approximately 100 elderly and disabled Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Lesko.¹²

Sources agree that the ghetto liquidation took place at night and that the ghetto's residents were marched to Zasław; however, some date it on August 14, 1942—before the Kreishauptmann's deportation order.¹³ According to *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, Lesko's Jews made a mass pilgrimage to the local cemetery before leaving for Zasław.¹⁴

On arrival at the camp barracks in Zasław, the Lesko Jews found them already overcrowded with Jews brought there from other localities, so they were forced to remain outside. They did not receive any food, and there was no work waiting for them. Over the next few days, a deportation transport of 4,000 Jews, including women and children, was sent from Zasław to the Bełżec extermination camp. This was followed by the shooting of elderly Jews in a nearby forest and then more transports to Bełżec, which continued until the camp's liquidation in 1943.¹⁵

SOURCES The following sources include information on the ghetto in Lesko: Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich and Muzeum Regionalne PT'TK w Brzozowie, 1993), p. 38; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 266; and Jerzy Tomaszewski and Andrzej Żbikowski, eds., *Żydzi w Polsce. Dzieje i kultura. Leksykon* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Cyklady, 2001), p. 252.

The following archival sources were used in preparing this entry: AŻIH (211/636; and 301/280); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 32 [Lesko]); and VHF (# 10770-2, 11086-1, 15248-9, 16875, 25239-3, and 32066).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 10770-2, testimony of Leon Finver, 1996.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, p. 6; VHF, # 25239-3, testimony of Renee Stern; and # 11086-1, testimony of Rosalind Ryza. It is possible that the armband regulation was not enforced in Lesko, as the town only became part of Distrikt Krakau in the summer of 1941, whereas

the armband regulations had been introduced throughout the rest of the Distrikt at the end of 1939.

3. VHF, # 16875, testimony of Jaffa Wallach, 1996.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, pp. 1–2, 5–7.

5. VHF, # 25239–3; and # 11086–1.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, pp. 22–23; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 31, 211/614, p. 30, letter signed by Dr. Tisch of November 17, 1941.

7. VHF, # 25239–3; # 11086–1; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, pp. 22–23.

8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, pp. 23, 25, 26, 28.

9. AŻIH, 301/280, testimony of Moses Zwas, 1945.

10. Ibid. Please note that two different villages named Kalnica are located in the vicinity, in Cisna and Zagórz gminas. Zwas estimates that 13,000 Jews were collected in the ghetto before its liquidation, but this figure is clearly too high. Also see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/636, p. 28.

11. W. Bielawski, *Zbrodnie na Polakach dokonane przez hitlerowców za pomoc udzielaną Żydom* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1987), p. 121.

12. VHF, # 16875; and Potocki, *Podkarpackie*, p. 38.

13. VHF, # 16875. According to AŻIH, 301/280, the ghetto was liquidated at the end of August 1942. Tomaszewski and Żbikowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, p. 252, and Potocki, *Podkarpackie*, p. 38, both date the liquidation Aktion on August 14, 1942.

14. Schmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 724; please note that this publication erroneously places Lesko in today's Ukraine.

15. AŻIH, 301/280; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 445; and VHF, # 16875.

LEŻAJSK

Pre-1939: Leżajsk (Yiddish: Lizbensk), town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Leżajsk, Kreis Jaroslaw, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Leżajsk, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Leżajsk is located about 200 kilometers (124 miles) east-northeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were around 2,500 Jews residing in Leżajsk.

Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, many Jews fled eastward from Leżajsk—by crossing the San River—into what was soon to become Soviet-occupied territory. The Germans occupied Leżajsk on September 10, 1939. On that same day the Germans set the synagogue on fire. They plundered Jewish property and abused mainly the Orthodox Jews. At the end of September 1939, the Germans expelled most of the Jews to the Soviet occupation zone. Only about 350 Jews, who had hidden in nearby villages, returned to live in the town. A local ethnic German, Nelis, was appointed as mayor of Leżajsk.¹

At the end of 1939 or in January 1940, the German authorities established an “open ghetto” in Leżajsk in an area

that had also been inhabited by Jews before the war. The Germans concentrated some 40 Jewish families from Leżajsk and an unknown number of resettled Jews into a “Jewish quarter,” on Bożnicza Street, where the synagogue had once stood. Poles and Germans took over the vacant Jewish dwellings. According to a report prepared by the Leżajsk branch of Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in May 1942, there were 105 small wooden houses and 27 brick houses in the Jewish quarter. The Jews were allowed to leave the area between 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. to purchase food. Conversations among Jews in the ghetto were concerned mainly with food and the bleak outlook for the future. Education and religious practice were forbidden by the Germans, but Yosel Melamed taught the children to keep them occupied, and some Jews worshipped secretly and observed the Sabbath. In 1940, the Jews were also required to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David.²

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed, headed by Feivel Wagner, Shmuel Ozer, and Leibel Katz. It was entrusted with providing laborers for the Germans who performed work such as digging up *matzevot* (Jewish tombstones) for paving roads. Jewish women worked mainly as maids in German homes. In November 1940, the Judenrat planned to open a community kitchen for the impoverished Jews of Leżajsk, which would distribute around 200 meals a day. The Judenrat wrote to the JSS in Kraków requesting assistance with the provision of food supplies.³

In 1941, the Germans enclosed the Leżajsk ghetto. Now Jews could leave the ghetto only with a special permit and only for labor. Jews caught outside the ghetto without a permit were imprisoned in the local jail; 6 Jews were executed in the jail yard. According to the Leżajsk branch of the JSS, there were about 1,000 Jews in the town as of April 1, 1942. The inhabitants of the Leżajsk ghetto consisted of the Jewish population of Leżajsk and the surrounding area who had evaded the Nazi deportation into the Soviet Union and more than 100 resettled Jews from Kalisz (arrived in 1939), Kraków (resettled in 1940), and Germany (deported in 1938).⁴

The anti-Jewish Aktions conducted by the Germans intensified. In 1942 (the exact date is unknown), members of the Gestapo and Order Police shot a number of Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Leżajsk. The details of the Aktion are unclear, since the arrests and shooting of the Jews took place at night. Soon afterward, a group of Jews was sent to an unknown destination. On June 23, 1942, the Germans shot 8 Jews who were being transported to Sieniawa. On July 15, 1942, the Germans shot 16 Jews in the town's square and executed 20 Jews in Jelna.⁵

At the end of July and beginning of August 1942, German police forces liquidated the Leżajsk ghetto: 39 Jews were taken to the village of Wierzawice and shot; the remaining Jews were taken to a temporary camp in Pełkinie, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) to the southeast, and after brutal treatment, they were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Several families and individual Jews were hidden by their Christian acquaintances. Some survived with the aid of Aryan papers provided by Marian Kozyra, which enabled them to register

for work in Germany. Others fled to the forests in the hope of surviving there. The Germans conducted thorough searches of the Leżajsk area for hidden Jews, right up to the end of the occupation.⁶

On February 18, 1945, a unit of the National Military Organization “Wołyński” attacked three Jewish homes and a building of the Soviet People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), killing a number of Jews. The few survivors immigrated mainly to Israel and the United States. The Jewish community of Leżajsk was not reconstituted after the war, but Jews from all over the world come to Leżajsk on Adar 21, the anniversary of tzaddik Elimelech Weisblum’s death (*Yahrzeit*). The *ohel* (a structure built over the resting place of a tzaddik, destroyed by the Germans in 1940) was restored in 1963, thanks to the efforts of Boruh Sefir, who survived the war in a Soviet camp; and Kazimierz Gdula and Rabbi Friedman, who, while imprisoned at Dachau concentration camp, promised each other to rebuild the *ohel* if they survived.⁷

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Leżajsk include the following: “Leżajsk,” in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicja and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 232–236; Chaim Rabin, ed., *Lizbensk; sefer zikaron le-kedoshei Lizbensk she-nispu be-sboat ha-natsim* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Leżajsk in Israel, 1970); “Leżajsk,” in Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Libra, 2004); and Stanisław Kłos, *Leżajsk i powiat leżajski* (Krosno: Roksana, 1999).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/638); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 32; RG-15.019M [ASG], reels 10 and 17); VHF (# 7685 and 47446); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 7685, testimony of Paula Engel; Rabin, *Lizbensk*, pp. 41–45, 271.

2. VHF, # 7685; Rabin, *Lizbensk*, pp. 46–54, 82, 271–273; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, report of Leżajsk branch of JSS to JSS headquarters in Kraków, received May 21, 1942.

3. VHF, # 7685; Rabin, *Lizbensk*, pp. 46–54, 82, 271–272; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 32, Leżajsk Judenrat to JSS Kraków, November 28, 1940.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 32, Leżajsk JSS to JSS Kraków, received May 21, 1942.

5. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 10, ASG, woj. rzeszowskie, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” Leżajsk, p. 345; IPN, ASG, woj. rzeszowskie, “Egzekucje,” Łańcut; Sąd Grodzki w Łańcut, Zg—brak numeru aktów zgonu/1946; Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 95.

6. E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 95–96; Rabin, *Lizbensk*, pp. 21–27.

7. Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 96; N. Aleksium-Mądrzak, “Nielegalna emigracja Żydów z Polski w latach 1945–1947,” *BŻIH*, nos. 3/95–2/96 (1995–1996): 76; Rabin, *Lizbensk*, pp. 130–133. See also Adam Mickiewicz Institute, available at www.diapozytow.pl/en/site/slady_i_judaica/lezajsk.

LIMANOWA

Pre-1939: Limanowa, town and powiat center, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ilmenau, Kreis Neu-Sandez, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Limanowa, town and powiat center, województwo małopolskie, Poland

The town of Limanowa is located 74 kilometers (46 miles) southeast of Kraków. According to the 1931 census, 1,002 Jews were living in Limanowa.

German forces occupied Limanowa on September 10, 1939. Shortly after their arrival, the Germans started to persecute the Jewish population; they arrested six Jews and took them to the nearby village of Stara Wieś, where they killed them.¹

On the official establishment of the Generalgouvernement on October 26, 1939, Limanowa became part of Kreis Neu-Sandez in Distrikt Krakau. The Kreishauptmann in Nowy Sącz was Dr. Reinhard Busch. The Aktions against the Jewish population in the Kreis were organized and carried out by the Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office, GPK) in Nowy Sącz, subordinated to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Kraków. SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Hamann, one of the cruelest and most bloodthirsty SS officers in the region, was in charge of the Nowy Sącz GPK (also known simply as the Gestapo) from 1940 to 1943. In implementing the various anti-Jewish measures and Aktions, the Security Police was assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Polish (Blue) Police in Limanowa.

In the fall of 1939 and the spring of 1940, a large number of refugees came to Limanowa from other towns in Poland. In March 1940, 500 refugees from the city of Łódź were confined within a refugee camp in Limanowa. This camp was, however, soon closed down without warning in mid-April. The refugees were sent to Nowy Sącz, Grybów, Mszana Dolna, and Limanowa; from the fall of 1940 and during 1941, these became



The bodies of sixty Limanowa Jews who were murdered in the Jewish cemetery are prepared for burial, ca. 1942–1943. USHMM WS #50376, COURTESY OF IPN

collecting centers for all the Jews forced out of the smaller towns and villages in the area.²

In the fall of 1940, there were 895 Jews in Limanowa, including 95 refugees. In September 1940, a public kitchen coordinated by the local Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Limanowa to alleviate the growing needs of the local population.³ By the summer of 1941, all the Jews from the surrounding villages had been concentrated in the town, and the population had swelled to over 1,000 residents. At the end of December 1941, the Germans conducted a “Fur Aktion” in Limanowa and imposed a large monetary contribution on the Jewish population.⁴ In April 1942, Limanowa counted a population of 1,402 Jews, including 602 refugees.⁵

In April 1942, the head of the GPK, Hamann, in Nowy Sącz received instructions from KdS Kraków to arrest and shoot all Jews in the Kreis known to be Communists or to sympathize with them. In response, Hamann obtained an old membership list for the Poalei Zion (left-wing Zionist) movement and ordered that all those on the list be arrested with the assistance of the Jewish Councils and Jewish Police. When the head of the Judenrat in Limanowa, Sola Shnitzer, refused to obey this order, Hamann traveled personally to Limanowa. On April 20, 1942, Hamann arrested Shnitzer together with the other members of the Judenrat. They were taken to a barn not far from the office of the Judenrat, where, under Hamann’s supervision, three SS men shot them. The members of Poalei Zion in Limanowa were then arrested and shot shortly afterwards.

On June 4, 1942, the Germans established an enclosed ghetto in the town. The ghetto was located in the so-called Kamieniec area along the Mordarka Stream.⁶ Between July 10 and July 16, 1942, more than 50 Jews from the ghetto were murdered by the Gestapo from Nowy Sącz and members of the local Gendarmerie post in Limanowa. In particular, Hamann directed the shooting of 33 people on July 16, 1942, with the aim of inducing the Jews in the ghetto to pay a contribution consisting of 75,000 złoty, several meters of fabric, 50 liters (13 gallons) of spirits, and 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of canned food.⁷ Another contribution was requested at the beginning of August 1942, when similar contributions were demanded from the Jews in Nowy Sącz, Stary Sącz, Grybów, and Mszana Dolna.⁸

On August 16, 1942, the Gestapo office in Nowy Sącz began the evacuation of the Jews from the ghettos of Limanowa, Stary Sącz, and Grybów, and from Mszana Dolna to the two ghettos in Nowy Sącz. The ghetto in Limanowa was liquidated on August 18, 1942.⁹ One day prior to this, Poles conscripted into the Baudienst (Construction Service) were ordered to excavate a mass grave in the forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) south of town on the road to nearby Stara Wieś.¹⁰

All the Jews were forced to assemble in the marketplace; they were allowed to bring with them only 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of luggage.¹¹ Among those assembled in the marketplace were 50 Jews who were already in a special work detachment (Arbeitskommando), employed as workers for the Vianowa construction company. Another 50 workers were then selected by Hamann for this detachment to fulfill the quota of 100; after

the selection, the group was forced to surrender all valuables and marched to a labor camp in nearby Sowliny.¹² Around 200 people, mostly the sick and the elderly, were selected and taken to the mass grave close to Stara Wieś and shot on the spot by members of the Gestapo and the SS.¹³ The Germans forced all the others, about 800 people, to walk to the ghettos in Nowy Sącz, some 26 kilometers (16 miles) away.¹⁴ At the end of August 1942, the occupiers deported almost all the Jews in the Nowy Sącz ghettos to the extermination camp in Bełżec.

After the liquidation of the ghetto, the *Żulag* (Jewish forced labor camp) at Sowliny to the north of the town continued to exist until November 1942. An additional 80 Jews were sent there from Mszana Dolna. On November 5, 1942, on Hamann’s orders, Fechner from the Gestapo in Nowy Sącz, assisted by local Gendarmerie officials under the command of Leutnant Georg Urban, escorted the remaining Jews of this camp (about 150 people) to a forest near Tymbark, to the west of Limanowa, where they were shot.¹⁵

Once the ghetto had been cleared, the houses in the area of the former ghetto were occupied by local Poles. The Germans arranged for the sorting of remaining Jewish property, and the less valuable items were auctioned off to local inhabitants.¹⁶

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish population of Limanowa during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicja and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 235–236; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 268; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 269–484 (LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/65, verdict against Heinrich Hamann and others).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Limanowa can be found in these archives: AŻIH (301/1203 and 1703); IPN; USHMM, (RG.15.019M [ASG], reels 4 and 14–15; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 32, 211/693); VHF; and YVA.

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 4.
2. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635 (Urteil von LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/65, July 22, 1966), p. 308.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/639.
4. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 328.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 32, 211/639.
6. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reels 14–15, p. 110, “Kwestionariusz o obozach”; and Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicja and Western Silesia*, p. 235.
7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3. It is not clear from this source if these shootings in July were related to the Aktion in April.
8. AŻIH, 301/1703, testimony of S. Kaufer.
9. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 393–397.
10. Ibid.
11. AŻIH, 301/1203, testimony of Mojżesz Ginter.

12. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 393–397.
13. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3.
14. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 393–397; and AŻIH, 301/1703.
15. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 438–440.
16. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reels 14–15, p. 110, “Kwestionariusz o obozach.”

MIECHÓW

Pre-1939: Miechów, town and powiat center, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Miechow, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Miechów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Miechów is located about 38 kilometers (24 miles) north of Kraków. In 1939, on the eve of war, the Jewish population was about 2,500 (out of a total of 6,700).

At the time of the German invasion on September 1, 1939, a large number of refugees, Jewish and non-Jewish, arrived in Miechów from towns and cities near the German-Polish border. The Germans arrived on September 3, and food supplies became short, as the Germans took the best for themselves.¹ Soon the German army and SS were abusing the Jews, and they burned down the synagogue.²

In the fall of 1939, the leadership of the Jewish community was reconstituted as a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was

chaired by Hirsch Edelist. Its principal responsibility was to supply workers for forced labor. A six-man unit of Jewish Police assisted in enforcing German demands. In December the Judenrat was ordered to compel every Jew aged 15 or older to wear a white armband with a Star of David. The Judenrat, which controlled the supply of material for the armbands, manufactured and sold them to people.³

A few Jews who had escaped to the Soviet part of divided Poland slipped across the border for visits and reported on the relatively tolerant treatment of Jews on the Soviet side. This prompted a small number of young people to cross the San River and try their luck under the Soviets. During the period between the division of Poland in 1939 and the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, there was a reliable postal service across the border. The winter of 1939–1940 passed without major disruption. However, Jews were under constant threat of being kidnapped for forced labor, such as shoveling snow. An 8:00 P.M. until dawn curfew was imposed on the Jewish population.⁴

In April 1940, German soldiers surrounded the town and forced the Jews and some non-Jews to assemble at the Miechów municipality. The Germans instigated a riot, breaking into Jewish homes, smashing furnishings, attacking the men, and raping some women. Towards evening they lit bonfires and forced the Jews to burn holy books and religious articles while singing and dancing around the fires.

In the spring of 1940, a German firm, Jaeger, arrived to take charge of repaving the Kraków-Miechów-Warsaw highway. The Judenrat was ordered to provide a substantial workforce as quickly as possible. Well-to-do members of the community bribed their way out of the labor gangs (10 złoty per day, paid to the Judenrat) and were replaced by poorer people. In many cases the meager food allowance the workers received was a lifesaver. There were, however, protests against such favoritism by some youths, who were repeatedly pressed into forced labor. Other parties were used to redirect the river channel at the edge of town or for road maintenance.⁵

From the start of the occupation until July 1940, Miechów's total population increased from 6,700 to 9,860, mainly due to the influx of Jewish refugees. Another 1,000 Jews who were expelled from Kraków arrived during the summer of 1940. From time to time, the local authorities forced people, mainly Jews, to leave the town to relieve the overcrowding. The Judenrat took on the responsibility for health and sanitation, assistance to the needy, education, and other functions. Some of the Kraków refugees were sick with typhus, and everyone in Miechów was inoculated. The Judenrat also opened a bathhouse and ordered everyone to bathe there on a weekly basis. Members of the sanitation service entered houses to inspect for cleanliness and to fumigate clothing. In June 1940, 120 poor people received one warm meal a day. By March 1941, the public soup kitchen was serving 300 meals a day for a token payment. A women's committee tended to the nourishment of 150 children and ran a kindergarten in the Judenrat building. A local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organiza-



A man stands alongside a wall inscribed with a Star of David inside the Miechów ghetto, July 11, 1941.

USHMM WS #18606, COURTESY OF IPN

tion in Kraków was also active in Miechów, although it did not always see eye to eye with the Judenrat.⁶

According to the JSS records for Miechów, in March 1941 the Jews were ordered to move to about 10 designated streets in the south of town around the synagogue, which became a “partially enclosed” ghetto. The ghetto area contained 350 houses, which had to accommodate more than 2,000 people.⁷ The German authorities gave the Jews only a few hours to move in, taking only what they could carry with them. Two or three families were forced to share each house. The few Christians who lived there were moved into abandoned Jewish houses. Subsequently the Judenrat was instructed to build a 5-meter-high (16.4-feet-high) wall topped with barbed wire, at its own expense, around the ghetto. Entry and exit required a permit from the German authorities. However, the guards could be bribed, and local farmers exchanged produce for work done by tailors and shoemakers in the ghetto, so that Jews could supplement their inadequate rations. At the start, there were probably around 2,500 inhabitants in the ghetto.⁸

In 1941 and 1942, additional Jews arrived from surrounding towns, as well as some deportees from Austria and Germany. Due to the overcrowded conditions, about 300 refugees were moved from Miechów to Działoszyce. During the winter of 1941–1942, the oppressive conditions and hunger grew worse. By February 1942, the JSS was assisting 450 needy people, and the public soup kitchen had to increase the number of daily meals. Despite the ban on movement in and out of the ghetto, ways were found to acquire food. Until the spring of 1942, the Jews of Miechów were able to send food packages to relatives in other towns. By 1942, Jews caught outside the ghetto would be shot on sight.⁹

One day at the end of June 1942, the Jews were locked inside the ghetto. Then 50 young men were taken to the Great Synagogue and held for 24 hours. On the next day they were taken to Bonarka, near Kraków, and put to work in the brick factory. For a while they were able to steal away from the work camp for an occasional Sunday visit in Miechów.¹⁰

On August 28, 1942, the Security Police post in Miechów took 600 sick and elderly Jews to Słomniki, where they joined thousands of others from the region. They were held without food or water, under heavy guard, in a swampy field on the banks of the Szereniawa River. After a week, at the beginning of September, a “selection” took place. Several hundred Jews were taken to open pits and killed on the spot. Jews deemed fit for work were sent to labor camps, while the rest were loaded onto freight trains and taken to the extermination camp at Bełżec. On September 4, 1942, the great Aktion took place in Miechów. German police units and auxiliary forces surrounded the ghetto and chased the inhabitants into a field near the train station, where thousands of Jews from Działoszyce, Proszowice, Skalmierz, and other nearby towns were waiting. Many who evaded the roundup were hunted down and shot. The Germans selected 800 to 900 young men for the labor camps at Prokocim and Płaszów. The rest were put into freight cars “sanitized” with a dusting of lime and transported

to Bełżec. About 50 Jews were kept back to clean up the ghetto and sort the possessions that were left behind. During the following weeks, they were joined by some 200 others who had escaped deportation or fled the labor camps to seek refuge in Miechów. Some were former inhabitants, others from smaller towns in the area.¹¹

At the beginning of November 1942, the German command ordered the complete “cleansing” of Kreis Miechow. In mid-November, the deputy Kreishauptmann in Miechów, Dr. Friedrich Schmidt, assisted by some local Poles, SS forces, German Gendarmerie, men of the civil administration, and the Jewish Police, captured about 600 surviving Jews from throughout the Kreis (including the last few dozen Jews left after the deportation from nearby Koszyce, where no formal ghetto had been established) and murdered them in the Chodówka Forest. Their bodies were thrown into pits dug by local farmers. Some who had hidden in the forest emerged from their hiding places, and they too were caught and shot to death. On January 15, 1943, the Germans burst into the ghetto and finished off the remaining 32 Jews (composed mainly of the Judenrat and Jewish Police). These victims were thrown into a common grave at the Jewish cemetery.¹²

Despite these Aktions, about 20 Jews managed to escape. Most of them survived in hiding for the rest of the war. On January 16, 1945, the Red Army drove the Germans from Miechów.¹³

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of the town can be found in the following publications: Nachman Blumental and Aviva Ben-Azar (Broshy), eds., *Sefer yizkor Miechow, Charsznica, Ksiaz* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Miechow, Charshnitz and Kshoynzh, 1971); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 300–305. The personal memoir of William Eisen, *Two Pounds of Sugar* (Buffalo, NY: William Eisen, 2003), includes a description of his life in the ghetto. The ghetto in Miechów is mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 317–318.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Miechów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1739; and 211/680–694); BA-L (ZStL/II 206 AR-Z 40/62); ITS; USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 14; RG-50.002*0063; and RG-50.155*0009); VHF (e.g., # 5821, 11791, 20139); and YVA.

Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, pp. 196, 197.

2. Ibid., p. 197.

3. Ibid.; Eisen, *Two Pounds of Sugar*, pp. 45–46.

4. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, p. 198; USHMM, RG-50.002*0063, Oral History with Aba Prawer, March 19, 1987; RG-50.155*0009, Video Testimony of Emanuel Tanay, June 16, 1987.

5. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, pp. 198–199.

6. AŻIH, 211/680–694 (files of the JSS branch in Miechów).

7. Ibid., 211/694, p. 48; VHF, # 5821, testimony of Peter Gersh recalls that ghettoization took place “a bit over a year after the start of the occupation.”

8. Eisen, *Two Pounds of Sugar*, pp. 48–49. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, pp. 215, 217, also date the establishment of the ghetto in 1940. Other sources date it in April 1941 (USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, p. 123) or September 1941 (Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 303–304). These later dates probably reflect the completion of the wall around the ghetto; in his oral testimony (USHMM, RG-50.155*0009), Emanuel Tanay stresses that the ghetto was established incrementally and probably was not formally “closed” until 1942.

9. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 303–304; AŻIH, 211/694, p. 48.

10. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, p. 199.

11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 304.

12. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, p. 211, 217; another account (p. 200) dates this Aktion on January 15, 1943. Also see USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, p. 123; AŻIH, 301/1739.

13. Blumental and Ben-Azar, *Sefer yizkor Miechow*, p. 211.

NIEBYLEC

Pre-1939: Niebylec (Yiddish: Nebilitz), village, Rzeszów powiat, Łwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Niebylec is located approximately 22 kilometers (14 miles) south of Rzeszów. An estimated 450 Jews were living in the Niebylec gmina on the eve of World War II.¹

Following the German invasion in September 1939, the German authorities had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Niebylec by the end of 1939. In March 1940, Moses Pariser was its chairman.² The German Gendarmerie also operated a jail in the village.

In December 1939, 20 refugees from Kalisz and Łódź were sent via Rzeszów to Niebylec, bringing the number of Jews up to approximately 220. As all of them arrived with almost nothing, the Judenrat provided them with free housing (some families were housed in nearby Lutcza), as well as bread, potatoes, and milk. They also received a small amount of cash and firewood; their shoes were repaired at the Judenrat's expense. A doctor was brought in to care for 2 people who had fallen ill. One of them was a *shochet* (ritual slaughterer), Dawid Reicher (or Rescher), who “suddenly lost his mind.” By May 1940, the town's Jews had spent 3,000 złoty on the newcomers' sustenance but had received only 150 złoty in assistance from the

Kraków branch of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC).³

In the spring of 1940, the Judenrat engaged in providing seeds for Jewish farmers holding small plots. Out of the approximately 50 farming families in the gmina, 17 were unable to fully sow their fields. The authorities threatened to expropriate them as “negligent” and put their farmland under Polish administration. Of the 17 families, 5 of those families lived in Lutcza, 4 in Blizianka, 3 in Niebylec, 2 each in Baryczka and Jawornik, and 1 in Gwoźnica Górna. They owned a total of 49 *morgi* (1 *morga* is approximately 5,600 square meters or 6,698 square yards) but were able to sow only 32, leaving 17 to lie fallow. Pariser pleaded with the AJDC for financial help, as he feared that those farmers would be resettled to Niebylec, “and if that were to happen, a few more vagrant families would come in.”⁴

A JSS committee was later set up to aid the refugees. It acted under the Judenrat's supervision and included Aron Uhes, Hersch Freund, and later, Israel Feldman.⁵

In August 1940, the Rzeszów Judenrat sent 10 new refugees from Kraków to Niebylec. Soon after, a much larger group of 40 expellees followed, bringing the number of newcomers to 64 by September 1940. This number of refugees remained stable until at least January 1941.⁶

In November 1940, the Judenrat was ordered to register Jews for forced labor; however, there is no information regarding the forced labor performed in Niebylec or its surroundings.⁷

On December 17, 1941, the Reichshof Kreishauptmann, Heinz Ehaus, ordered the establishment of ghettos in the Kreis. In Rzeszów, the order was effective on January 10, 1942; for the remainder of the Kreis, on February 1, 1942. The Jewish residential area in Niebylec was most likely established as a ghetto shortly after this date. While not fenced, its inhabitants were allowed to leave it only with written permission. Laborers conscripted to work outside the ghetto were granted such permission.

Similar to other places in the region, the Jews living in the vicinity of Niebylec were ordered to move there in March 1942. An estimated 450 Jews were collected in the Niebylec ghetto during this period.

On April 14, 1942, the Gestapo shot seven ghetto residents. Of those executed, five names are known: Ida Brener (60 years old), Jankiel Fridrich (60), Szymon Mer (90), Józef Graz (45), and Mozes Schneiwas (70). All were buried in a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery.

In June 1942, the German authorities in Kraków issued an order for all the Jews of Kreis Reichshof to be concentrated in the Rzeszów ghetto for deportation, as Kreishauptmann Ehaus was eager to be the first to render his Kreis *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews) in Distrikt Krakau. As a result, in the second half of June, the Gendarmerie supervised the transfer of the Jews from all the other Kreis ghettos into the Rzeszów ghetto, such that some 22,000 Jews were concentrated there by the beginning of July 1942.⁸

The Niebylec ghetto was liquidated on June 25, 1942. Agents of the Sonderdienst (Special Police) killed three Jewish

merchants during the transport to Rzeszów. Aron Blum and Aron Rain were buried in the village of Połomia; Szandla Rain, in Baryczka.⁹

In Rzeszów, the Niebylec Jews shared the fate of others concentrated there and were sent in the course of the July 1942 deportations to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰

In November 1943, the Gestapo shot nine Jews and the 11 Poles who had been sheltering them in the neighboring village of Połomia.

SOURCES Brief descriptions and references on the ghetto in Niebylec are included in the following publications: Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 114–115; Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 266–267; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), p. 123.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/509 [AJDC], 211/918 [JSS]); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC Niebylec]).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 3 (1959): 88.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/509 (Niebylec), p. 1.

3. *Ibid.*, 210/509, pp. 1–4, 11, 21, 24.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8, 14–15; for a full list of the farmers, see p. 13.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 30, 46.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37, 42, 47, 54, 59; for a complete list of all refugees, including their towns of origin, see pp. 43–45.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

8. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 711, pp. 414–415; and Moshe Yaari Wald, ed., *Rzeszów Jews: Memorial Book* (Tel Aviv: Rzeszower Societies in Israel and the United States, 1967), p. 82.

9. *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 123. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 333, dates the Niebylec ghetto liquidation in July 1942; Potocki, *Żydzi*, p. 115, as April 1942. However, other sources confirm that Jews from the neighboring ghettos were brought into Rzeszów during a three-day period, between June 25–27, 1942; e.g., see Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich (Part 3),” *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4 (1985): 90.

10. Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich (Part 3),” p. 99.

NOWY SĄCZ

Pre-1939: Nowy Sącz (Yiddish: Nay-Sants), city, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Neu-Sandez, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Nowy Sącz, city and powiat center, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Nowy Sącz is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) southeast of Kraków. In 1939, the city’s population numbered about 35,000; of these, approximately 12,000 were Jews.¹

The German army occupied Nowy Sącz on September 6, 1939. The Germans suppressed all Jewish religious institutions, including the synagogues and religious schools, plundered Jewish homes, and required that Jewish males perform physically demanding labor.

At the end of September 1939, SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Hamann of the Security Police was appointed as deputy head of the Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) in Nowy Sącz (becoming its head in 1940).² In late September the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat); among its first tasks was to supply laborers to the Germans, which to some extent stopped Jews from being seized from the streets. In November 1939, a number of Jewish refugees from Łódź and Sieradz arrived, and the Jewish Council helped to integrate them into the community.³

In the spring of 1940, Yaakov Marin was officially appointed as head of the Jewish Council; but in October 1940, on Hamann’s orders, he was sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp and died there of pneumonia. In 1940, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was also established under Y. Folkman to assist the Judenrat with its tasks. It was comprised mostly of social outcasts and soon earned a bad reputation for working closely with the German police.⁴

Over the initial months of the occupation, the Germans imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures in the city. These



Polish Jews wearing armbands walk down a street in Nowy Sącz, n.d. USHMM WS #63041, COURTESY OF MICHAEL O.

included the marking of Jewish businesses and a ban on leaving the city without permission. Jewish lawyers were forbidden to practice, and Jewish doctors could treat only Jewish patients. Many Jewish stores were “Aryanized”—that is, their inventory was seized or the businesses were placed under “trusteeship” by the German authorities.

By the summer of 1940, the Germans had established a labor camp at Lipie, about 30 kilometers (19 miles) from Nowy Sącz, and had sent several hundred Jewish laborers there. At Lipie the Jews lived and worked under harsh conditions while constructing a new road. Another group of 300 Jews was sent from Nowy Sącz to work constructing a dam in Rożnów. Other Jews worked at sites around the city, assigned by the labor office (Arbeitsamt). A Jewish Block Dienst (separate from the Ordnungsdienst) assisted in rounding up Jews for forced labor quotas. The German police guarded the Jews, pursued them on the streets of the city, and sent them to labor camps. The Gestapo demanded money and other “contributions” from the Jewish community. Jewish houses were searched repeatedly for weapons, and the officials conducting the searches frequently looted any items they fancied.

In the fall of 1940, all the Jews living close to the Slovak border were ordered to leave their homes and move to Nowy Sącz or its immediate vicinity. The Kreishauptmann in Nowy Sącz, Dr. Reinhard Busch, decreed that several spa towns in this area, including Krynica, Muszyna, and Piwniczna, had to be cleared of Jews by November 30. The Jewish Council in Nowy Sącz had to find accommodation for these new refugees.

The number of Jews in the city increased, especially following the expulsion of thousands of Jews from Kraków in the spring of 1941. This increase in the Jewish population meant new challenges and burdens for the Jewish Council. The Jewish hospital on Kraszewski Street was reopened, receiving financial support from Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków.

In April 1941, the Jewish community of Nowy Sącz was fortunate to receive more than 6,000 kilograms (6.6 tons) of matzot in time for Passover. Part of this delivery was purchased by the Jewish Aid Committee in Slovakia and sent to Nowy Sącz on instructions from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). At this time, 1,000 people were using the public kitchen that served hot meals. In the summer of 1941, some food aid was even received from Portugal, thanks to assistance from the First New Sandez Society in New York.⁵

In May 1941, the German authorities ordered that Jews who were living in the villages and smaller towns in Kreis Neu-Sandez had to move to the larger towns, including Nowy Sącz. As a result, several hundred more refugees arrived, almost all in need of support.⁶ Then in July 1941, following the German attack on the Soviet Union, the German authorities established two Jewish residential areas or ghettos in Nowy Sącz, in the northern part of the city where most Jews had lived for generations. The first was at Piekło, in the northeast, near the Kamienica River, and the second was in the area around Kazimierz Street (also known as Jewish Street). The latter area was smaller in size but more densely populated. In

July 1941, all Jews living outside these two demarcated areas were forced to move within them. The ghettos remained unfenced at first, but Jews required special permits to leave them. A total of about 12,000 Jews were forced to reside in the two ghettos.⁷

Extreme overcrowding was the norm. In some cases, four or five families (20 people) had to share a single apartment comprising one room and a kitchen. There was also terrible hunger. The weekly ration consisted of only 700 grams (24.7 ounces) of bread, 30 grams (1 ounce) of meat, and 20 grams (0.7 ounce) of sugar per person. Everyone had to obtain some extra food illegally or starve. In the cold winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to chop up their furniture for firewood to keep warm, as they were ordered to surrender all fur items. Soon afterwards they were even ordered to surrender their remaining furniture.

In the late summer of 1941, the Border Police post (or Gestapo) launched a manhunt for rabbis and traditionally clothed Hasidim. Code-named “Aktion Kaputan,” this resulted in the arrest of 10 individuals who were all sent to Auschwitz.

At the start of 1942, a typhus epidemic broke out in the ghettos. A health committee, composed of those with medical experience, strove to improve medical treatment and sanitary conditions. At first, the hospital did not charge for medical services, but later a small fee was collected and turned over to the Jewish Council. The doctors made house calls and were permitted to go out after the curfew. The German authorities forbade the treatment of gunshot wounds, but the medical staff ignored this order. There were no Jewish surgeons in the ghetto. In the face of the growing danger of Aktions in the town, some Jews sought to hide in the hospital.

In the fall of 1941, the Gestapo targeted Jews who had fled to Soviet-controlled eastern Poland in the fall of 1939 and had subsequently returned to Nowy Sącz. They arrested about 30 Jews during this Aktion and murdered them. In January 1942, the Gestapo conducted a “cigarette Aktion” in the ghetto. On Hamann’s instructions, they raided the ghetto and arrested any Jews trading in cigarettes. Two groups comprising about 70 people altogether (including some children) were arrested as “black marketeers” and shot in the old Jewish cemetery.

Officials of the Gestapo and German Order Police sometimes entered Jews’ apartments and arrested them with no explanation. They operated together with the Jewish Police, which also participated in many of the roundups.

In the first half of 1942, a German named Hans Swoboda was in charge of Jewish affairs at the Arbeitsamt; he was responsible for sending groups of Jews to labor camps in the region, such as those at Rabka and Pustków. Some of those sent to these camps were murdered there or died from the harsh conditions.⁸

On April 28, 1942, Hamann conducted an Aktion against left-wing elements in the ghetto, especially Zionists. At 5:00 A.M., SS units surrounded the ghetto. On the basis of lists, the German and Jewish Police arrested about 150 people and brought them to the prison on Piarska Street. After one day

and night in prison, they took the prisoners to the Jewish cemetery and shot them there. On the following night, at least another 50 Jews were murdered as Hamann's men shot people wildly in the ghetto.

Rumors spread among the Jews that these Aktionen were only the prelude to a larger deportation or killing Aktion. Ghetto residents tried to find work with German companies or the Wehrmacht, which might provide some security. Some Jews paid bribes to obtain these positions. Many of the skilled jobs were located in the area of the Piekło ghetto, which remained an open ghetto, although its area was reduced by a few streets in the summer of 1942. Here, there were workshops specialized in repair work and trades such as carpentry, broom making, and preparing furs. Among those places employing Jews outside the ghetto were a German army barracks, various construction companies, a school for Luftwaffe officers, woodworking companies in Nawojowa and Rytro, coal transportation at the railroad station, and the labor camp in Kurów. The workers employed by these enterprises received permits that appeared to protect them from deportation.

At some time in July 1942, the Germans enclosed the second ghetto on Kazimierz Street with a brick wall 2 meters (6.6 feet) high.⁹ The preparation for the liquidation of the ghettos also began in July 1942. The sick and elderly were moved into the enclosed ghetto, and Jews capable of work were registered once again. In August the Piekło ghetto was reduced in size, increasing overcrowding. Heavy taxes were demanded from all the Jews of the Kreis, just before the deportation Aktion. Then between August 17 and August 20, Jews from the surrounding towns of Stary Sącz, Grybów, and Limanowa were transferred to the ghettos in Nowy Sącz, raising the number of Jews there to more than 16,000.¹⁰ The SS and Police Leader (SSPF) ordered that the sick and elderly were to be shot on the spot. Hamann was in charge of the Aktion leading to the deportation of the Jews.

During the clearing of the Jews from the surrounding towns, Hamann's men shot many of the Jews on site, and in Mszana Dolna almost all the Jews were shot, rather than being transferred to Nowy Sącz despite the existence of a rail connection.¹¹ On August 21, 1942, Hamann assembled all the Jewish officials and announced that the expulsion of the Jews would start two days later, on August 23, 1942. The Jews were ordered to gather that day at 5:00 A.M., next to the Dunajec River between the railway and Helena bridges. The Jewish Council instructed the Jews to bring their apartment keys with them, tagged with the owners' names and addresses. Every person was told to bring 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of food and 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of luggage. The Jews were informed they would be resettled to Ukraine for agricultural work, but many expected the worst as some Germans spoke openly about the Jews' fate: "They will come to St. Peter."

The Germans launched the Aktion on Saturday, August 22, with the arrest of about 200 Jews. They escorted the Jews to the Jewish cemetery, where they were ordered to destroy all the tombstones so as to leave no trace of a Jewish presence in

the town. The remaining Jews, around 16,000 people, began to assemble at the Dunajec River late in the evening of August 22. At 6:00 A.M. the next morning, Hamann showed up with Swoboda of the employment office and other German officials, Gestapo officers, and a police unit. Armed guards surrounded the entire area. The selection began at 9:00 A.M., and after two hours, about 750 Jews had been selected for labor details. Those not capable of work were sent back to the ghetto. These people would be sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.

The first train arrived on Monday, August 24, 1942, and left two days later; the last one departed on Friday, August 28. Jews were packed into the rail cars—about 140 in each—and lime spread on the floor of the cars was the only "comfort" they received on the journey to Bełżec.¹² Many people had to leave their belongings behind, due to lack of space. Each train had approximately 25 railroad cars. The windows of the cars were barred with barbed wire. The Jews that left from Nowy Sącz were gassed on arrival at Bełżec.

Of the 750 selected Jews, about 200 were sent away to other labor camps at Muszyna, Rożnów, and Sędziszów Małopolski. Those who remained in Nowy Sącz were housed on Kazimierz Street, and most were assigned to the Aufräumkommando, tasked with clearing up remaining Jewish property in the ghettos. At the end of August, Hamann also directed the killing of the patients of the Jewish hospital. These individuals were shot in Marcinkowice, about 6 kilometers (4 miles) from Nowy Sącz. After the deportations the Gestapo searched systematically for Jews who tried to hide in the city or in the former ghettos, all of whom they shot on the spot or at the Jewish cemetery.

The work of the clearing group was accompanied by hunger, physical exhaustion, and the emotional strain of witnessing the searches for Jews in hiding and the sale of Jewish property. When a group who worked outside the remnant ghetto was caught smuggling in food, Hamann had all 38 of them shot. As the amount of work declined in late 1942, groups of Jews were sent to Mielec and Tarnów for other work assignments. The remaining 100 or so Jews were sent to the labor camp at Szebnie in two groups in July and August 1943. Altogether, more than 20,000 Jews from the city and its vicinity perished within less than three years. Only a few hundred managed to survive in the various labor camps, in hiding, or on the "Aryan side."

Heinrich Hamann was sentenced to life imprisonment by the regional court (Landgericht) in Bochum in 1966.

SOURCES The Yiddish-language yizkor book for Nowy Sącz edited by Rafael Mahler, *Seyfer Sants* (Tel Aviv: Sandzer landsmanshaftn in New York, 1970), contains a particularly detailed section on the Holocaust by Rafael Mahler "der hurbn un um-kum," pp. 721–797; another detailed source is the more recent volume in English by Shlomo Zalman Lehrer and Leizer Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz* (Southfield, MI: Targum, 1997), pp. 247–333. Other relevant published sources include Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 3, Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 256–266;

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 269–484 (LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/65, verdict against Heinrich Hamann and others); and Mordechai Lustig, “Ghetto of Nowy Sącz under German Occupation” (testimony written in Hebrew in June 2006; a translation is available at www.jewishgen.org).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Nowy Sącz can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/211, 1203, 1327, 1338, 1703, 2040, 3455, 3456, and 3458); IPN; USHMM (RG-15.019M; 1997.A.0124 [ŻSS]); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Lustig, “Ghetto of Nowy Sącz,” on the JewishGen Web site: “Remember the Community of Sanz,” p. 1; Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz*, p. 257.
2. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 276.
3. Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, p. 734; Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz*, pp. 269, 277.
4. AŻIH, 301/1703, testimony of Samuel Kaufer; Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, p. 770; Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz*, p. 287.
5. Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, pp. 756–760, 764.
6. Ibid., pp. 743, 769; Lustig, “Ghetto of Nowy Sącz,” p. 2.
7. Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, pp. 769–770. USHMM, RG-15.019M, “Kwestionariusz o obozach” for Nowy Sącz, dates the establishment of the ghetto in August 1941.
8. AŻIH, 301/3455–3456, and 3458; Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, p. 774.
9. AŻIH, 301/1338, testimony of Emil Steinlauf; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 308; USHMM, RG-15.019M, “Kwestionariusz o obozach.”
10. AŻIH, 301/1203 and 1338; Lustig, “Ghetto of Nowy Sącz,” p. 4; Mahler, *Seyfer Sants*, pp. 782–783.
11. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 357.
12. Ibid., pp. 405–406; and Lustig, “Ghetto of Nowy Sącz,” p. 4.

NOWY TARG

Pre-1939: Nowy Targ, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Neumarkt, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Nowy Targ, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Nowy Targ is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Kraków. In 1921, there were 1,342 Jews living in the town (16 percent of the total population). In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were about 2,500 Jews living in Nowy Targ.

German armed forces occupied Nowy Targ on September 1, 1939, the first day of the invasion, due to the town’s proximity to the Czechoslovakian border. A few Jews fled to Eastern Galicia ahead of the German advance. The Soviet authorities subsequently deported most of these Jews to Siberia after they occupied eastern Poland in mid-September. As soon as the Germans occupied Nowy Targ, they arrested 12 Jewish community leaders on the pretext that they had fired on German



A group of boys wearing armbands pose in Nowy Targ, April 1940. USHMM WS #44839, COURTESY OF ROBERT MENDLER

troops, then sent them to a concentration camp in Germany. Accompanying the German army were mobile forces of the Sicherheitspolizei (Security Police). Einsatzkommando I/3, commanded by Alfred Hasselbach, advanced through Zakopane to Nowy Targ. According to one source, Hasselbach’s forces murdered 45 Jews in the Nowy Targ area before moving on to Nowy Sącz and Jarosław.¹

Among the first decrees issued by the German authorities was for all Jewish businesses to be taken over by a custodian. The larger ones were handed over to local ethnic Germans, and the smaller ones were liquidated. All Jews over the age of 10 had to wear the Star of David on their clothing, Jews were not permitted on the town square or the main streets, and they could not buy food in Polish stores. From November 12, 1939, Nowy Targ came under the supervision of SS-Hauptsturmführer Robert Philip Weissmann, the head of the Security Police in Kreis Neumarkt, whose headquarters was located in Zakopane.

The Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of 12 members chaired by Meir Ginsberg. The Jewish Council’s duties included preparing lists of Jews for forced labor and collecting “contributions” for the Germans. No Jewish police force was created. The Jews were conscripted to perform various forced labor assignments in the town and for the Germans. Jews from Nowy Targ also worked in a stone

quarry in Zakopane. The workers received meager food rations and had to work long hours. They were able to receive parcels from relatives provided an “Aryan” delivered the parcels to the Zakopane Judenrat for distribution.²

The Nowy Targ “Jewish residential area” (open ghetto) was created in May 1941. It was located between Kraśnińskiego, Waksmund, Nadwodna, Jan Kazimierz, and Dorota Streets. Its area was about 1,000 square meters (1,196 square yards). Initially about 2,000 Jews from Nowy Targ and the surrounding region were concentrated there. According to a report by the Kreishauptmann in Nowy Targ, written at the beginning of June 1941, the area around Zakopane had been cleared of Jews up to the gates of Nowy Targ. “The Jews in Neumarkt were currently being concentrated in a ghetto, which later on was also to absorb the Jews from the other locations [in the Kreis].”³ The area of the open ghetto was very small and dilapidated. The Jews were persecuted and harassed. For example, the Weissmann family was killed because they bore the same name as the head of the Security Police in Zakopane, Robert Weissmann. From October 15, 1941, leaving the Jewish residential area without special permission was punishable by death.⁴

Random executions of Jews intensified. The Germans executed several Jews from the Nowy Targ ghetto in the Bolfark Forest near the town. On June 8, 1942, the Germans took several Jews from a feather-plucking plant, shooting and burying them at the Jewish cemetery. Also, Jews charged with trading in foreign currency were taken to the SS training school in Rabka, tortured, and murdered there.⁵

At the end of July or the beginning of August 1942, SS-Oberführer Scherner, the commander of the Security Police in Kraków, ordered that the Jews from Szczawnica, Krasiuski, and other villages should be concentrated in Nowy Targ briefly, prior to their deportation. Those who were too old or sick to be moved were to be shot on the spot. During August these orders were implemented, resulting in an additional influx of several hundred Jews into the Nowy Targ ghetto. In Szczawnica, for example, a Security Police detachment commanded by Richard Sehmisch shot 39 Jews, sending the remainder to Nowy Targ.⁶

On August 29, 1942, the Nowy Targ Judenrat, on instructions from the Germans, announced that all Jews were required to assemble in the Piłsudski sports stadium the following morning. The Jews were told they would be sent to work in Reichskommissariat Ukraine and that they should bring a small amount of luggage. About 3,500 Jews assembled at the stadium, where German and Polish police surrounded them. Then SS-Hauptsturmführer Weissmann carried out a selection. Old and infirm Jews were hurriedly sent to one side together with the members of the Judenrat. Jews with special skills or craftsmen were also selected into another group on the basis of a list from the work office (Arbeitsamt) and separated from their families. The Jews were then made to surrender their valuables, and those chosen for work were loaded onto trucks and taken to a collection point under guard. The mass of the Jews were then escorted to the railway station and

loaded onto cattle trains to be sent to the Bełżec extermination camp; Jews from the neighboring town of Jordanów were added to the deportation train, following a similar Aktion there on the same day. In Nowy Targ, the elderly and infirm together with the Judenrat members were taken and shot at the Jewish cemetery. Polish members of the conscripted Construction Service (Baudienst) filled in the mass grave. David Grassgreen managed to escape the shooting, as he knew the hidden trails in the area. Following the ghetto liquidation, the German and Polish police forces combed the Jewish houses, looking for those in hiding. Over the following months a number of Jews were captured and shot in the Nowy Targ area.⁷

A labor camp was established in Nowy Targ on August 30, 1942. It was located in a barracks behind the train station. The labor force consisted of approximately 35 Jews who had been spared deportation from the Nowy Targ ghetto. The prisoners performed the following types of work: carpentry, plumbing, shoemaking, and sewing. The prisoners also had to sort the clothing that belonged to the murdered Jews. About 10 of the prisoners died in a typhus epidemic. The Germans executed some inmates outside the labor camp. When the camp was liquidated on May 25, 1944, the remaining prisoners were taken to the Płaszów forced labor camp.⁸

After the war, a few Jewish survivors returned to Nowy Targ and established a local Jewish committee in the town. According to the yizkor book, Poles belonging to the extremist right-wing organization NSZ (National Armed Forces) began attacking and harassing the Jews. Chairman Klinger and six other Jews were given 24 hours notice to leave town; they were shot before the required time elapsed. David Grassgreen, who escaped from the cemetery during the August 1942 Aktion, was also murdered following his requests to the Polish Ministry of Interior for the return of the synagogue, which had been converted into a movie theater. This wave of antisemitic violence convinced the remaining Jews not to remain in Poland; most immigrated to Israel and the United States.⁹

SOURCES Publications dealing with the fate of the Jews in Nowy Targ include the following: Michael Walzer-Fass, ed., *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ and Vicinity. Translation from Sefer Nowy Targve ha sevilla* (Tel Aviv: Townspeople Association of Nowy Targ and Vicinity, 1979); and Mieczysław Adamczyk, ed., *Dzieje Miasta Nowego Targu* (Kraków: Drukarnia Narodowa w Krakowie, 1991).

Documents on the extermination of the Jews in Nowy Targ can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1667, 1781, 4707); BA-L; IPN (e.g., Wyrok p-ko Robertowi Weissmannowi i Richardowi Schmiesłowi); USHMM (Acc.2004.368; Acc.1997.A.0166; RG.15.019M, reels # 4 and 14; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 36); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1420 and 1172; O-6/410/5564276; O-41/650/5732776).

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NOTES

1. Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, pp. 56–57.
2. Ibid., pp. 56–57, 75–76; verdict in the case of Robert Philip Weissmann, LG-Frei, 1 Ks 1/64, June 25, 1965, published in

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, vol. 21 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 593, pp. 170–219.

3. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 342; Report of the Kreishauptmann in Nowy Targ for the period from September 17, 1939, to May 31, 1941, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rutten & Loening, 1961), p. 64; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14 (ASG sygn. 48 b), “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” p. 189.

4. *JuNS-V*, vol. 21, Lfd. Nr. 593, p. 182; A. Eisenbach, “Ludność żydowska w Królestwie Polskim w Końcu XIX w.,” *BŻIH*, 30 (1959): 96; Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, pp. 57–58; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14 (ASG sygn. 48b), p. 189.

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 4, docs. 552 and 553, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych,” and doc. 498 Protokół, June 10, 1945; IPN, Ankieta GK “Represje . . .” pow. Nowy Targ, woj. krakowskie; Sąd Pow. w Nowym Targu, Zg 13/46, 43/48, 6/49; Ankieta GK “Egzekucje” Nowy Targ, woj. krakowskie.

6. Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, p. 69; *JuNS-V*, vol. 21, Lfd. Nr. 593, pp. 184–185.

7. Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, p. 60; *JuNS-V*, vol. 21, Lfd. Nr. 593, pp. 186–189; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 4, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” doc. 548; AŻIH, testimonies of Józef Winstrauch (301/1781) and Maryla Pastor (301/4707, 1667). Also see *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo nowosądeckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), pp. 78–83; this source indicates that some 1,500 Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in 1942, but this figure may be too high.

8. IPN, ASG, sygn. 48a, p. 188; IPN, Kolekcja “Z,” sygn. 924; OKKr, S 33/71; Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, p. 62; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 342.

9. Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ*, p. 72.

OLPINY

Pre-1939: Ołpiny, village, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Ołpiny, Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ołpiny, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Ołpiny is located approximately 30 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of Jasło. There were 185 Jews living there in 1921, out of a total population of 2,674.

The Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) chaired by Chaskiel Machler. Benjamin Wróbel served as the Judenrat’s secretary. In May 1940, there were 225 Jews in Ołpiny, including 50 refugees from Łódź who settled there in December 1939. In describing the community’s situation at the time, the Judenrat wrote to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) that Ołpiny’s Jews are no longer engaged in any kind of trade, which had been their main pre-war source of income.¹

According to Arnon Rubin, the Germans restricted the freedom of movement of all Jews soon after the occupation, allowing them to go only to the nearest village, and so depriving them of their means of income. The Judenrat delivered 30 Jews a day for forced labor. It also collected money and valuables at the Germans’ request.

In February 1941, the Judenrat reported 299 Jewish residents. A number of Jews were receiving some food from surrounding estates owned by Poles.²

According to Mieczysław Wieliczko, historian of Jasło County, the process of ghettoization in the Kreis was completed in 1941, while some Jews were still allowed to live in villages. One of the ghettos established around that time was in Ołpiny.

Wieliczko established that in the spring of 1942 part of the Jewish population from the ghetto in Ołpiny was moved to Jasło and to Biecz. Rubin, who maintains that no ghetto was established in Ołpiny, dates the resettlement to Biecz in the summer of 1942. Prior to this deportation (June and July 1942), 40 men were sent to the labor camp in Płaszów. The remaining 120 men, women, and children were taken on August 9, 1942, to the Dąbry Forest near Rzepiennik Biskupi and shot there.

SOURCES The following publications include references to the fate of the Jews of Ołpiny: Mieczysław Wieliczko, *Jasielskie w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), pp. 131, 182–184; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 259–260.

Archival sources can be found in AŻIH (210/524) and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/524 (Ołpiny), pp. 1–3.
2. Ibid., pp. 11, 19–20.

PILICA

Pre-1939: Pilica (Yiddish: Piltz), town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: initially a town, reclassified in 1941 as a village, Kreis Miechow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: town, województwo śląskie, Poland

The town of Pilica is located 51 kilometers (32 miles) north-northwest of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were 1,763 Jews living there.¹

Pilica was occupied by German troops on September 5, 1939, and it soon came under the administration of the German civil authorities (the Landkommissar for Kreis Miechow) based in nearby Wolbrom. A German Gendarmerie post was set up in Pilica Castle; there was also a unit of Polish (Blue) Police in Pilica. Until the autumn of 1941, however, Jews were



Pre-war photograph of the Berman family in front of a wooden synagogue in Pilica.

USHMM WS #11901, COURTESY OF ANN BERMAN DAY

allowed to conduct their lives in nearly the same manner as they did before the war.²

By March 1940, the German authorities had set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Ber (Berek) Fogiel as chairman, Ch. Zielony as secretary, and Bencion Oberbaum, M. Blumenfeld, Gutman (Gitman) Wajnsztok, and Dr. Jakub (Jan) Szabszewicz (Szabsiewicz) as the remaining members.³

A Jewish health-care organization, Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia (TOŻ), resumed its activities in Pilica on June 25, 1940, under the supervision of Dr. Szabsiewicz. Due to the scarcity of resources, it could only distribute small amounts of basic medicine, and yet it provided special assistance to Jewish children by serving them a glass of milk, two white rolls, and a slice of bread daily. At first, only 20 children were in its care, but by the end of 1940, it was assisting up to 80. From September 22, 1940, the Central Organization for Orphan Care (CENTOS) was also active in Pilica.⁴

By the end of November 1940, the number of Jews in Pilica had increased by 500, reaching 2,253. Most of the newcomers were either deportees from Silesia or refugees from Kraków or the town of Szczekociny, which had been burned down.

On January 1, 1941, the authorities revoked Pilica's town status, and as a result, all residents were divested of their right to food rations, as they were now treated as village residents.⁵

A six-man Jewish Police unit was set up on the orders of the Kreishauptmann in April 1941. Its number increased to 10 in May 1942, at which time a sentry was also posted outside the ghetto.⁶

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Pilica to take over provision of welfare from the Judenrat on July 31, 1941. The committee was chaired by Dr. Szabsiewicz, and it included Bencion Oberbaum and Abram Borzykowski. The Judenrat members Fogiel and Wajnsztok soon replaced the latter two. Szabsiewicz resigned in protest, accusing the Judenrat of obstruction of welfare in Pilica.⁷

By October 1941, 191 deportees from Miechów and Wolbrom had been resettled in Pilica with an additional 200

Jews from other localities. The Judenrat registered 2,500 Jews living in Pilica in December. This number had increased slightly—to 2,572—by April 1942.⁸

According to a survivor, Helena Rusinek, the situation of the Jews in Pilica changed after Polish partisans shot two Polish policemen on February 28, 1942. Within days, two retaliatory Aktions followed in which 11 Pilica residents were arrested and machine-gunned in a public execution. During these Aktions, three Jews were also shot separately.

After that, approximately 60 young Jews began to meet and discuss the possibility of resistance. Two rifles were purchased with money received from Chairman Fogiel, who also informed them of the location of three hidden revolvers and let the group use the typewriter to produce leaflets. Organized in cells of 5 people each, they entered into an agreement with local Polish partisans. The two groups undertook some joint sabotage operations, such as taking down road signs, loosening railroad ties, and distributing flyers. They further communicated with partisan groups in Jędrzejów and Opoczno and collected 100,000 złoty by going into peasants' homes and demanding a levy on "pain of death." Following the disappearance of one of their most active members—Herbert—Chairman Fogiel was no longer kept informed of the unit's plans, as circumstantial evidence indicated that he had betrayed Herbert to the Germans.⁹

According to JSS records, in April 1942, no separate Jewish quarter had yet been established in Pilica. Possible confirmation of the existence of an "open ghetto" in Pilica just prior to the liquidation Aktion in September comes from the testimony of one survivor regarding the deportation of Pilica's Jews: "there was no closed ghetto in the town. Jews lived on one street."¹⁰

By July 1942, 100 Jews had been sent to the Płaszów labor camp, and another 75 to the Biezanów labor camp. A special committee was set up to collect money and food for their sustenance. The Jewish Police was tasked with its weekly delivery.¹¹ By August 1942, workshops had been set up in the synagogue with 50 tailors supported by 40 assistants sewing pants.

It was at this time that the Miechów Kreiskommissar visited Pilica and promoted the secretary of the Jewish Police, Leon Teuchler, to its commander. He also increased its strength from 10 to 14 members.¹²

Pilica's Jews were aware of the partial deportation of the nearby Słomniki community that took place in early June 1942. On June 8, 1942, the Judenrat chairman warned the community that "[when the time comes] every able Jew must flee to the forest."¹³

In the event of a deportation Aktion, the community's Jewish partisans planned to stock each house with gasoline, set the town on fire, and "die on the spot." A few weeks later, on September 5, 1942, forces of the SS, the Gestapo from Miechów and Wolbrom, and Gendarmes surrounded the town. All Jews were summoned to the market square, where they were held all day without any food or water. Approximately 20 people, including children, were shot.¹⁴

According to Estera Rusinek, 1,080 Jews were deported, while over 1,000 managed to flee.¹⁵ However, the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, which dates the liquidation Aktion on September 6, states that the majority of the 3,000 able-bodied Jews were sent to work camps and the remainder (1,060) to the Bełżec extermination camp from Wolbrom.

By September 12, Chairman Fogiel had received the Germans' permission to establish an open, remnant ghetto in a separate part of the town, where somewhere between several hundred and 3,000 Jews gathered. They were confined to a few houses near the synagogue under very overcrowded conditions. They worked gathering, cleaning, and sorting abandoned Jewish property.

With the help of local Poles, those partisans who had evaded the deportation built four separate bunkers in the vicinity and moved out of the ghetto. Soon afterwards, a group of ghetto inhabitants were removed, some of them being sent to work camps.¹⁶

A police order issued on November 10, 1942 (effective December 1, 1942), listed those towns in Distrikt Krakau where the presence of Jews in ghettos was still permitted; Pilica was not one of them. The penalty for Jews found outside of ghettos was death. A number of Pilica residents managed to move to the Radomsko, Będzin, and Sosnowiec ghettos before the Pilica ghetto was liquidated in November 1942 and its residents murdered.¹⁷

The Jewish underground failed in its attempt to organize local resistance. Most of the partisans were killed when the Germans discovered their bunkers in mid-January 1943. Some 70 Jews were reportedly shot in Pilica and its vicinity that month. Some of the Poles who provided shelter, including Maria Rogozińska and her one-year-old son Piotr, and certain Polish policemen were also shot.¹⁸

Of the few Jews known to have survived from Pilica, most passed through a series of forced labor and concentration camps, including several who were inmates of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

SOURCES The main published account on the fate of the Jewish community of Pilica during the Holocaust is Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 388–392. Reference to a ghetto in Pilica is made also in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 988–989.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/545 [AJDC]; 211/789-791 [JSS]; and 301/520 and 2856 [Relacje]); and USHMM (RG-15.079 [Ring I/122]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 38, 211/789 (Pilica), p. 10.

2. AŻIH, 301/520, testimony of Estera Rusinek, n.d.
3. According to *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 16, 1942, Uberbaum died in February 1942; *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 5, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/545 (Pilica), p. 4; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/789, pp. 33, 39.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/789, pp. 2, 8, 12–13; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/545, pp. 5–8.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/789, p. 61.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 3, 1942.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/790 (Pilica), pp. 1, 9, 11–14.
8. Ibid., 211/791, pp. 3, 9.
9. AŻIH, 301/520; in her description of events, Rusinek is frequently off by one year.
10. Ibid., 301/2856, testimony of Helena Lederman, 1947. It is possible that Lederman was referring to the open remnant ghetto that was set up later, as she refers to the Aktion as the “last deportation,” but she mentions simultaneous Aktions in Wolbrom and Żarnowiec, which probably indicate rather the September deportation.
11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 3, 1942; and USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/791, pp. 41, 43, 46.
12. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 28, 1942.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/791, p. 53.
14. AŻIH, 301/520.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Getto warszawskie, lipiec 1942–styczeń 1943* (Warsaw: PWN, 1980), p. 309.
18. AŻIH, 301/520. Note that Shmuel Krakowski in *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984), p. 234 and in his later article “Żydowski opór w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie,” p. 285, in e.d. D. Libionka, *Akcja Reinhardt: Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004) – reports about armed resistance in Pilica on September 5, 1943, long after the small ghettos in the Distrikt were liquidated (or gives this date as the date of the ghetto liquidation). Krakowski further connects these purported uprisings with a larger wave of Jewish resistance in 1943, i.e., in Warsaw or Częstochowa. The chronological error most likely derives from Rusinek’s testimony (AŻIH, 301/520).

PILZNO

Pre-1939: Pilzno, town, Dębica powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Pilzno is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) east of Kraków. A census in 1921 recorded 752 Jews (21.2 percent of the total population) living there. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, 788 Jews were residing in the town, out of a total population of 1,342.

German forces occupied the town about one week after the start of the invasion on September 1, 1939. When the Germans established the Generalgouvernement in late October 1939, Pilzno became part of Kreis Debica within Distrikt Krakau.

In Pilzno there was an outpost of the German Gendarmerie and a detachment of the Polish (Blue) Police.

In mid-September 1939, the synagogue was burned down. Starting in the fall of 1939, the German authorities in Pilzno introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were made to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David and were required to register with the authorities. Jews were deprived of much of their private property. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, which was assigned the task in 1940 of providing Jews for forced labor. Forced labor tasks performed by the Pilzno Jews included road construction work, breaking rocks in a quarry, cutting trees in the forest, and sweeping the streets.

In mid-August 1940, the Judenrat established a self-help committee, which by the end of the year had become subordinated to the official Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization for the Generalgouvernement, based in Kraków. In late September 1940, there were about 1,300 Jews residing in Pilzno, including 250 refugees, mainly from Łódź, Poznań, and Kraków.¹

By the summer of 1941, the JSS had established a soup kitchen, which provided food for the poor. It received occasional food distributions from the food supply office (Ernährungsamt) of the Kreishauptmann in Dębica and also more regular financial support from the JSS in Kraków—but little help from the Judenrat. However, the available resources always remained inadequate to meet the needs of the many impoverished Jews in Pilzno.

In July and August 1941, the simmering conflicts between the Judenrat, headed by M. Treibicz, and the JSS branch in Pilzno, headed by Leon Kupferblum, intensified. Disputes about the financing of JSS activities in Pilzno were aggravated by personal accusations made by the Judenrat against members of the JSS branch. These disputes were settled temporarily in September, following the intervention of the Kreisjudenrat in Dębica. In October 1941, there were 17 cases of typhus reported, mostly among the poorer Jews of Pilzno, which resulted in three deaths.²

In mid-December 1941, the JSS branch opened a child-care facility in Pilzno for children of poor Jewish families, providing health checkups, some education, and also supplementary nutrition. In the following months, around 30 children received extra food and care in this facility.³

In January 1942, the head of the Judenrat, Treibicz, was dismissed by the Kreishauptmann, and a new Judenrat was formed. Among its members now was Samuel Birnbach, who also served on the local JSS committee. In this way, it was hoped that most of the previous frictions between the two bodies could be eliminated. Twenty-four of the Jews sent for work at the Pustków labor camp returned in January, as they had become infected with typhus there.⁴

On June 20, 1942, the Jews of Pilzno were informed that they had until July 4 to move to a “closed quarter” (*geschlossenes Viertel*).⁵ Several Pilzno survivors confirm that a ghetto was set up in Pilzno during the summer of 1942. It covered about 1,800 square meters (2,153 square yards) and existed for just a

few weeks. According to Israel Turk, it was set up in a few buildings in the smallest, dirtiest corner of town. Henry Reicher noted that part of the town was fenced off and guarded by the Jewish and Polish (Blue) Police. The Jews lived crowded together, with more than 4 people per room. Sarah Friedman recalls being forced to move out of her house into the ghetto, which was very overcrowded; people slept on mattresses on the floor.⁶ The JSS records confirm that by July 4, 1942, a Jewish hospital had been opened within the “Jewish quarter.” By mid-July, between 400 and 600 additional Jews had been brought into Pilzno from the surrounding villages, half of whom qualified for support from the soup kitchen. At this time, the Pilzno JSS desperately pleaded for a special subvention from the headquarters in Kraków, as all the able-bodied men were assigned to work in Dębica, or further away, and the remaining women and children were left with no means of support. In addition, the resources of the Judenrat were exhausted, due to many additional costs.⁷

In the second half of July, the office of the German Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Dębica organized the liquidation of the ghetto, assisted by the local Gendarmerie and other auxiliary forces. During the roundup in Pilzno, at least 17 Jews were killed on the spot, and around 1,500 Jews were sent to Dębica.⁸ According to one survivor, a policeman came to warn his family of the impending ghetto liquidation the next day, so her family fled at night to the countryside. They tried to retrieve belongings they had hidden with Polish neighbors, but these former friends turned them away empty-handed.⁹

From Dębica, together with Jews from other localities, the German Security Police deported most of the Jews from Pilzno to the Bełżec extermination camp. A few able-bodied Jews were sent to Pustków and other labor camps. Some of those sent to Pustków were subsequently transferred to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

In the second half of 1942 and in 1943, after the Pilzno ghetto had been liquidated, the German Gendarmerie and Polish (Blue) Police hunted down and shot Jews who had gone into hiding. The Chilowicz, Bochner, and other Pilzno families evaded the roundups by hiding in prepared bunkers, but some Jews were betrayed and killed.¹⁰

A good number of local Poles decided to help the Jews, and several of them paid for it with their lives when the Germans discovered their humanitarian efforts.¹¹ On February 19, 1943, the German police shot four Poles for offering shelter to Jews; they also killed the 6 Jews whom the Poles had hidden. On October 9, 1943, the Germans shot five members of the Rębina family and the 12 Jews they had been hiding, then burned all the buildings on the farm. When Josef Bobrowski was discovered to be hiding 2 Jews, both he and the Jewish refugees were shot. After the war, Yad Vashem recognized Józefa Ryńska of Pilzno as Righteous Among the Nations for her role in helping Jews during the occupation. Another Pole who provided life-saving help to the Jews was Mieczysław Ryba, of Slotiwej. From August 1942 to the summer of 1944, 3 Jews hid on his father’s farm: Benjamin Deresiewicz, Abraham

Einspruch, and Israel Hamel. In the spring of 1943, the brothers Hyman and Mendel Reiner of Pilzno joined them. As the front grew closer, the 5 Jews moved to another farm. All survived.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Pilzno can be found in these publications: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 385; Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 291–293; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3, *District Krakow* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 268–270; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 586. Additional information can be found on these Web sites: “Maurice Chilowicz and the Story of Pilzno,” at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org; and “Pilzno,” at www.sztetl.org.pl.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/792-794 [JSS]); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); VHF (e.g., # 6985, 10213, 23367, 27137, 30184); and YVA.

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trans. Robert Haney

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/792, p. 7, JSS Pilzno to JSS Kraków, September 25, 1940.
2. Ibid., 211/793, pp. 10–55.
3. Ibid., 211/792, p. 26, JSS Pilzno to JSS Kraków, January 5, 1942 (misfiled); 211/793, pp. 67–70; 211/794, pp. 12, 39.
4. Ibid., 211/794, p. 14, JSS Pilzno to JSS Kraków, February 1, 1942.
5. Ibid., 211/794, pp. 46–47, JSS Pilzno to JSS Kraków, June 21, 1942; RG-15.019M, woj. Rzeszów, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” no. 8 (Pilzno), dates the ghetto from June 20, 1942, but this was the day when the order for its establishment by July 4 was issued.
6. VHF, # 6985, testimony of Israel Turk; # 27137, testimony of Henry Reicher; # 30184, testimony of Sarah Friedman.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/794, pp. 46–54, June and July 1942.
8. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 385; VHF, # 10213, testimony of Sidney Schrank.
9. VHF, # 30184.
10. “Maurice Chilowicz and the Story of Pilzno,” at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/pilzno/Chilowicz.htm.
11. www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/pilzno/backgr.html.

PROSZOWICE

Pre-1939: Proszowice, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Miechow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Proszowice is located 24 kilometers (15 miles) northeast of Kraków. In 1939, there were 1,450 Jews living in Proszowice.¹

The Wehrmacht occupied Proszowice in early September 1939. Dawid Szydłowski was charged with running the town’s Jewish Council (Judenrat). The remainder of the Judenrat consisted of the pre-war leaders of the community.² A Jewish police force was organized subsequently, and its commander cooperated with the Germans.³

At first, the Proszowice Jews were able to lead their lives much as they had before the war. All survivors emphasize that it was safe and quiet there until 1942.

By May 1940, there were 1,700 Jews in Proszowice, including 200 refugees. The Judenrat assigned the poor to local families for support and sustenance. A self-help committee was set up for their benefit by August 1940 and was chaired by the Judenrat’s president. By October 1940, the number of refugees had doubled, the newcomers being mainly Jews expelled from Kraków. Although many rented from Poles, there was a serious shortage of lodging.⁴

A typhus epidemic broke out in March 1941. German authorities quarantined the town, and Proszowice residents were forbidden to leave. There was no epidemic hospital. A Jewish doctor by the name of Loofenholz attended to the sick. By May 1941, the number of Jews had increased significantly, reaching 2,600. At the end of June 1941, the town was still closed. A soup kitchen was launched to feed the sick and was maintained after the epidemic for the benefit of the poor. Typhus cases kept reappearing periodically. A hospital fitted with 10 beds opened only in June 1942.⁵

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in Proszowice in July 1941 to take over the organization of welfare from the Judenrat. It included the Judenrat chairman Szydłowski as president, Leibuś Felman as his deputy, and Dawid Rozenberg. In the summer of 1941, the JSS soup kitchen served 350 meals daily, including 100 free of charge. In November 1941, the JSS solicited food supplies from 20 Polish estates in the vicinity for the soup kitchen; 19 owners promptly responded, promising produce free of charge. By January 1942, the number of Jews in Proszowice had reached 3,008, with the number of newcomers (1,558) exceeding the number of local Jews.⁶

In June 1942, JSS member Rozenberg accused Szydłowski of abuse of power and called for an investigation of the branch by the main office in Kraków. According to Rozenberg, Szydłowski denied other members access to the organization’s affairs, correspondence, and bookkeeping; the latter was done solely by his brother and sister. Szydłowski further intentionally delayed two vital matters for the community, these being the opening of workshops and an agricultural cooperative. Although the outcome of Rozenberg’s action is unknown, only Szydłowski’s name appears in subsequent official correspondence.⁷

On July 15, 1942, the Jews living in the villages surrounding Proszowice were brought into the town. Their number is unknown.⁸

On June 22, 1942, 100 laborers were sent to Kraków, thereby raising the number of Proszowice Jews laboring in the vicinity of Kraków to 350. A few hundred more Jews were dispatched

to Kraków in mid-July. The community was forced to deliver weekly food rations for its laborers. That summer in Proszowice, 50 Jews worked repairing roads; 40, on water irrigation projects for the Strauch Company; 10, for Trunkenpolz in agriculture; 8, for an agricultural cooperative; and 10 aged over 50, cleaning the streets. Approximately 100 women were employed in agriculture in Wierzbno, Kościelec, Jakubowice, Opatkowice, and Kowary.⁹

A Czech German named Lachowicz and a Jewish refugee from Kraków named Stern organized privately owned workshops in late July 1942. Proszowice Jews generally distrusted Stern, and of the town's craftspeople, only the tailors decided to take paid jobs at the workshop. Another obstacle to the workshop's operations was the local Arbeitsamt, which continued to conscript workshop employees for forced labor in Kraków, thereby forcing Lachowicz to change the status of the workshop from "private" to "collective," as the latter designation was approved by the Arbeitsamt. The workshops filled sample orders of trousers, drawers, suits, and furs for the Strassberg, Medwitz, and Lichtig companies. By the time production orders were placed by these companies, however, the community was no longer in existence.¹⁰

The Jewish community of Proszowice was liquidated at the end of August 1942, probably on Saturday, August 29. One day prior to the community's deportation, the town was surrounded, and the Germans ordered all Jews to report to the market square. Local farmers were forced to provide wagons to transport 2,000 Jews to nearby Słomniki, from where many of the Jews of Kreis Miechow were being gathered for deportation to the Bełżec extermination camp. Posters were hung reminding Poles of the death penalty for helping Jews.

Those who did not report to the market square were shot in their houses. The elderly and children were selected out and shot. A group of Jews numbering between 50 and 100 were sent to Płaszów by truck. Some volunteered to go.¹¹

Aside from those who fled or hid with Polish friends, the Germans left behind 100 to 200 Jews, including members of the Judenrat and Jewish Police, to gather, clean, and sort the abandoned Jewish property stored under the Judenrat's care. These Jews formed the basis for some kind of remnant ghetto, as they were subsequently joined by other Jews who emerged from hiding.

Upon the community's liquidation, the Germans went from village to village in search of Jews in hiding. Those they caught they shot on the spot; Poles found to be sheltering Jewish escapees shared the fate of the Jews. The killings, however, ended after three or four days, as the German authorities announced that Jews would be permitted to return to Proszowice to live in their own houses. On September 24, 1942, Szydlowski informed the Kraków JSS office of the resumption of social welfare activities, including the reopening of the soup kitchen after "a one-month break." By this time, approximately 500 Jews had gathered in the Proszowice "ghetto." Szydlowski further estimated that 700 Proszowice Jews were in the various Kraków camps. After the Germans caught one of his sons pocketing an item from the warehouse, Szydlowski

and all his sons were shot together on one day. A total of 26 Jews were reportedly shot in October 1942.¹²

A police order issued on November 10, 1942, listed those towns in Distrikt Krakau where the presence of Jews in ghettos was permitted; Proszowice was not one of them. The penalty for Jews found outside these ghettos was death. This order presaged the imminent deportation of the remaining Jews in Proszowice.¹³ One of the survivors, Al Bukiet, reported that after the main deportation Aktion, he was still able to return from his labor camp to Proszowice for weekends. With time the ghetto became smaller and smaller, and only those who had jobs were allowed to stay.¹⁴

The ghetto was most likely liquidated in December 1942, although some sources date it in November. Its inhabitants were sent to Bełżec.¹⁵

SOURCES The fate of the Proszowice Jewish community is mentioned in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1030.

The following archival sources were used for this entry: AŻIH (210/564 [AJDC]; 211/820-825 [JSS]; 302/66 [Pamiętniki]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 50; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and RG-02.208M [Pamiętniki]); and VHF (# 01355-1, 07285-3, 11515-6, 19305, 19311, 22337, 24467-3, 31459-4, 31742, 32085, 35546, 37184, 42061-3, and 43560).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 50, 211/824 (Proszowice), p. 19.
2. VHF, # 19305, testimony of Majer Goldstein, 1996; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/820 (Proszowice), pp. 7, 11.
3. VHF, # 31459-4, testimony of Helen Reich, 1997.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/564, pp. 1, 5, 7.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/820, pp. 32, 34; 211/821, pp. 23, 31; 211/822, p. 22; 211/823, p. 23; 211/824, pp. 6, 19; and 211/825, p. 7.
6. Ibid., 211/821, pp. 44, 54; 211/822, pp. 61, 66; and 211/824, p. 19.
7. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/825, pp. 1-3.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 2, 1942; and VHF, # 35546, testimony of Barbara Dohnal, 1997.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 2, 1942, and August 16, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/825, pp. 8-9, 13, 16.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/825, pp. 18, 23-24, 28, 44.
11. According to VHF, # 19311, testimony of Hala Goldstein, 1996; # 32085, testimony of Rachel Englard, 1997; # 22337, testimony of Mannie Schneider, 1996; # 07285-3, testimony of David Werdyger, 1995; # 43560, testimony of Al Bukiet, 1998; # 19305; # 31742, testimony of Janek Schnall, 1997; and Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1030.
12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/825, pp. 47, 50; VHF, # 11515-6, testimony of Fryda Wollstein, 1996; AŻIH, 302/66, testimony of Maria Stecko; VHF, # 19305; # 24467-3, testimony of Jack Kleiner, 1997, specifically uses the

word *ghetto* in describing Proszowice at this time. Also see *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krakowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1984), p. 79; and Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1030. No description of the “ghetto” has survived, but it probably was an open ghetto where the remaining Jews lived together in a few houses.

13. E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 98.

14. VHF, # 43560.

15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/825, p. 57; VHF, # 19305; # 11515-6; # 07285-3; # 43560; *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 79.

PRUCHNIK

Pre-1939: Pruchnik, village, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Jaroslau, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

The village of Pruchnik is located 18 kilometers (11 miles) southwest of Jarosław. In 1921, there were 877 Jews living in Pruchnik, constituting 51.7 percent of the total population. Jewish residency was concentrated around the market square, as well as on Kańczuga, Jarosław, Kościelna, and Długa Streets.

There were 976 Jewish residents in Pruchnik on the outbreak of World War II. Shortly after capturing the village on September 9, 1939, the Germans shot approximately 50 Jews after having dragged them behind horses through the streets.¹

The Germans replaced the majority of Poles serving in the Pruchnik municipality with Ukrainians. A man by the name of Harasymow was appointed as the new mayor; and a certain “Kondratko” became Pruchnik’s wójt. A small German Gendarmerie post was stationed in the village.²

Archival files of the Pruchnik American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branches maintain that an open ghetto in Pruchnik was established as early as November 1939. Until the beginning of 1942, the ghetto—located on Długa Street—served as the designated place of Jewish residence; however, its inhabitants could still move freely around the village.³

The Judenrat chairman, Samuel Goldstein, described events leading to the ghetto’s establishment as follows: “In November 1939, the community was expelled to the [new German-Soviet] border, but because the border was [already] closed, they [the Jews] could not cross it. Wanting to return to their houses, they were unfortunately forbidden entrance, and were forced to wander for two weeks until they finally received the authorities’ permission [to move back to Pruchnik]. On their return, they were compressed onto a single street, suffocating in this confined space and dying of hunger.” In this letter, sent to the AJDC’s Kraków office in June 1940, Goldstein requested assistance for the 580 Jews who had returned to Pruchnik (i.e., approximately two thirds of the pre-war pop-

ulation), including 25 refugees. By December 1940, the number of ghetto residents had risen to 600.⁴

In the spring of 1941, the community sought the Kreishauptmann’s permission to teach horticultural and agricultural courses and for the assignment of uncultivated parcels of land in and around Pruchnik. The Kreishauptmann denied the request. Nevertheless, clandestine schooling of Jewish children took place in the ghetto. Among the teachers was Irena Kudler, who also took part in the underground education of Polish youth in Pruchnik.⁵

A branch of the JSS was established in Pruchnik in June 1941. Local doctor Ottmar Schorr (born 1908) chaired the committee, which also included Irena Kudler (deputy) and Bernard Pasternak. On Schorr’s request, Maier Ober replaced the latter due to poor performance, in March 1942. The committee never managed to open a soup kitchen and limited its activity to the distribution of small sums of money or rations.

According to Schorr, very few men returned after the 1939 expulsion; hence the ghetto’s residents consisted primarily of women, children, and the elderly, none of whom were able to donate any funds for social services. According to the JSS report, there were 137 ghetto residents under the age of 18 in August 1941. Of that number, 39 were 14 to 18 years old. In the summer of 1941, a number of Jews arranged employment for reasonable wages with local farmers.

In an attempt to increase welfare funds, Schorr wrote to the JSS headquarters in Kraków in June 1941: “The municipality in Pruchnik collects rent from all ‘ownerless’ Jewish houses [those whose owners did not return after expulsion], and even from those whose owners are residing in Pruchnik. Furthermore, the municipality collects significant rental sums from the military quartered now for several months in two synagogues. Of all this income, the Jewish community is not receiving anything.” Schorr requested Kraków’s assistance in persuading the municipality to transfer a portion of this income for the welfare of Pruchnik’s Jews. Furthermore, according to Schorr, expropriated Jewish land had been assigned to private commissars, who were depositing part of the income with the Treuhandstelle (Trustee Office)—not the Jews.⁶

By January 1942, Pruchnik’s Jews were no longer allowed to leave the limits of the village, due to “the recent order forbidding the Jews to leave their places of residence.” Despite poverty and overcrowding among the Jews of Pruchnik, there was only one case of typhus registered by March 1942. Dr. Schorr was the only doctor serving the community.

In April 1942, there were 575 Jews living in the ghetto. They occupied 51 houses, comprising 146 rooms. A few of the Jews were permitted to live outside the ghetto; for example, in June 1942, Schorr lived at 39 Rynek Street, and Irena Kudler, at 5 Kościelna Street.

Pruchnik’s Jews remained hopeful of obtaining jobs in agriculture; however, by June 1942, “permissions to go to work on neighboring farms” remained with the authorities. Finally, in mid-July 1942, 65 volunteers were working in agriculture, 15 of whom were under 15 years of age and labored in local orchards.

The JSS reported in June 1942 that “[the community] recently declined by 20 people, mainly fathers and mothers, who up to now had sustained families, which are now left to their fate.” These people were either sent to labor camps or more likely shot. In the summer of 1942, over a dozen Jews were reportedly shot by three German Gendarmes near the cemetery.⁷

As evidenced by another of Schorr’s letters to Kraków, dated August 3, 1942, the ghetto was liquidated between August 1 and 3, 1942. “Because [the] entire local population is being deported, the JSS branch is ending its activities as of July 31, 1942.” According to a secondary source, the community was deported to the Bircza ghetto, and shortly thereafter, on that ghetto’s liquidation, to the Bełżec extermination camp. An unknown number of Jews were also taken from Pruchnik to the killing site in Wólka Pełkińska and shot there. The Germans allowed a few families to remain in Pruchnik for at least one month, after which they were moved to the ghetto in Sieniawa.

SOURCES The Pruchnik ghetto is briefly mentioned in Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich and Muzeum Regionalne PTTK w Brzozowie, 1993), pp. 123–124.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/565 [AJDC]; 211/826–827 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); and VHF (# 5761).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. VHF, # 5761, testimony of Dov Feit, 1995; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo przemyskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1983), pp. 82–83; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/827 (Pruchnik), p. 28.

2. “Wspomnienia łączniczki Armii Krajowej ps. ‘Kropka’ z lat okupacji hitlerowskiej z terenu Pruchnika,” *Ziemia Pruchnicka*, no. 3 (11) (2002): 3–4.

3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/565 (Pruchnik), p. 1; “Wspomnienia łączniczki,” pp. 3–4.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/657 (Łańcut), p. 16; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/565, pp. 1–2. According to Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1030, the expulsion was “an initiative of the Polish mayor.”

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/827, pp. 6–7; “Wspomnienia łączniczki,” pp. 3–4.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/826 (Pruchnik), pp. 6–7, 15–19, 36, 41–43; and 211/827, pp. 2, 10, 23.

7. *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 82–83; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/827, pp. 6–7, 24, 28, 33–34, 39, 43.

PRZEMYŚL

Pre-1939: Przemyśl, city and powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: two occupation zones along the River San—the German-occupied right bank, Jarosław powiat, from

June 27, 1940, Deutsche-Przemyśl, and the Soviet-occupied left bank, Pshemysl’, Drogobych oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Przemyśl, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Przemyśl, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Przemyśl is located about 220 kilometers (137 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, Przemyśl had around 54,000 inhabitants, including some 20,000 Jews. Another 4,000 Jews resided in the villages of the Przemyśl powiat.

Przemyśl straddled the demarcation line between the German and Soviet occupation zones in Poland. The city was divided along the San River, creating a German-occupied zone, including the left-bank Przemyśl, and a Soviet-occupied zone, incorporating the city center and its adjacent districts.

On September 16, one day after the German capture of Przemyśl, parts of the Einsatzgruppe zur besonderen Verwendung (Einsatzgruppe z.b.V.) commanded by Obergruppenführer Udo von Woyrsch entered the city. Einsatzgruppe personnel collected Jewish men, especially leaders of the community, shot them in pits at various locations outside the city, then went on to loot and destroy Jewish homes and businesses.¹

By the end of September, the Jews from German-occupied Przemyśl had been expelled across the San River. After the expulsions, only 66 Jews remained in the part of the city now called Deutsche-Przemyśl. These Jews were subsequently forced into two buildings on 11/13 Dolińskiego Street; they consisted mainly of sick and elderly refugees from Katowice and Jarosław. In June 1942, the Germans killed them in the nearby village of Kuńkowce.

After October 26, 1939, the Einsatzgruppen administration was transformed into the regional office of the Gestapo under SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Alfred Hasselberg based in Przemyśl. At this point, Captain Schiffer was appointed as the Kreishauptmann, while SS-Obergruppenführer Schattenheim became head of the local Gestapo.



Poles buy household goods being sold by Jews in the Przemyśl ghetto, 1941. The original Yiddish caption reads, “The peasants exploit our desolation.”

USHMM WS 44372, COURTESY OF YIVO

On June 22, 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, capturing Przemyśl on June 28 after heavy fighting. Among the city's 65,798 inhabitants were about 16,500 Jews.

On November 1, 1941, the Germans reunited the right- and left-bank districts of Przemyśl into one administrative district. On March 1, 1943, Przemyśl became the center of its own Kreis with an area of 1,996 square kilometers (771 square miles) and 217,106 inhabitants.

After the Germans captured the city, the Jewish community organized a committee led by Drs. Susswein, Haas, and Duldig. In early July, this committee was transformed into the Jewish Council (Judenrat). The German authorities appointed Dr. Ignacy Duldig as head of the council. Its executive committee consisted of over 20 prominent members of the Jewish community and had its headquarters on Kopernik Street. The Judenrat was responsible for collecting funds, provisions, and equipment demanded by the local German army command, as well as supplying Jewish laborers for road construction and repairing war damage in the city. Shortly after the German occupation of Przemyśl, the Gestapo arrived and announced a new set of regulations for the Jews. They were to be separated from the rest of the population, made to surrender personal property and valuables, and ordered to abandon their homes and relocate to the Garbarza district of the city. In addition, all Jews aged 16 to 60 were required to register with the Jewish labor office, which was subordinated to the German Arbeitsamt, headed by a Ukrainian senior official. Groups of Jewish workers provided manual labor overseen by ethnic Germans and Ukrainians.

The Judenrat was also responsible for issuing food rations and overseeing the Jewish Police. To assist the starving population, the Judenrat organized a soup kitchen. In addition, members maintained the small synagogue on Mnisza Street (the only synagogue within the Jewish quarter) and several churches (*kloizers*), particularly on Czarniecki Street.

In July 1941, Jews were forced to move to a designated area of Przemyśl, and after December 26, 1941, the Schutzpolizei became responsible for policing the Jewish district. The Garbarza district, designated as the Jewish residential area, was bounded on three sides by the bend in the River San. The southern boundary was marked by the Kraków-Lwów rail line. This small Jewish quarter became home to 17,000 people. Initially the Jewish area was not enclosed, and Jews could walk freely through the streets. Only crossing the river via the provisional bridge was prohibited by the Germans.

On July 3, 1942, the newly appointed Stadtkommissar, Bernard Giesselmann, issued a formal decree to create a separate Jewish residential quarter in Przemyśl. On July 16, the Przemyśl ghetto came into being, covering roughly the same territory as the existing Jewish quarter.²

The Jews had to move to the ghetto no later than 10:00 P.M. on July 15. Those leaving the ghetto illegally and those knowingly giving shelter to Jews were threatened with the death penalty. All the entrances to the ghetto were closed except for those on Wiktoria (Jagiellońska) and Lwów Streets. In its final section, the regulation ordered that Jews could

only leave the ghetto to work. In the early hours of July 16, the fencing of the ghetto began.

Most sources estimate that at least 22,000 Jews had been resettled to the ghetto by the summer of 1942. Throughout its history, approximately 24,000 Jews passed through the Przemyśl ghetto.

From the spring of 1942 on, the Gestapo and members of the Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office, GPK) shot groups of Jews at the Jewish cemetery on Słowacki Street on numerous occasions. In addition, between June and August 1942, the Germans killed a number of Jews remaining in the surrounding villages. By the end of June 1942, some 5,000 surviving Jews from neighboring villages, such as Bircza, Krzywcz, Niżankowice, and Dynów, had been resettled to the Przemyśl ghetto, as the area around Przemyśl was cleared of Jews.

On the orders of Gestapo chief SS-Untersturmführer Adolf Benthin, in mid-June 1942, the Judenrat had to provide a list of 1,000 young, able-bodied Jews capable of work. On June 18, 1942, people on the list were arrested and handed over by the Jewish Police to the Gestapo and Schupo. On June 20, those not able to bribe their way off the list were transported to the Janowska Street Camp in Lwów.

After sealing the ghetto on July 16, 1942, the Germans prepared for the first large-scale deportation from Przemyśl. The leaders of the Judenrat were notified on July 23, 1942, that the first resettlement for forced labor would take place four days later. Members of the Judenrat, hospital staff and patients, and those with working permits were to be exempted. The Gestapo issued 5,000 work permits to Duldig to be distributed among the 20,000-strong Jewish population. All work cards were collected and sent to the Gestapo on July 24 and given back to the Judenrat two days later with a list of those marked for "resettlement."

On July 25, the ghetto was surrounded by part of Police Battalion 307, under Captain Schaller's command. Announcements were posted throughout the city notifying the local population of the resettlement of the Jewish population on July 27 and warning that anyone caught giving assistance to Jews or plundering their property would face the death penalty. On July 27, 3,850 Jews, primarily from the areas adjacent to the synagogue on Mnisza Street, were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec. On the same day, the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Duldig, and his deputy, Rechter, were killed on the steps of the Judenrat building on Kopernik Street. At this time, several hundred elderly, sick, and disabled Jews were taken to the forest near Grochowce and shot by members of the Sipo, commanded by Karl Reisner.

The deportations continued on July 31, when about 3,000 residents of Czarniecki, Kopernik, and adjacent streets were transported to Bełżec. On August 3, another 3,000 Jews shared the same fate. In total, 9,850 Jews were sent to their deaths in Bełżec between July 27 and August 3, 1942. It was during this first Aktion that despite the pledges made by the Catholic bishop of Przemyśl, Franciszek Barda, all Jewish converts to Christianity were shot at the Jewish cemetery. In addition, all the patients of the Jewish hospital were shot.

On November 17, men of the Schupo and Gestapo surrounded the ghetto. The next morning, "Aktion Judenrein" began, in which 4,000 people were collected at the deportation square and sent to their deaths in Bełżec. (Some 8,000 Jews were slated for deportation to Bełżec, but only 3,500 showed up. The remainder were in hiding in the ghetto. Before the trains left, another 500 were pulled from their bunkers and added to the transport.) On the same day, the orphanage was liquidated.

After the second Aktion, the ghetto was reduced in size and partitioned into two ghettos: "Ghetto A," for about 800 people capable of work; and "Ghetto B," for about 4,000 "nonproductive" Jews. In February 1943, the two ghettos in Przemyśl were put under the command of SS-Obersturmführer Josef Schwammberger, who was known for his exceptional cruelty. Ghetto A was officially declared a labor camp by Schwammberger, and any contact with Ghetto B was strictly forbidden.

Although there was no armed resistance in the ghetto, a dozen young Jews managed to escape in mid-April 1943. An organized group, headed by Brunk, Kastner, and Grin, attempted to reach Polish partisans in the surrounding forests but was apprehended. All the escapees, except for one, were shot by Ukrainians just outside the city. On May 10, 1943, Reisner was severely injured after a Jew stabbed him. The attempt on Reisner's life brought severe German retaliation to the ghetto when three randomly chosen Jews, Grin, Gründ, and Krebs, were sentenced to be hanged. In addition, approximately 30 Jews in the ghetto were shot as a reprisal.

On September 2–3, 1943, the final liquidation of Ghetto B began when an entire battalion of German troops rounded up approximately 3,500 Jews and sent them to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp. On September 4, 100 Jews from the ghetto were deported to the work camp at Szebnie. On September 10, the commander of the GPK, Rudolf Benewitz, announced that all Jews who reported for resettlement voluntarily would be assigned to work camps. On the following day, 1,580 Jews gathered at the Grzegorz Piramowicz School on Kopernik Street. After making them undress and surrender their valuables, the Sipo shot them in groups of 50. This Aktion became known as the "Turnhalle Aktion" (Gymnasium Aktion). Another deportation of 100 Jews to the Szebnie camp followed on October 28.

Between November 28, 1943, and February 2, 1944, the roughly 1,000 Jews remaining in the (former) Ghetto A labor camp were either shot or sent to the camps at Stalowa Wola, Szebnie, Płaszów, or Auschwitz II-Birkenau. The last 20 Jewish children in the ghetto were shot personally by Schwammberger. Just before the liberation of Przemyśl, the bodies of Jews killed in the ghetto were burned by the Wehrmacht. By the spring of 1944, only approximately 120 Jews remained in hiding in Przemyśl.

The ghetto was destroyed at the end of February 1944, at which point Przemyśl was declared to be *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews). The estimated 120 Jews still hiding in bunkers and other places in Przemyśl were mostly discovered and killed over the subsequent months.

On July 27, 1944, the Red Army reentered the city. According to official data, the population of Przemyśl had fallen from approximately 54,000 on the eve of World War II to only 28,144 in January 1945. Of these, there were 22,173 Poles, 3,372 Ukrainians, 415 Jews, 106 Russians, and 78 of other nationalities. Of the 415 Jews in Przemyśl in January 1945, fewer than 250 were pre-war residents of the city. The Shoah abruptly ended the thousand-year history of the Jewish community in Przemyśl.

When the SS prepared to launch their first Aktion on July 26, 1942, the military commandant in Przemyśl, Major Max Liedtke, and his adjutant, Dr. Albert Battel, requested that Jews working for the German army be spared. When the request was denied, Wehrmacht forces took control of the rail bridge over the San River. They threatened that no transports would leave the ghetto and ordered the bridge to be blockaded. When the SS Kommando attempted to cross the bridge, Liedtke threatened to open fire. After phoning their commander in Kraków, Julian Scherner of the Gestapo, they acceded to the request, temporarily saving many Jews from deportation. On the same day, according to survivors' testimony, an army detachment under Battel's command broke into the ghetto and used army trucks to whisk off between 80 and 100 Jews to a military barracks for protection.

After the incident, SS authorities began a secret investigation into Battel's conduct. They discovered that Battel, though himself a member of the Nazi Party since May 1933, had previously attracted notice by his friendly behavior towards Jews. Before the war, he had been indicted by a party tribunal for extending a loan to a Jewish colleague. During his service in Przemyśl, he was officially reprimanded for shaking the hand of the chairman of the Judenrat. Battel's actions even attracted the attention of Heinrich Himmler, who took a lively interest in the investigation. Yad Vashem posthumously recognized Albert Battel as Righteous Among the Nations nearly 30 years after his death. For his part, Major Max Liedtke became the highest-ranking German officer to be awarded the same honor.

In Przemyśl, the number of Christians who provided assistance to their Jewish neighbors will never be known. Whether it was a piece of bread for a starving inhabitant of the ghetto or a hiding place for a Jewish stranger, the true extent of aid given to Jews during their last days can never be quantified. In spite of constant fear and the threat of death, dozens of Christians from Przemyśl, both Polish and Ukrainian, were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. Fortunately, much evidence of the kindness and heroism of a number of people from Przemyśl and its vicinity has been documented by those Jews who survived with their help.

A number of Poles and Ukrainians, however, lost their lives for helping Jews, due to betrayal by neighbors, friends, and even family members. According to postwar investigations, 568 Christians from Kreis Przemyśl were murdered for attempting to help Jews. For example, Michał Gierula from the village of Łodzinka near Bircza was hanged by the Gestapo after being betrayed by a Polish woman for offering shelter to

three partisans of the Armia Krajowa (Home Army) and to three Jews.

Stefania Podgórska and her sister, Helena, saved 13 Jews using a hiding place in the attic behind a false wall in their home at 3 Tatarska Street. Stefania went on to marry Max Diamand (Józef Burzmiński), one of the Jews hidden in her cottage. Their story was made into a film, *Hidden in Silence* (1996), and a documentary, *The Other Side of Faith* (1991). The Sisters of the Sacred Heart, a convent in Przemyśl, sheltered and cared for 40 Christian and 13 Jewish children during World War II. Most of the Jewish children there either had been left on the steps of the orphanage at 80 Mickiewicz Street by desperate parents or had been brought by Polish friends and neighbors. In addition to individuals and religious orders, a local branch of Żegota also functioned in Przemyśl after September 1943. Żegota provided false identity cards, food, and money; assisted individuals and institutions sheltering Jews; and protected them against informers.

Karl Reisner was sentenced to life imprisonment by a German court in 1969 for crimes committed in Przemyśl.³

SOURCES Further information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Przemyśl can be found in the following publications: Aaron Freiwald and Martin Mendelson, *The Last Nazi: Joseph Schwammberger and the Nazi Past* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1994); John J. Hartman and Jacek Krochmal, eds., *I Remember Every Day: The Fates of the Jews of Przemyśl during World War II* (Przemyśl: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk and Remembrance and Reconciliation, 2002); Arie Menczer, ed., *Sefer Przemyśl* (Tel Aviv, 1964); Joseph Rebhun, *God and Man in Two Worlds* (Claremont, CA: Or Publishing, 1985); Joseph Rebhun, *Leap to Life: Triumph over Nazi Evil* (New York: Ardor Scribendi, 2000); Jan Rożański, "Przemyśl w latach drugiej wojny światowej," in *Tysiąc lat Przemyśla* (Warsaw and Kraków, 1974); Józef Sohn-Sonecki, *Byłem jeńcem Wehrmachtu* (Warsaw, 1956); Józef Sohn-Sonecki, *Byłem więźniem Wehrmachtu* (Warsaw, 1965); Bronisław Szatyń, *A Private War: Surviving in Poland on False Papers 1941–1945* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1985); A. Wolfshant-Dinkes, *Échec et mot: La miracle de ma vie* (Paris, 1975); and Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht: Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002), pp. 586–592.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Przemyśl under the German occupation can be found in the following archives: APPrz; AŻIH (e.g., 301/4957; 211/833–834); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, 205 AR-Z 302/67, vol. 3); IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-50.002*0131; RG-15.019M, reel 11); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStL, 205 AR-Z 302/67, vol. 3, pp. 498–577.
2. For a map of the ghetto area as of its enclosure on July 15–16, 1942, see Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht*, p. 589.
3. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 31 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 699, pp. 519–671, verdict of LG-Hamb, (50) 38/67, January 14, 1969.

PRZEWORSK

Pre-1939: Przeworsk, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Jaroslau, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: town, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Przeworsk is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) east of Rzeszów. There were 1,457 Jews living in Przeworsk in 1921, according to the census.

In the first days of World War II, the Jewish section of Przeworsk was severely damaged by air raids. Shortly after occupying the town, the Germans searched the synagogue and allegedly found ammunition there. In retaliation, they razed the building on September 12, 1939. The Gestapo arrived from Jarosław to execute 30 Jews.

Survivor Harry Kuper testified that the Germans, soon after entering Przeworsk, ordered the Jews gathered in a church. After an elderly rabbi failed to report, the Germans selected every tenth man from among the assembled, took them away, and pretended to torture them to find out the rabbi's whereabouts. After a man disclosed his hiding place, the rabbi was arrested and thrown into a hole for execution. Observing the scene from his window, a priest was shot for intervening. The prisoners, including the rabbi, were released.¹

Within weeks, the Germans stripped Jewish stores of merchandise and then closed them. Men, aged from 15 to 70 years old, and women, from 15 to 65 years old, daily assembled at the market square for work assignments. The assignments included cleaning train cars of debris, factory labor, and menial work for the Germans.²

Survivor Zygmunt Margules testified that shortly after the Soviet invasion of Poland, on September 17, 1939, the SS arrived in Przeworsk late one night, beat many Jewish residents, and "said everybody has to go."³ According to historian Andrzej Potocki, most of the Jews were forced across the San River, into Soviet-occupied Polish territory, including to the nearby town of Sieniawa. The Germans left only 27 Jews in Przeworsk.



One religious Jew is forced to cut off the sidelocks of another in front of German SS men in Przeworsk, ca. 1939–1940.

USHMM WS #33485, COURTESY OF GFH

Contemporary documentation of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) indicates that nearly 1,750 Jews were forcibly expelled from Przeworsk. In 1940, the Jewish Council (Judenrat), led by Mojżesz Korn, reported that some 2,000 Jews had resided in Przeworsk before the war, but only 25 Jews lived there in May 1940. Another 200 Jews, presumably former Przeworsk residents, were living in neighboring villages. In November 1940, the Judenrat reported “35 souls” residing in Przeworsk. In a retrospective report, dated March 2, 1941, to the AJDC concerning charity efforts over the past year, the Judenrat noted that the same number of Jews were still in Przeworsk. Another 170 Jews lived in its vicinity. There were no refugees or deportees. The Jews had no paying jobs and were living off their “depleted savings.”⁴

A detailed testimony by Mina Kalter, the only other primary source available to the author, suggests that Kalter’s extended family were some of the only Jewish residents still living in Przeworsk after the expulsions. Because Kalter’s family resided in a house in an undamaged Christian neighborhood, they took in other relatives and a family of refugees from Kraków, bringing the number of occupants to 28.

Kalter recalls that the Germans forced the Przeworsk Jews to reside in a ghetto in October 1939 but does not mention explicitly the forced expulsions, which made the ghetto one of the smallest in the Distrikt. She states that the possible reason for the Germans to establish a ghetto was because “my home town was only 15 miles from the border that was established then between Germany and the Soviet Union. . . . So we thought that maybe the Germans did not have any confidence in us, knowing that the Russians are only a few miles away; therefore, they separated us from the mainstream of society and maybe from the Soviets. They had no confidence, because that’s all we heard is Jews are Communists, and that’s maybe the reason we are there.”⁵ Two secondary sources report that the ghetto was established as late as July 1942.⁶

Kalter testified that violence accompanied the Jewish population’s transfer to the ghetto. One day after work, the community was ordered to deliver all valuables and house keys to the town hall the following morning. That day, the Jews were ordered to wait outside their houses with only what they could carry. They were then escorted to a pasture behind the Bernadine monastery. There the Judenrat members were ordered to dig a hole. The rabbi and his two sons were thrown into it and shot. All the remaining Jews were then escorted to the burned-out section of the town and ordered to reside there.

Initially unfenced, the ghetto was subsequently enclosed. Kalter describes the situation as follows: “In the first weeks, which was then called the ghetto, it was open. . . . Only a couple of weeks later, the ghetto was encircled by barbed wire, by four watch towers that were manned twenty-four hours a day, and nobody could get out any more, except to and from work. There were gates through which the people taken out to work were counted.” The workers were often beaten and insulted.

Only working ghetto residents received “a small bread ration and a bowl of soup.”

Diseases, especially typhus and dysentery, spread due to the deplorable living conditions. The sick were either shot or left to die. “It began to be a very common sight to see on your way to work all the people in the streets dying and dead,” Kalter recalls. She also remembers that separate barracks for men and women subsequently were constructed on the ghetto grounds. The sick, forced to reside in a barrack at the very end of the ghetto, were periodically removed and presumably shot.⁷

Secondary sources date the ghetto’s liquidation to October 1942, when its residents were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. Kalter, who escaped from the ghetto in March 1941, believes the Przeworsk Jews were deported to Sędziszów Małopolski, an unlikely destination located in Kreis Debica.

A number of Jews likely perished during the ghetto liquidation or subsequently. Polish documentation indicates 90 Jews were shot in Przeworsk between 1942 and 1943. Some probably were fugitives from the liquidation of ghettos in other localities. The victims were buried in the Jewish cemetery. Nine people were buried in a field owned by Jakub Kapusta in the Mokra Strona neighborhood.⁸

SOURCES The following publications were used to prepare this entry: Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), p. 138; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 410.

Archival sources on the fate of the Przeworsk community include AŻIH (210/269 [AJDC]; 211/836 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]; and RG-50.462*0013); and VHF (# 7785, 14642).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 14642, testimony of Harry Kuper, 1996.
2. USHMM, RG-50.462*0013, testimony of Mina Kalter, 1986.
3. VHF, # 7785, testimony of Zygmunt Margules, 1995.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/269, pp. 1–5.
5. Ibid., RG-50.462*0013.
6. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo przemyskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1983), pp. 96–97; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 410, citing undefined documentation in ITS Arolsen.
7. USHMM, RG-50.462*0013.
8. Ibid., RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 11, file 527 (Przeworsk).

RABKA

Pre-1939: Rabka, town, Nowy Targ powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Neumarkt, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rabka-Zdrój, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Rabka is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) south of Kraków. On the outbreak of World War II, around 500 Jews were living there.¹

The German army occupied Rabka on September 3, 1939. In the first months, Jews were harassed and beaten by the Germans, and their property was plundered. The German authorities imposed a number of restrictions on the Jews, including the wearing of the Star of David.

In March 1940 the Germans created a 12-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Rabka, referred to as the Jewish Community (Jüdische Gemeinde), with Zygmunt Buschbaum as chairman. The other members included Benzion and Dawid Braunschweig, Salomon Koc, Bernard Borger, Chaim Schiffer, Stiel, Hochman, Szymon Zollman, Izrael Selinger, Filip Ettinger, Scherer, and Samuel Reitenbaum. The Rabka Judenrat held jurisdiction over several surrounding villages and small towns. The Judenrat had to pay "contributions" to the Germans.²

In August 1940, the Germans transferred the headquarters of the Security Police School (Die Schule des Befehlshabers der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes) from Zakopane to Rabka. The purpose of the school was to train future German and Ukrainian Security Police officers and collaborators. SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger was the founder and first commander of the school. SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rosenbaum was his deputy and later the commandant. Jews performed forced labor at the school, such as constructing shooting ranges; they were also rounded up, tortured, humiliated, and killed there, serving as live practice targets. Paul Beck, a Jew from Zakopane, was entrusted with organizing the work details.³

As of February 21, 1941, there were 460 Jews in Rabka, 120 of them receiving social welfare assistance. On March 30, 1941, a community kitchen administered by the Judenrat opened in Rabka. Due to lack of food, it was forced to close several times during its existence. By June 1941, the Jewish population had risen to around 630. In September, the newly established branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Rabka provided financial assistance to 96 people (15 percent of Rabka's Jews). From September 1, 1939, to March 31, 1942, the JSS in Rabka provided medical help in 143 cases and housing to 30 people; helped 75 people obtain clothing; provided supplementary food to 130 people; and distributed about 66 meals a day in the community kitchen.⁴

The Jews of Rabka were conscripted for forced labor. In 1941, around 30 Jewish men together with about 300 Poles worked in stone quarries in Zaryte. They worked 16 hours a day and received little payment and no food or clothing. On October 24, 1941, Jews from Rabka were taken to a labor camp at Czarny Dunajec. Among those sent were 37 men, mainly the elderly and sick, who had previously not been deemed fit for such work.⁵

The situation of the Jews of Rabka deteriorated in 1942. All Jewish men were enlisted for forced labor. Almost no one received any kind of money for work. There were also conflicts between the JSS and the Judenrat over lack of funds. In February 1942, the Jews were ordered to surrender all winter

clothing to the Germans. Four Jews who tried to hide their clothing were shot. On April 1, 1942, there were 686 Jews in Rabka, including 370 refugees who had arrived from Kraków and Bielsko-Biała (in Ost-Oberschlesien) in 1940. At this time 200 Jews were receiving aid from the JSS, which was also planning job training for women.⁶

In May 1942, around 80 forced laborers from Stary Sącz were working in Rabka. In June 1942, another group of destitute Jews arrived from Nowy Sącz. The Jewish Council planned to open a tailoring cooperative for 10 tailors and 50 seamstresses, in the hope that productive efforts might preserve the Jewish community, which in July comprised 450 people, as well as 200 Jewish forced laborers from other towns. During the summer, the Germans shot hundreds of Jews from Rabka and other nearby towns in a series of bloody Aktions.⁷

The first Aktion took place on May 20, 1942; 45 Jews from Rabka and its vicinity, who had been identified as elderly or unfit for work during an examination conducted by SS-Untersturmführer Rosenbaum a few weeks earlier, were assembled at the Villa Tereska. They were shot and buried in a mass grave in a small clearing in the forest behind the Security Police School. About 10 of the forced laborers from Stary Sącz deemed unfit were shot with them.⁸

The second Aktion took place in June 1942. The victims included 45 Jews brought from Nowy Targ (arrested for alleged currency offenses) and 55 Jews from Rabka.⁹ The Germans also shot a whole family because it bore the name Rosenbaum, which was the name of commandant Wilhelm Rosenbaum, and the Buschbaum family, because the wife was German and had converted to Judaism.¹⁰ The third Aktion took place on July 17, 1942, when the elderly Jews of Rabka were assembled by the Germans near the Villa Tereska and shot. At this time the Germans demanded "contributions" from the Judenrat, claiming that in return the Jews would not be deported. In the course of daily roundups, the Germans picked up Jews and shot them in the nearby forest.¹¹ At the end of July 1942, around 100 Orthodox Jews carrying Torahs were brought to Rabka from Nowy Sącz, tortured, and murdered.¹²

The deportation of the Jews of Rabka to the Bełżec extermination camp took place on August 30, 1942. The Germans issued a warning that any Pole providing help to the Jews would face the death penalty. Nonetheless, the convent of the Sisters of Magdalene in Rabka gave refuge to Jewish children from many places in Poland.

The Germans hunted down and murdered the remnants of Rabka's Jews who had evaded deportation. At the end of August 1942, SS officers hanged 10 Jews at the Security Police School, including a member of the Judenrat.¹³

Several sources indicate the existence of a form of "open ghetto" in Rabka but do not date its establishment. From 1940 the Jews of Rabka and its vicinity were conscripted regularly to perform forced labor at the Security Police School. At first, the local Jews were allowed to live in their own houses, while Jewish workers from outside the town were housed near the school in the Słone district. Eventually, all the Jews of Rabka were ordered by the Germans to move into this residential

area.¹⁴ In June 1941, the Germans extended the *judenfrei* (free of Jews) resort area around Zakopane northward towards Nowy Targ.¹⁵ A curfew was imposed on the Jews of Rabka. They could remain on the streets for only one hour a day. In January 1942, Zygmunt Buschbaum, as chair of the JSS in Rabka, wrote to the main office in Kraków that German plans to create a Jewish residential area in Rabka had been postponed.¹⁶ Some sources indicate that the Rabka “ghetto” was located in two or three residential buildings on Długa Street. The ghetto could be accessed from a drugstore in the Słone district of the town.¹⁷

Wilhelm Rosenbaum was tried in Hamburg in 1967 and sentenced to life imprisonment.¹⁸

SOURCES Publications dealing with the fate of the Jews in Rabka during the Holocaust include Michael Walzer-Fass, ed., *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ and Vicinity; Translation from Sefer Nowy Targve ha sevivva* (Tel Aviv: Townspeople Association of Nowy Targ and Vicinity, 1979); Robin O’Neill, “Rabka Police School (Poland)” (Salisbury, England: Yizkor Book Project, 2004), available at www.jewishgen.org; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 416.

Documents on the extermination of the Jews in Rabka can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3269, 3270, 4727); IPN (SP Nowy Targ Ns IV 5/53, Zg 19/46, 54/49; SP Sucha Beskidzka Zg 8/47/1, 8/47/2-3, 20/48, and 34/46; and SP Żywiec Zg 72/46); USHMM (RG.15.019M, reels 4 and 14; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 36, JSS [AŻIH, 211/848-850]; and RG-50.002*0063); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 41, 211/849, JSS memo April 1, 1942.
2. AŻIH, 301/3270, testimony of Izrael Salinger, p. 1.
3. Martin Gilbert, *The Boys: Triumph over Adversity* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1996), p. 449; O’Neill, “Rabka Police School (Poland)”; AŻIH, 301/3719, testimony of Leopold Kestenbaum.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/848, JSS report to Kraków, September 28, 1941; and letter of Jewish Community to JSS Kraków, February 21, 1941.
5. Ibid., testimonies of Henryk Ettinger and Paweł Langsam in JSS Kraków report of June 22, 1941, and letter to Kraków JSS, October 22, 1941; RG-50.002*0063, testimony of Aba Prawer.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/849-850, JSS reports on January 17, April 1, 6, 20, 24, and May 8, 1942.
7. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/850, JSS reports to Kraków, June 29, July 6 and 20, 1942, interview with Mr. Naht from Rabka, June 19, 1942, and with Mr. Schreiber, June 21, 1942; Verdict against Wilhelm Rosenbaum, LG-Ham (50) 21/67, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 30 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 689, pp. 216–218.
8. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, pp. 216–218; AŻIH, 301/3270, 3269, testimony of Maria Żak (Maria Grunberg), p. 3; and 4726, testimony of Oskar Lonker, p. 2.

9. AŻIH, 301/3269, 301/4726.

10. Walzer-Fass, *Remembrance Book of Nowy Targ and Vicinity*, p. 80; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, pp. 221, 232.

11. IPN, SP Żywiec Zg 72/46; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, p. 219; AŻIH, 301/3269.

12. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, pp. 218–219; AŻIH, 301/3269.

13. Ewa Kurek, *Your Life Is Worth Mine. How Polish Nuns Saved Hundreds of Jewish Children in German-Occupied Poland, 1939–1945* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997), pp. 197–204; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, pp. 222–223.

14. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689, p. 211; O’Neill, “Rabka Police School (Poland).”

15. Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 64.

16. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 41, 211/849), JSS report to Kraków, January 17, 1942.

17. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 14 (IPN, ASG, sygn. 48b, k. 193), report on the Jewish Ghetto in Rabka, signed by Józef Stalin [sic?]; testimony of Dr. Zdzisław Olszewski (at www.rabka.pl).

18. Verdict against Wilhelm Rosenbaum, in *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 30, Lfd. Nr. 689.

RADOMYŚL WIELKI

Pre-1939: Radomyśl Wielki, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Radomysł Wielki, Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Radomyśl Wielki, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Radomyśl Wielki is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) northeast of Tarnów. In 1925, there were 1,425 Jews living in Radomyśl Wielki out of a total of 2,432 residents. In 1939, Jews still comprised more than half of the town’s population.

Soldiers of the Wehrmacht entered Radomyśl Wielki after bitter fighting on September 7, 1939. Immediately, they seized Jewish and Polish men and took them to the local church, where they were held for a few days before being released. The Germans beat the nearly 300 captive men, murdering several. Soon after their arrival, the Germans began to conscript Jews for forced labor and also beat and humiliated them. On one occasion, they chased the Jews to the market square (*Rynek*) and forced them to undress, taking their valuables and giving their clothes to local peasants. They also forced Jews to clean the square with their bare hands and to cut the grass with their teeth. German soldiers raided Jewish homes, confiscating valuables and brutalizing the occupants.¹

The German authorities soon imposed a series of discriminatory restrictions on the Jewish community. Although Jewish businesses had reopened shortly after the occupation, Jewish owners were forced to display the Star of David outside the front door. In addition, Jews were forced to wear armbands at all times. Jews could not move freely without a special pass; restrictions on the selling of food were enforced,

and ritual slaughter of animals was strictly forbidden. Shortly after the introduction of these discriminatory laws, most Jewish businesses were handed over to local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*). Despite the restrictive measures, the Jewish population initially retained some contact with the surrounding villages. Soon, however, Jews were forbidden to leave town even with work passes, and “contributions” and special taxes were imposed on the Jewish community.

The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Jeremiah Leibowicz, on January 25, 1940.² Its main task was to ensure that the orders imposed by the Germans were carried out, or it would face severe punishment. It organized quotas of forced laborers every day, and in response to repeated German demands for contributions, it collected and handed over Jewish property. The Judenrat also coordinated the work of various welfare organizations that were active during the occupation. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Radomyśl Wielki ran two public kitchens that depended heavily on the branch’s ability to raise funds. According to one report from November 1941, the Jewish community in Radomyśl Wielki, which was largely composed of refugees, was suffering from overcrowding, impoverishment, and famine. Some 80 percent of the Jews were in need of welfare support.³

The members of the Judenrat tried their best to spare as many Jews as possible from being sent away for forced labor. The establishment of small workshops and factories provided several Jews with employment, which exempted them from labor conscription. Despite the efforts of the Judenrat, in 1940, kidnappings of young Jewish men capable of work intensified. Many of those captured by the Germans were sent to the Pustków labor camp or to the neighboring village of Dulcza Mała. On April 17, 1940, over 200 people were taken to Pustków; the transport that followed, which also included members of the Judenrat, was more than twice this number.⁴

In 1941 and 1942, another influx of refugees from Mielec and Dębica caused living conditions in Radomyśl Wielki to deteriorate. Overcrowding and dire sanitary conditions contributed to the outbreak of a typhus epidemic. Once again, the Judenrat acted promptly, establishing a sanitary unit as well as an isolation hospital for those infected.

In April 1942, a member of the Gestapo from Mielec came to Radomyśl Wielki and murdered all the Zionists, including their leader Haskel Eisland.⁵

The sources disagree on the existence of a ghetto in Radomyśl Wielki. Most archival sources indicate that there was not a ghetto, or even a Jewish quarter, until just prior to the deportation Aktion.⁶ It appears that a “ghetto” existed in Radomyśl Wielki only very briefly in mid-July 1942, serving as a temporary holding area for Jews from surrounding villages during the destruction process.⁷ Prior to this, it appears that the Jewish population continued to live beside their Aryan neighbors. However, some oral testimonies and sections of the yizkor book mention the existence of a ghetto without specifying the date of its establishment.⁸ According to J. Ziobron’s essay, following the second transport of Jews to the Pustków camp (probably in

1942), the Germans “sought to create a ghetto in town, and to put all the Jews from the nearby villages in that ghetto.”⁹ It appears that some survivors employ the term *ghetto* to convey the idea that the Jews were concentrated under overcrowded conditions and physically segregated from the rest of the population.

From April to June of 1942, an influx of refugees from Dębica and Bobowa further strained the resources of the Judenrat and the welfare organizations in Radomyśl Wielki. Living conditions became unbearable, and tension was further exacerbated by constant German demands. In mid-July 1942, all the remaining Jews from the surrounding villages were brought to Radomyśl Wielki. Soon afterwards, the Judenrat informed the population that had converged on the town that the Germans demanded the establishment of a ghetto, but many Jews refused to believe it.¹⁰

Shortly afterwards, the Germans asked for a contribution from the Jews, claiming that it might defer an impending deportation Aktion. Although the contribution was delivered, on July 17, 1942, forces of the Gestapo and the police sealed the town. Two days later, in early morning, all the Jews of Radomyśl Wielki were ordered to assemble in the market square with all their possessions. A selection was carried out; and many Jews were murdered during the process, as they were unwilling to be separated from their loved ones. The elderly and infirm (about 150 people) were taken to the Jewish cemetery where forces of the Gestapo, the Gendarmerie, and the Schutzpolizei shot them. Their bodies were buried in a mass grave. Those who remained in the marketplace were transported on carts to Dębica, which served as a concentration point for the Jews of the area. From Dębica, most of the Jews were deported with other Jews of the region to the extermination camp in Bełżec.¹¹

A few Jews managed to escape the roundup and fled to the forests. The Germans and their collaborators hunted down most of them, but one group formed a partisan unit of about 50 people (including a number of Jews from Radomyśl Wielki) in the forest near Dulcza Mała. German raids resulted in the capture of some Jews even in November 1944. One group of 70 partisans succeeded in crossing the front line to the Soviet side on December 27, 1944.¹²

SOURCES Further information on the history and the fate of the Jewish population of Radomyśl Wielki can be found in the following publications: Antoni Balarzyn, *Martyrologia ludności żydowskiej z Radomyśla Wielkiego i okolic podczas II wojny światowej* (Radomyśl Wielki: A. Balarzyn, 1989); *The Martyrdom of the Jewish Population of Radomysl Wielki and the Surrounding Areas during the Second World War*, trans. Krystyna Brozyna (Virginia: M. Miller, C. Fox, 1989); Hilel Harshoshanim and Yitshak Turkov-Grudberg, eds., *Radomishel rabati yeha-sevivah: Sefer zikaron Groys Radomishle un sviveh: Yizker-bukh*, (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Radomishel yeha-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1971); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 338–341; and Jan Ziobron, “The History of the Jewish Commune in Radomysl Wielki” [in Polish], *Ziemia Radomska*, no. 3/7 (March 1991).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Radomyśl Wielki can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1428, 1025, 1103, and 1145; and 211/873); IPN; USHMM (1997.A.0272; RG-50.030*0285); VHF (# 18869, 46584); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1145, testimony of H. Aussenberg; Ziobron, "The History of the Jewish Commune," pp. 4–5; and Harshoshanim and Turkoŷ-Grudberg, *Radomishel rabati veba-sevivah*, pp. 1104–1105.

2. Haja Garen-Rozenblat (now Levi), "The First Days with the Germans," in Harshoshanim and Turkoŷ-Grudberg, *Radomishel rabati veba-sevivah*.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 42, 211/873, report of the JSS Radomyśl Wielki to JSS in Kraków, November 19, 1941.

4. Balaryn, *Martyrologia ludności żydowskiej*, p. 12; AŻIH, 301/1145, and 301/1428, testimony of Z. Reich; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland, vol. 3, Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 340–441; Ziobron, "The History of the Jewish Commune," p. 5.

5. Ziobron, "The History of the Jewish Commune," p. 5.

6. See AŻIH, 301/1145; 301/4964, states that there was no ghetto or Jewish quarter in Radomyśl Wielki.

7. Ibid., 301/1145.

8. Harshoshanim and Turkoŷ-Grudberg, *Radomishel rabati veba-sevivah*, pp. 1104–1105; VHF, # 18869, testimony of Jack Honig; and # 46584, Pnina Levenberg.

9. Ziobron, "The History of the Jewish Commune," p. 5.

10. AŻIH, 301/1145.

11. Ibid., 301/1103, testimony of B. Lichtig; Ziobron, "The History of the Jewish Commune," pp. 5–6.

12. AŻIH, 301/1145.

ROPCZYCE

Pre-1939: Ropczyce (Yiddish: Ropshitz), Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Ropczyce is located about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east of Kraków. On the eve of war in 1939, there were about 1,200 Jews living in Ropczyce.¹

Following the invasion of Poland, German troops occupied Ropczyce on September 8, 1939.² In the first days of the conflict, the Germans bombed the town heavily. Jewish homes were particularly affected, leaving more than 30 families without shelter. Upon entering Ropczyce, the Germans burned the local synagogue, and they harassed and humiliated the Jewish population.³ Soon after, the Germans began to conscript Jews for forced labor. In 1939 or early in 1940, the Germans created a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Dr. Arnold Meister. Immediately after its establishment, the Judenrat began to take care of the numerous needs of the Jewish community. At the end of 1940, under the patronage of the Judenrat, a public kitchen, a shelter, and a "women's commit-



Jews are gathered in an open lot in the Ropczyce ghetto, April 1, 1942. USHMM WS #44341, COURTESY OF YIVO

tee" were established. In 1941 and 1942, following the establishment of a local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, many of the impoverished and malnourished Jewish children in Ropczyce were provided with food and medical assistance.

By the spring of 1940, Ropczyce had become a collection point for Jewish refugees from the territories annexed by the Third Reich and from neighboring villages. The Jewish population in the town increased from 773 in 1940 to over 1,000 in 1941.

On May 7, 1942, on orders from the Security Police in Dębica, 75 men capable of physical work were sent to the labor camp in Pustków.⁴ A second roundup took place at the beginning of June 1942. The Germans shot 23 people on the spot and sent 150 more to the Pustków labor camp. In late June 1942, the Jews from Ropczyce and neighboring villages were forced into a ghetto located on Jewish Street. The conditions in the ghetto were extremely hard, due to severe overcrowding.⁵

In July 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. They shot 28 people, mostly children and the elderly on the spot, while the majority of the population was escorted on July 23 to the nearby town of Sędziszów Małopolski. From there, most of them were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. A group of young women was loaded on cattle cars destined for this extermination camp. According to information from local Christians, the train also carried lime, which may have poisoned the passengers; however, it is more likely that they were gassed on arrival at Bełżec. A number of the Jews from Ropczyce were selected as unfit for travel, and the SS and Gendarmerie shot several hundred Jews on the spot in Sędziszów and buried them in a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery.⁶

SOURCES Further information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Ropczyce can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 352–353; and I. Rosenfeld, ed., *Hayo hayta Ayara Ropczyce* (Israel: privately published, 1985).

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Ropczyce can be found in the following

archives: AŻIH (301/793 and 301/620); USHMM (Acc.1997. A.0124 [JSS], reel 44); VHF (# 19939); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Rosenfeld, *Hayo bayta Ayara Ropczyce*, pp. 25–26, 37.
2. AŻIH, 301/793, report prepared by the Temporary Jewish Committee in Dębica.
3. VHF, # 19939, testimony of Helena Horowitz.
4. AŻIH, 301/620, testimony of J. Himmelblau.
5. Rosenfeld, *Hayo bayta Ayara Ropczyce*, pp. 74–78, dates the establishment of the ghetto at the beginning of 1942; but VHF, # 19939, and Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 352–353, both date the establishment of the ghetto in June 1942.
6. Rosenfeld, *Hayo bayta Ayara Ropczyce*, pp. 74–78, 92–95; AŻIH, 301/793 (this source dates the liquidation of the ghetto and the transfer to Sędziszów on July 24).

RYMANÓW

Pre-1939: Rymanów, town, Sanok powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1941–1945: Rymanow, Kreis Krosno, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rymanów, Krosno powiat, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Rymanów is located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. In 1921, of a total population of 3,546 the Jews numbered 1,412.

On September 8, 1939, the Germans entered Rymanów. Soldiers marched into the town, claiming that local civilians had fired on them.¹ They forced the Jews to assemble in the main square and stand for hours at gun point with their arms up. Soon women and children were allowed to leave, and the others were released three hours later. On September 17, the Security Police from Sanok arrived in Rymanów and ordered that all Jews, except for a few families and members of the Judenrat, must leave town and relocate to the Soviet-occupied

zone. Most of those who crossed the border, however, were able to return home shortly afterwards.² The Jews of Rymanów did not offer any organized resistance to the German occupation.³

On October 26, 1939, when the Generalgouvernement was created, Rymanów was incorporated into Kreis Krosno, within Distrikt Krakau. Large-scale deportations of Jewish populations in the area of Kreis Krosno, including Rymanów, were organized and carried out by the Krosno Border Police detachment subordinated to the main office in Jasło (Grenzpolizeikommissariat [GPK] Jasło–Aussendienststelle Krosno). The German Gendarmerie and Polish (Blue) Police also participated in these Aktionen.

From the fall of 1939, the German authorities enforced a series of discriminatory measures against the Jewish population of Rymanów. They confiscated Jewish businesses and prohibited the free movement of Jews without special permission. Jews were forced to wear armbands bearing the Star of David and to surrender any valuable items, and they were conscripted for forced labor. Jews were forbidden to buy produce in the marketplace before 10:00 A.M. The German authorities demanded several large “contributions” from the Judenrat, which were paid.⁴ Furthermore, those able to work were forcibly engaged in the construction of what subsequently became a camp for Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) during 1941.⁵

Rymanów became a transit point to which Jews from other cities were brought shortly before being deported to extermination and labor camps. In November 1941, 100 Jews were brought to Rymanów from the neighboring town of Krosno. Jews were apparently able to take with them various kinds of movable property.⁶ In December 1941, the town of Rymanów had 1,300 Jewish residents, 300 of which were displaced persons from neighboring villages and towns. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was active by 1941, establishing a public kitchen as well as a sanitary commission. The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was headed by H. Spira and P. Silber. It established a Jewish police force to assist it in enforcing German regulations and demands for laborers.⁷

Information on the ghetto in Rymanów is sparse and somewhat contradictory. The majority of the Jewish population was not significantly displaced, as most Jews lived within the “Jewish residential quarter” near the center of town. Jews brought in from neighboring towns and other refugees were moved in with the original population, and no physical barriers were erected around the Jewish quarter, which served as an open ghetto. By 1942, leaving this area without permission was punishable by death. There was also a camp or area of Jewish concentration on the outskirts of the town at Posada Dolna. This served both as a transitory holding area for some Jews before being sent on to labor camps or sites of destruction and as a lodging place for those performing forced labor for the Kirchhof road construction firm. The sources occasionally refer to this specially constructed Jewish “camp” as a ghetto. Both the camp at Posada Dolna and the area of the Jewish quarter in the town had been established by early 1942 (some sources date these events in 1941).⁸



Jews are assembled for deportation in a public square in the Rymanów ghetto, August 1942.

USHMM WS #18782, COURTESY OF YVA

In March 1942, the entire Jewish population, including those who had been displaced there from other cities and towns, was officially registered. In July 1942, almost 600 Jews from throughout Kreis Krosno were moved to Rymanów, causing further overcrowding and pressure on limited resources. Those able to work were promptly registered by the employment office to be eligible to receive assistance from the JSS.⁹

At the beginning of August 1942, a selection took place. The Gestapo informed the Judenrat that a group of Jewish men fit for work was to assemble on the marketplace the next morning: 200 young men between the ages of 18 and 35 answered the order. They were subsequently divided into two groups. One was sent to the Kirchhof facility, and the other was directed to the railway station where the men boarded a train headed for the Płaszów labor camp.¹⁰ Deportations to extermination sites at Bełżec and Barwinek near the Slovak border followed soon after. On August 13, 1942, a group of SS men and local militia surrounded the town and ordered all Jews to report to the marketplace. Women, children, and those unable to work, as well as those who were living in the outskirts of Rymanów, were shot on the spot.¹¹ The assembled mass of Jews was then divided into groups; the elderly were taken to Barwinek and subsequently murdered in the woods near the border town of Dukla.¹² A number of those able to work were sent to the Kirchhof facility, while the rest of those assembled in the marketplace were taken to the railway station and loaded onto trains probably destined for the Bełżec extermination camp. For several weeks after the deportation, the police forces then patrolled the town, hunting down and shooting Jews they found in hiding. The Kirchhof workers were employed for a few more weeks and were then sent to Rzeszów. Their fate is unknown.¹³

Although the Rymanów ghetto had been almost completely liquidated, in August 1943 around 100 Jews coming from Brzozów, the area around Rymanów, and the town itself were shot by unidentified members of the Gestapo and two SS officers, Neumann and Keller from the Krosno Border Police Office. The corpses of this group were buried in a mass grave at the local Jewish cemetery.¹⁴

According to the testimony of P. Dager and B. Scherrer, there were roughly 400 survivors, about 20 of which had survived the camps. Those who were not deported mainly survived in hiding with the aid of non-Jews, on forged “Aryan” papers, or because they had crossed into the Soviet Union prior to June 1941.

SOURCES Further information on the history of the Jewish community in Rymanów can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas bakehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 356–358; Yosef Rotem et al., eds., *Rimanov: Toldot ba’ir ve-haye ba-Yehudim b’temunot* (Israel: Y. Rotem, G. Vainreb, Y. Sharar, 2001); and A. Potocki, *Żydzi rymanowscy* (Krosno: APLA, 2000). The ghetto in Rymanów is mentioned in Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 440.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Rymanów during the war can be found

in the following archives: AŻIH (301/235); IPN; ITS; USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 1; and *Gazeta Żydowska*); VHF (e.g., # 1077, 10361); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2283; M-1/Q/38, 205; M-1/E/2139, 2171, 2197).

Caterina Crisci

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/235, testimony of Israel Alster.
2. Ibid.; and Central Historical Commission (CHC) of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the U.S. Zone, Munich (Historical questionnaire) Pearl Dager, Betsheva Scherrer, published in Potocki, *Żydzi rymanowscy*, pp. 158–160.
3. CHC, U.S. Zone, Munich (Historical questionnaire) Pearl Dager, Betsheva Scherrer, pp. 158–160.
4. AŻIH, 301/235.
5. Potocki, *Żydzi rymanowscy*, p. 78.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, November 19, 1941.
7. Ibid., December 12, 1941.
8. Potocki, *Żydzi rymanowscy*, pp. 49, 79, 169; Rotem et al., *Rimanov*.
9. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 8, 1942.
10. AŻIH, 301/235.
11. Ibid.; Rotem et al., *Rimanov*, p. 42.
12. Potocki, *Żydzi rymanowscy*, p. 169.
13. AŻIH, 301/235.
14. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1.

RZEPIENNIK STRYZEWSKI

Pre-1939: Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, village, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Rzepiennik Strzyżewski is situated on the small Rze-pianka River, approximately 30 kilometers (19 miles) south of Tarnów. An estimated 40 Jewish families lived in Rzepiennik Strzyżewski in 1939.¹

The German army occupied the village in early September 1939, but there is no information on how this initially impacted the Jewish community. The new administration set up a German Gendarmerie post. The synagogue was destroyed.

Moses Braw was appointed as the chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), and D. Baranker was its secretary. In January 1940, the Judenrat reported only 169 Jews living in Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, 10 of them refugees from Kraków. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) archives contain a list of recipients of donated flour distributed by the Judenrat in December 1940. The list contains the names of the heads of 26 families, close to one half of the community—97 people.²

On August 28, 1940, 12 expellees from Łódź arrived in Rzepiennik. They were housed with local Jewish families who also provided them with sustenance. Even the arrival of such a small group became a heavy burden on the impoverished community. The Judenrat set up a welfare organization, with Simson Kirschenfeld as the chairman. Its primary purpose

was to seek any help available from the AJDC and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization.³ From mid-1942 onward, Dawid Kahane was in charge of local welfare.⁴

By January 1941, the number of Jews in Rzepiennik had increased to 241. Another group of expellees—numbering 36 in all—came from Oświęcim in February or March 1941. The Judenrat housed them together by assigning them to flats and provided them with beds containing straw for padding. A soup kitchen was opened for their benefit, serving up to 65 meals per day. The kitchen did not last very long, due to financial constraints, but it was reopened in May 1942. In the meantime, a small amount of donated groceries was distributed. In March 1941, the Judenrat reported 300 Jews living in Rzepiennik.⁵

On the orders of the Kreishauptmann in Jasło, Dr. Walter Gentz, a ghetto was established in Rzepiennik Strzyżewski at the end of 1941.⁶ Again, there is no information regarding how the ghetto's founding changed the community's life, the size of the ghetto, or restrictions on movement. Most likely, Jews remained in those houses they had lived in since before the war. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was organized and charged with keeping order among the ghetto's inhabitants.⁷

By June 1942, Jewish farmers from the surrounding villages, including the other Rzepienniks, were resettled into the ghetto, thereby bringing the number of residents to over 400.

Information regarding disease in the ghetto is lacking; however, it is likely that the community was on the verge of an epidemic, as all residents were vaccinated for typhus in the summer of 1942. The Judenrat's sanitation committee periodically checked yards for cleanliness. That summer, 45 laborers were employed in road works, and 8 women worked as gardeners, "beautifying the neglected appearance of the village."

In July 1942 a new chairman of the Judenrat, Jechiel Loria, was appointed.⁸

German forces commanded by the Gestapo chief in Gorlice, Ernst Fundheller, assisted by Gendarmes from Rzepiennik Strzyżewski, Jasło, and Gorlice, liquidated the ghetto on August 11, 1942. The community was made to believe that it would be deported to a different location. Each person was allowed to take up to 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of luggage. Thirty young men were selected from the group and sent to the Gorlice ghetto.

The remaining 364 Jews were led to a nearby meadow by a ravine. Formed in rows of 4, all were marched to the nearby Dąbry Forest located about 0.8 kilometer (0.5 mile) from the ghetto. In sequence, groups of 10 people each were forced to undress and walk approximately 201 meters (220 yards) through bushes to a bench. Sitting on the bench, they were shot in the head in succession. A young boy would throw the dead bodies into a large hole, powdering them with lime. The mass shootings were completed by nightfall. Active participants in the shooting included Paul Roloff, the Gendarmerie commander in Jasło, and Alois Viellieber, deputy commander of the Gorlice Gendarmerie.⁹

Only a few names of those murdered are known: Dawid Dembitzer, with his wife and daughter; Berl Kochane, with

his wife, daughter, and son-in-law; the families of Judo Sped, Pachel Taffel, Gast, Kirschenfeld, Kornfeld, and Teller. A number of Jewish residents who were at some point brought to the Rzepiennik ghetto from the nearby village of Olpiny may also have been among those murdered.¹⁰

In Gorlice, 30 men from Rzepiennik were collected on the edge of the town in a shoe factory on Polna Street. They were most likely included in the transport that was sent to the Bełżec extermination camp on August 17, 1942.

It is not known how many Rzepiennik Jews managed to escape the liquidation. On September 8, 1942, the *shochet* Chaim Stamler, his wife Miriam, and two-year-old child were shot by the German Gendarmerie near a forest in Rzepiennik Strzyżewski. They were buried together at the place of execution.

SOURCES Brief information on the Jews of Rzepiennik Strzyżewski can be found in these publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 154–155; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo tarnowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), p. 166.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1113 [Relacje]; 210/610 [AJDC Rzepiennik Strzyżewski]; and 211/918 [JSS Rzepiennik Strzyżewski]); and USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 44; and RG-15.084M, # 1113).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, June 5, 1942.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/610 (Rzepiennik Strzyżewski), pp. 1, 4, 7, 13–15. At the turn of 1940–1941, Braw was temporarily replaced by Ch. Hölzel. He is named as the chairman's deputy in the summer of 1942; see Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 44, 211/918 (Rzepiennik Strzyżewski), pp. 69, 71.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/610, pp. 9, 17; also see Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/918, p. 14.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/918, p. 65.
5. Ibid., pp. 3, 43, 65; and Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/610, p. 17.
6. Władysław Boczoń, *Żydzi gorlicy* (Gorlice: Władysław Boczoń, 1998), p. 144.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 12, 1942.
8. Ibid.; also, June 5, 1942.
9. *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 166; Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), p. 182; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 411; "Rzepiennik Strzyżewski," www.kirkuty.xip.pl/rzepiennik.htm. According to Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 155, the liquidation Aktion took place on August 9, 1942.
10. *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 166—three days later, on August 14, 1942, 80 residents of the Bobowa ghetto and 38 of the Biecz ghetto (they came from Skołyszyn near Jasło) were executed in the same Dąbry Forest. For a partial name list, see p. 167.

RZESZÓW

Pre-1939: Rzeszów, city, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Reichshof, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rzeszów, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Rzeszów is located about 156 kilometers (97 miles) east of Kraków. In 1931, there were 11,228 Jews living in Rzeszów out of a total population of 26,902. On the outbreak of World War II, there were probably about 14,000 Jews living in the city.

The Germans bombarded Rzeszów on September 9, 1939, and occupied the town on September 10. As the German forces drew closer, many Jews tried to flee to the east, but most were turned back. The Germans ordered a census, including a special listing of the Jews. Many were put to forced labor, including office and street cleaning, road and bridge repairs, and other forms of menial labor. During this work the Jews were beaten and the beards and *payot* (side locks) of Orthodox Jews were torn off their faces. Within the first month, the interiors of the synagogues were trashed and their contents desecrated. The better apartments of the Jews were taken over by German officers. The Jewish hospital was turned into a military installation.

At the end of October 1939, a 30-man Judenrat, headed by the attorney Kleinman, was appointed. A Jewish police force, commanded by Leon Brezner, was also established. The Judenrat had to raise “contributions” demanded by the Germans and organize the quota of forced laborers.

From December 1, 1939, Jews aged 12 and older were ordered to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David. Their movement about the city was restricted and train travel forbidden. A 7:00 P.M. curfew was imposed. In December, thousands of Jews from Kalisz, Łódź, and Upper Silesia were forcibly resettled to Rzeszów. They were housed in synagogues and the old army barracks. All Jews aged 16 to 55 were examined by physicians to see if they were fit for labor. Those who passed were registered at the Arbeitsamt (labor office).¹

The Germans changed the name of Rzeszów to Reichshof. During 1940, the principal disruptions for the Jews were caused



Jews walk in a long column through the streets of Rzeszów during a deportation Aktion in the ghetto, July 1942.

USHMM WS #74347, COURTESY OF IPN

by arbitrary house searches and kidnappings for forced labor. People of means were able to bribe their way out of forced labor, paying for replacements. The German mayor (Stadthauptmann) ordered the removal of Jewish businesses from the main streets of the city, which in turn created some all-Jewish streets, although a ghetto was not created at this time.²

By 1941, it was evident that the Germans were planning to establish a ghetto. Starting in June of that year and continuing throughout the fall, the Jews were ordered to vacate their homes and move onto the special streets designated for the ghetto.³ The official announcement of the establishment of the ghetto was published on December 17, 1941. The ghetto area included these streets: Galenzowski, Wenska, Tannenbaum Słowacki, Kazimierz, Baldachówka, Szpitalna, Blum, and Mickiewicz. There were entrance gates at three streets—Mickiewicz, Galenzowski, and at the junction of Kazimierz with Baldachówka. The part of the ghetto lying between Targowica and Lwów Streets was marked out in such a way that only the buildings were in the ghetto, but the streets themselves were outside it. To pass from one house to another, people had to make holes in walls, cross over balconies, or go through improvised passages and gangways. By December 1941, all the Jews had moved into the ghetto.⁴

On January 5, 1942, posters were put up around the ghetto, signed by Kreishauptmann Dr. Heinz Ehaus, prohibiting Germans and other “Aryans” from entering the ghetto without a special pass.⁵ This order followed other measures also affecting the movement of Poles, designed to combat the spread of typhus. On January 10, 1942, the Rzeszów ghetto was sealed. By this time the ghetto had been enclosed by walls and wooden fences and surrounded by barbed wire. Houses along the ghetto perimeter had had their windows and doors boarded up. At this time the number of people imprisoned in the ghetto is estimated at 12,500. The only people permitted to leave the ghetto were those being taken to forced labor. Within the ghetto there were workshops for tailoring, shoemaking, and upholstery. The Judenrat was ordered to open a medical clinic to replace the Jewish clinic outside the ghetto that was shut down.

In addition to the work noted above, Jews were put to forced labor at installations belonging to the German air force, in a factory formerly owned by Jews, on nearby farms, and in military camps. Those allowed outside the ghetto for work fared somewhat better than those locked in with no access to food and because of the poor sanitary conditions. Epidemics of dysentery and typhus drove up the mortality rate, and bodies piled up in the streets. The Judenrat established a small hospital, which lacked both beds and medicine. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) provided support for 2,500 people, and two public kitchens distributed hundreds of portions of soup on a daily basis. The Judenrat received permission to grow potatoes in a field outside the ghetto. Some of the small ghetto workshops served German clients, which enabled the ghetto inhabitants to acquire supplementary food.⁶ In the spring of 1942, a number of forced laborers were transferred to a labor camp in Biesiadka, where they cut down trees.

The Judenrat established an elementary school, which functioned until the large Aktion of July 1942. The Judenrat also offered vocational training courses to provide more people with “essential skills” that might keep them alive. There were courses for training electricians, carpenters, nurses, and agricultural workers.

In addition to the Jews of Kalisz and Łódź, other Jews from the vicinity were brought to the Rzeszów ghetto. The overcrowding became severe, sometimes with more than one family to a room. In January 1942, the inhabitants were ordered to turn in their fur garments. On April 30, 1942, the Gestapo in Rzeszów conducted a “Kommunisten-Aktion” against the Jews of the ghetto. Gestapo men arrested a number of Jews as alleged Communists. These people were then tortured in prison before being killed. The Judenrat was instructed to collect the mutilated bodies and bury them.⁷

In June 1942, Kreishauptmann Dr. Ehaus imposed a massive “contribution” of 1 million złoty on the Reichshof ghetto, threatening to kill members of the Judenrat if the sum was not paid within one week. The other Jewish Councils in the Kreis also had to deliver smaller sums to the Kreishauptmann personally at this time. According to a survivor from Kolbuszowa, the Judenrat from that town was the only one not to suffer losses at the hands of Dr. Ehaus during this Aktion. It was probably at this time that Kleinman and several other members of the Rzeszów Judenrat were executed, although some secondary sources date this much earlier in 1940.⁸

On June 25–27, 1942, congestion in the ghetto became intense with the transfer of Jews from Łańcut, Tyczyn, Kolbuszowa, Głogów Małopolski, Sokołów Małopolski, Sędziszów Małopolski, Czudec, Jawornik Polski, Błażowa, Niebylec, and Strzyżów to the Rzeszów ghetto. Mina Perlberger recalled the scenes as the Jews crowded into Rzeszów: “The wagons, starting to move, were lined up, and it was impossible to see the beginning or the end of the line. It was wagons from all the small towns around Rzeszów, Błażowa, Jawornik, Tyczyn, going in one direction: Ghetto.” Word soon spread that there was insufficient space to accommodate all the Jews and that people would have to sleep in the streets.⁹

Once they were all settled into the Rzeszów ghetto, there were now three families to a room. By early July 1942, the ghetto population had reached around 22,000 people. At that time the Judenrat was notified by the German authorities that the evacuation of the ghetto would begin in a few days, starting with those who were unfit for work or in an otherwise weakened condition. Everyone was told to bring a few personal effects, including jewelry, and a two-day supply of food. Placards informed the public that any Pole who hid a Jew would be shot.¹⁰

The massive expulsion began on July 7 and was carried out in four stages: July 7–8, July 11, July 14–15, and July 17–18. At each stage the sector of the ghetto designated for removal was surrounded by forces of the Order Police and the Gestapo. The inhabitants were ordered to assemble in the old Jewish

cemetery. People lingering in their dwelling places for any reason were shot on the spot. The assembled Jews were stripped of their possessions. “Essential” workers and their families were exempted from the expulsion. Patients in the hospital were forcibly removed. Jewish doctors slipped poison to some of their patients to spare them from the ordeal. The remaining hospital patients, occupants of the old-age home, and others unfit for labor (about 1,000 people) were taken to the Rodna Forest (between Rzeszów and Głogów) and murdered. The majority of the ghetto inhabitants were marched to the train station at Starowina and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹¹

The evacuations continued throughout July. The empty apartments were turned over to Poles who had been evicted from their own dwellings to make way for German occupants. During this period, nearly 20,000 Jews were deported, and hundreds were shot.¹² At the end of this major Aktion, the only ones left were those with a special stamp on their identification cards.

Following this major Aktion, the size of the Rzeszów ghetto was reduced to the area between Baldachówka and Kaczmarska Streets. In November 1942, the Germans designated the Rzeszów ghetto as one of the five ghettos in Distrikt Krakau in which the remnants of the Jewish population in that area would be concentrated.¹³ At this time, only 3,000 Jews remained, mainly essential workers and their families, but also people who had evaded the expulsion—the “illegals.”¹⁴

The ghetto was divided into two sectors—one to the right of Baldachówka Street and the other to the left. The eastern ghetto (# 1) was run like a concentration camp. It was surrounded by barbed wire and lit up by searchlights. Each morning the prisoners were lined up for a roll call. The beds were removed and replaced by wooden shelves, and a barrier separated the men from the women. The western ghetto (# 2) was called the Schmelz (smelting) ghetto by the Jews and was for the elderly, the children, and those unable to work. In August 1942, women with children were ordered to register for “light labor.” With a perversity of hope this was interpreted as a positive sign; women who had no children “borrowed” a child from their neighbors. As they reported for the registration, they were surrounded by an SS unit and then sent to Bełżec.

On November 15, the Gestapo ordered everyone with a labor permit to assemble at the roll-call square. Many brought their children with them, based on the assumption that their work permits would protect the children as well. As the workers stepped forward and were checked off, the children were detained for placement in a “children’s home.” During this Aktion, around 1,500 Jews (mainly children) were loaded onto trucks and taken to their deaths.¹⁵

Between December 1942 and June 1943, there were numerous Aktions that led to the murder or transfer to work camps of the ghetto inhabitants. Jews continued to work making clothes for the German army and dismantling the houses in the ghetto, among other tasks. The head of the Judenrat in

this period was a Jew named Serog from Teschen in Silesia.¹⁶ In March 1943, 22 Jews were shot as they entered the ghetto from work. In late August or early September 1943, the existence of the two ghettos came to an end. The remaining inhabitants, about 2,500 to 3,000 people, were assembled on Baldachówka Street. Some were transferred to the forced labor camp at Szebnie, and many of the others were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. About 150 were held back to clean up the ghetto area and collect the belongings of the deported.¹⁷ After this date, around 450 Jews remained in Rzeszów in the forced labor camp at the aero-engine factory (*Zwangsarbeitslager im Flugmotorenwerk Reichshof*), which existed until the summer of 1944.¹⁸

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Rzeszów during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications, among others: M. Yari-Wold, ed., *Kehilat Raysba; sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Rzeszow in Israel and the USA, 1967); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 155–170; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 14 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), pp. 537–538; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vols. 23 and 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998 and 2004), Lfd. Nr. 619 and Lfd. Nr. 711; Stanisław Kotula, *Losy Żydów rzeszowskich 1939–1944: Kronika tamtych dni* (Rzeszów, 1999); Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004); Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich,” *BŻIH*, pts. 1–4 (1983–1988); and Hilde Huppert, *Hand in Hand mit Tommy: Ein autobiographischer Bericht 1939–1945* (St. Ingbert: Werner J. Rohrig, 1988).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 211/922-933; 301/4968); BA-L (B 162/2275-2277); IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-02.054); USHMMPA (WS # N05250, N05264, N64876, N64897, copies received from MOR); VHF (e.g., # 907, 19803, and 24020); and YVA.

Samuel Fishman and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, pp. 75, 95; USHMMPA, WS # N05250 and N05264 (copies received from MOR).
2. Bericht des Stadthauptmanns in Reichshof, October 30, 1940, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 186–187.
3. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, pp. 79, 95.
4. Ibid., p. 95; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, pp. 165–166.
5. USHMMPA, WS # N64876, Polizeiliche Anordnung, signed Dr. Ehaus, January 5, 1942.
6. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 166.
7. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, p. 522.
8. Naftali Salsitz, “The Holocaust in Kolbuszowa,” in I.M. Biderman, ed., *Pinkas Kolbushov* (New York: United Kolbushover, 1971), p. 77.
9. USHMM, RG-02.054, “Buried Alive,” a diary by Mina Perlberger, p. 128.

10. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, pp. 83, 523; USHMMPA, WS # N64897, Bekanntmachung, signed Der Kreishauptmann, July 6, 1942.

11. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 167. See also BA-L, B 162/2275–2277 (ZStL, AR-Z 288/60, vol. 2, pp. 273 ff, and vol. 4, pp. 934 ff.); and *JuNS-V*, vol. 23, Lfd. Nr. 619, p. 91.

12. AŻIH, 301/4968, testimony of Dawid Grünberg, p. 3.

13. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942; see Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, pp. 344–345.

14. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 167.

15. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, pp. 85–86; *JuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 711, p. 415.

16. Huppert, *Hand in Hand mit Tommy*, pp. 55–81.

17. Yari-Wold, *Kehilat Raysba*, p. 90; Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 168.

18. *JuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 711, p. 416.

SANOK

Pre-1939: Sanok, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: center, Kreis Sanok, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Sanok is located approximately 200 kilometers (124 miles) southeast of Kraków. In 1938, there were 4,773 Jews in Sanok (including 324 Jews from Posada Olchowska, which was incorporated into the town in 1930). At the onset of World War II, more than 5,000 Jews were living in Sanok, including a number of refugees from Germany, Austria, and western Poland.¹

German armed forces occupied Sanok on September 8, 1939. On the night of September 16–17, the Germans burned down three synagogues and destroyed two Jewish printing houses and libraries, containing some 4,000 volumes. On September 26, the Germans ordered 150 Jewish families across the San River into the Soviet zone of occupation. The Aktion



View of the Sanok ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #59022, COURTESY OF STADTAN, E 39 NR. 933/13

was organized by Einsatzkommando I/1. Jews from Kraków, Bochnia, Tarnów, Krosno, and Rymanów were also deported into the Soviet zone via Sanok, and others came to Sanok, attempting to cross the border voluntarily. By the end of 1939, the Soviet authorities had more or less closed the border.

In October 1939, Sanok became a Kreis center within Distrikt Krakau. The first Kreishauptmann was Dr. Schaar; Dr. Class succeeded him from the second half of 1941 until the start of 1943. Primarily responsible for the anti-Jewish Aktions in Sanok was the Border Police-Office (Grenzpolizeikommisariat, GPK), especially the members of its Gestapo section.

In the fall of 1939, the Germans started to confiscate and liquidate Jewish businesses. From December 1, Jews aged over 12 had to wear armbands bearing a blue Star of David. The Germans appointed Leon Werner as chairman of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), which had to provide a daily quota of forced laborers aged between 14 and 60. More wealthy Jews, however, were permitted to pay for replacements. Jewish men worked mainly cleaning and repairing the streets, while women and children either worked as domestic servants or were forced to gather rocks from the San River. The Jews were poorly paid and malnourished, so they had to barter possessions for food on the black market.²

On their arrival, German officials started to evict Jews to take their apartments, and Jews also had to meet German demands for furniture. Soon the Jews expelled from their homes and those living in other areas of town were all required to move into several designated Jewish residential areas within Sanok. The movement of Jews was restricted; they could leave the town only up to the distance of 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) and only during specific hours. To travel further afield, they required special permits issued by the Kreishauptmann. The penalty for disobeying these rules was death. According to several sources, the resettlement of the Jews into specific quarters within Sanok effectively meant the establishment of an open ghetto, although it is difficult to date this precisely.³

As of December 1940, there were about 9,000 Jews in Kreis Sanok, of which some 2,500 lived in the Kreis center.⁴ According to a report of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), in July 1941, there were 2,700 Jews in Sanok, including 140 merchants; 120 skilled workers (of which 68 owned businesses, mainly tailors, shoemakers, and tinsmiths); 200 laborers; 6 self-employed; and 600 unemployed. Furthermore, 350 Jews were receiving assistance, while another 550 had applied for aid. The community kitchen distributed daily meals to 175 Jews; 102 Jews received medical help; and 144 families were receiving financial assistance.⁵ In September 1941, the Sanok JSS reported there were 2,400 Jews in the town, of whom 334 were receiving assistance; 50 Jews were performing forced labor.⁶ Around this time (at Rosh Hashanah), the Gestapo arrested a group of Jews while praying and deported them to the Auschwitz concentration camp.⁷

As of December 12, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Sanok introduced a law restricting the residence of Jews within the Kreis. Jews who were not permanent residents before June 22, 1941, were not permitted to settle in Kreis Sanok. Any Jews

who had arrived after this date were required to leave the area. The Judenrat were required to report any Jewish newcomers to the office of the Kreishauptmann. Violators of the law would be severely punished.⁸ In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to surrender all items of fur clothing to the Germans.⁹

From the spring of 1942, the Gestapo in Sanok conducted repeated registrations of the Jews in the town, dividing them into those able to work and those unfit for work.¹⁰ From this time, members of the Gestapo regularly arrested groups of Jews and shot them in the Jewish cemetery on Kiczury Street. The Judenrat was forced to send other Jews to bury the bodies. Among the victims were Jews who had appealed against their categorization as unfit for work and probably some who had returned from Distrikt Galizien, but others were shot more or less at the whim of the Gestapo. At the end of the occupation, the Polish authorities uncovered more than 30 mass graves here, containing the bodies of around 1,000 Jews. The other Jewish cemetery was razed, and the Germans used the *matzevot* (tombstones) to pave the roads.¹¹

In mid-summer 1942, the Germans dissolved the separate Jewish quarters in Sanok and established a single enclosed ghetto in the town, which was closely guarded. Jews could only leave it with a special pass to go to their workplaces. Jews caught outside the ghetto without permission faced the death penalty.¹² It was located on Jagiellońska Street and covered 2,000 square meters (almost 2,400 square yards). Initially, about 2,500 Jews inhabited the ghetto, but additional Jews were brought there from other places in the Kreis. Some Jews left the ghetto daily to work in road construction and at a railway carriage factory. Others worked in a labor camp based at the Trepcza quarry on the outskirts of town. The death rate in the ghetto reportedly was about 2 people per day.¹³

In preparation for the deportations from Kreis Sanok, the Germans also established a transit camp for Jews at Zasław, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) south of the town. This was an unfinished paper factory, with its own railhead, that was surrounded with barbed wire. The only accommodation was in primitive barracks. From the middle of August the Germans started to concentrate Jews in Zasław, for example, from Lesko, Bukowsko, and Ustrzyki Dolne. The camp's location within a factory was exploited to make Jews believe they would find employment there, but most were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp within days.

On September 5, 1942, the Germans announced on placards that all the Jews in the Sanok ghetto would be taken to the Zasław camp.¹⁴ Then on September 10, the German police, assisted by Ukrainian auxiliaries, conducted a major deportation Aktion. The Jews were ordered to appear with luggage in front of their houses, leaving their keys behind. It was announced that anyone providing help to Jews would be punished by death. The Jews of Sanok were taken to the Zasław camp, where in total more than 11,000 Jews from the region were crammed into barracks suitable for only about 500 people. The sick and the disabled were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Sanok. After a few days, some 4,000 Jews from Kreis Sanok were deported to Bełżec. Soon afterwards, two more

transports carrying about 9,000 Jews in total were sent from Zasław to Bełżec.¹⁵

On September 14, 1942, Stadthauptmann Class announced the creation of three separate Jewish camps (or remnant ghettos) in Kreis Sanok, in Sanok, Trepcza, and Zasław. In this manner, the Germans attempted to lure out of hiding the remaining Jews, promising them survival. About 300 Jews had remained in the Sanok ghetto. The Germans soon killed most of the Jews who emerged.¹⁶ In the fall of 1942, about 100 Jews were retained to clear the area of the ghetto, but several hundred others lived in the Trepcza camp and other workplaces in Sanok, now converted into barrack camps. In mid-December 1942, the Gestapo shot remaining members of the Judenrat in the Jewish cemetery.¹⁷ Also in December, the Trepcza camp was liquidated, and about 700 Jews were transferred to Zasław, where they were shot the next day.¹⁸ In January 1943, the remaining Jewish laborers in Sanok were concentrated in the remnant ghetto. After a few days, they were then sent to the Zasław camp. It is assumed that most were then sent to their deaths from Zasław, although the details remain unclear.¹⁹

Some Jews managed to escape the liquidation of the ghetto and go into hiding. The Germans hunted down the Jews in the nearby villages. In Bykowce, the Germans shot 3 Jewish escapees from the Sanok ghetto. In Dąbrówka, the Gestapo shot 14 Jews. On April 19, 1944, Stanisława Kornecka was executed by the Germans for sheltering a Jew.²⁰

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Sanok include the following: El'azar Sharvit, ed., *Sanok: Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Sanok voha-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Sanok voha-sevivah be Yisrael, 1969)—a translation of sections dealing with the Holocaust (pp. 327–333) is available at jewishgen.org; “Sanok,” in Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Wydawn., 2004); David Bloomberg, *Won't Forgive . . . Can't Forget: The Story of Jacques Graubart* (Oxfordshire, England: Writersworld, 2006); and Jafa Wallach, *Bitter Freedom: Memoirs of a Holocaust Survivor* (Schuylkill Haven, PA: Hermitage Publishers, 2006).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Sanok can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1619, 1793, 3245, 3246, 3555, 3992); BA-L (B 162/14494); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 45; RG-15.019M, reel 11; RG-50.155*0010); USHMPA (WS # 57831, 57842, 57843, 57848, and 57851); VHF (e.g., # 9007, 20860, 38212, 38885); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. “Sanok,” in Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, pp. 170–174.

2. BA-L, B 162/14494, Verdict of LG-Be (500), 3 P(K) Ks 1/72, August 23, 1973, against Johann Bäcker und Hans Quambusch (ZStL, II 206 AR-Z 13/64), pp. 10–12; Sharvit, *Sanok: Sefer zikaron*, pp. 327–333; AŻIH, 301/3245, testimony of Hadasa Hochdorf; VHF, # 38885, testimony of Henry Stern; # 9007, testimony of Pearl Parnes; testimony of Ya'akov Gurfein, in *The Trial of Adolf Eichman: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Israel State Archives and Yad Vashem, 1992–1995), pp. 331, 333; Stanisław

Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 36–38; “Sanok,” in Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 174.

3. BA-L, B 162/14494, p. 12; VHF, # 38885; # 9007; Gurfein testimony, in *The Trial of Adolf Eichman*, vol. 1, p. 331.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 45, letter from Kraków JSS to Sanok, December 22, 1940.

5. Ibid., report of Sanok JSS for July 1941.

6. Ibid., report of Sanok JSS for September 1941.

7. Sharvit, *Sanok: Sefer zikaron*, p. 331.

8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 45, letter signed by Dr. Tisch, November 17, 1941.

9. BA-L, B 162/14494, p. 13; Gurfein testimony, in *The Trial of Adolf Eichman*, vol. 1, p. 333.

10. Gurfein testimony, in *The Trial of Adolf Eichman*, vol. 1, p. 331.

11. OKBZH-S, 8/70, testimony of Janina Piotrowska and Jan Smyczyński; C. Cyran and A. Rachwał, “Eksterminacja ludności na Sanoczyźnie 1939–1944,” *Rocznik Sanocki* (1979), p. 42; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 11, “Protokół,” doc. 685.

12. BA-L, B 162/14494, p. 17.

13. USHMM, RG-15.019M, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” doc. 185; BA-L, B 162/14494, p. 17; “Sanok,” in Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 174.

14. AŻIH, 301/3555, testimony of Maria Dżambowa and Mała Sturm, p. 1.

15. BA-L, B 162/14494, pp. 17–18; Gurfein testimony, in *The Trial of Adolf Eichman*, vol. 1, p. 331; AŻIH 301/3246, testimony of Markus Silberman; 301/3556, testimony of Usher Szwarc; 301/4916, testimony of Mojżesz Zwas; E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 97.

16. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów,” pp. 97–98.

17. Sharvit, *Sanok: Sefer zikaron*, p. 332.

18. BA-L, B 162/14494, p. 25.

19. Sharvit, *Sanok: Sefer zikaron*, pp. 332–333, gives the final destination as Bełżec, but this killing facility was closed at the end of December 1942.

20. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 11, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” doc. 683; “Sanok,” in Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu*, p. 175.

SĘDZISZÓW MAŁOPOLSKI

Pre-1939: Sędziszów Małopolski, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sedziszow Malopolski, Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sędziszów Małopolski, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Sędziszów Małopolski is located about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east of Kraków. In 1921, when the town became part of the reestablished Polish state, there were only 861 Jewish residents in Sędziszów Małopolski.

Soon after the invasion of Poland, German troops entered Sędziszów Małopolski on September 8, 1939. When the Germans established the Generalgouvernement in October 1939, the town became part of Kreis Debica, within Distrikt Krakau. A branch of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle)

based in Dębica organized the main Aktions against the Jews within its area of jurisdiction, including the town of Sędziszów Małopolski, assisted by the German Order Police and other auxiliary forces.¹

In 1939, there were 1,000 Jewish residents in the town. In the period from 1939 to 1941, the Germans imposed a series of discriminatory measures against the local Jewish population. These included the confiscation of Jewish property, the imposition of forced “contributions,” the obligation to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David, and mandatory registration. In addition, the Germans prohibited the Jews from leaving the town limits and conscripted them to various kinds of compulsory hard labor.

There is very little information regarding the fate of the Jewish population prior to the establishment of the ghetto in June 1942. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by a man named Faust was established and made responsible for providing the daily quotas of forced laborers, who were mainly employed in construction and cleanup work. Records of the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization indicate that until September 26, 1941, despite the dire situation of the Jews in the town, there was no public kitchen. This was mainly due to the difficulties encountered raising funds to restore the local synagogue, in which the kitchen was to be established. Although no epidemic of typhus broke out in Sędziszów Małopolski, poor sanitary conditions among the Jewish population forced Meilech Löw, the head of the local JSS, to request funds to buy medical supplies in January 1942.² On February 2, 1942, the public kitchen, which served around 100 free meals per day, was finally opened. However, the living conditions in the town were also affected by considerable overcrowding. By February 15, 1942, the number of Jews in Sędziszów Małopolski had reached 1,380, including many refugees who had arrived from the nearby town of Kolbuszowa.³

At the beginning of May 1942, 50 young Jews were sent to the Pustków labor camp. The Germans established an open ghetto in Sędziszów Małopolski in June 1942 in an area circumscribed by three buildings. In addition to local Jews, it very briefly held several hundred Jews from the village of Ropczyce, who were concentrated there on July 23, 1942, just one day before the ghetto’s liquidation. This brought the number of Jews in the ghetto to about 1,900. The ghetto was liquidated on July 24, 1942. Approximately 400 Jews, many of them old people, children, and women from Ropczyce, were shot on the spot by members of the SS and the Gendarmerie after a selection. Their remains were buried in a mass grave in the Jewish cemetery. About 1,500 Jews were dispatched via Dębica to the extermination camp at Bełżec. Although the town was officially declared to have been “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*) following the liquidation of the ghetto, at least 19 Jews were discovered subsequently in hiding and were immediately shot.⁴

SOURCES Information regarding the ghetto in Sędziszów Małopolski can be found in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 280–282; E.

Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 87–109, here pp. 87 and 95; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 446; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1984), p. 172.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Sędziszów Małopolski may be found in the following archives: AŻIH (JSS 211/948); IPN (Zh III/31/35/68, g., woj. Rzeszowskie); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 45); VHF (e.g., # 1236 and 18693); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1412 and O-22/54).

Caterina Crisci and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Robert Haney

NOTES

1. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie żydów,” p. 87.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 45, Bescheinigung, Krakau, January 31, 1942.
3. Ibid., reel 45; VHF, # 1236, testimony of E. Kleinman.
4. Wein and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia*, p. 282; VHF, # 18693, testimony of S. Blaufeld, and # 1236; Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów,” p. 95; *Rejestr miejsc*, pp. 172–173; Yehoshua Gold, “Ropshitz during the Occupation,” in I. Rosenfeld, ed., *Hayo hayta Ayara Ropczyce* (Israel: I. Rosenfeld, 1985), pp. 74–78.

SIENIAWA

Pre-1939: Sieniawa, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Seniawa, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Sieniawa, Kreis Jaroslau, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Sieniawa is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) north-northwest of Przemyśl. In 1939, there were 1,300 Jews living in Sieniawa.¹ German forces briefly occupied the town in September 1939. The Soviets took over later that month, following their invasion of Poland from the east. The Soviet occupation was largely peaceful for Sieniawa’s Jews. Survivor Sally Bach recalled it as “a very good period” under the Soviets.²

Following the German recapture of Sieniawa in late June 1941, 50 to 60 Jews were arrested on charges of having cooperated with the Soviet police. Most were released after paying a ransom, but 15 people were detained and later shot.

The Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) chaired by Shmiryahu Schmidt, who was soon replaced by Eliyahu Gross. According to survivors, Gross was very friendly and influential with the Gestapo who oversaw the town, often bribing its members.³

On May 26, 1942, a conference of all the Judenrat chairmen in the Kreis took place in Sieniawa. The Kreishauptmann in Jaroslau appointed Gross as the Kreisobmann, that is, the president of the Presidium of the Area Council. This position held authority over all 15 Jewish Councils, some of which had much larger Jewish populations. Among them were Jaroslau (the Kreis center), Łańcut, Przeworsk, Pruchnik, Landshut,

Leżajsk, Grodzisko Dolne, Żołynia, Bystrowice, Markowa, Kańczuga, Czarna, and Monasterz. At the conference, Gross “introduced a work plan in the sphere of fulfilling the decrees of the German authorities, and in the social field.” Gross never exercised much of his power, and in the summer of 1942, most of the Jewish communities in the area were liquidated.

In July 1942, there were 1,800 Jews living in Sieniawa. By then, its Judenrat had distributed some clothing, heating fuel, and 20,000 złoty among the town’s Jews. No soup kitchen was organized. The Jewish population sustained itself by trading household items for food with Ukrainians, the predominant residents of the town. Jews worked in forestry, road repairs, and sanitation.⁴

In the summer and early autumn of 1942, several processes were taking place in Sieniawa, most of them simultaneously. Each was part of the liquidation plan for the Jews of Kreis Jaroslau. The Germans had selected Sieniawa as the main place of concentration for the Jews before their final shipment to extermination or labor camps. The Jews from neighboring settlements were brought into Sieniawa in the summer of 1942. A number of Jews from larger towns in the Kreis were also transferred to Sieniawa, following the liquidation of their communities. At that time, the Jews of Sieniawa were not ghettoized and there are no references to restrictions on their movement within the town.

Available sources differ, but the liquidation of the Sieniawa Jewish community probably took place on August 25, 1942. After this main Aktion, only several hundred Jews remained in Sieniawa. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*—which gives an earlier date of July 20 for the Aktion—the community was gathered in the synagogue and then sent to the Pełkinie transit camp. Many children and elderly people were murdered in and around Sieniawa during the course of this Aktion. The women were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp, while the healthy men were transferred to labor camps. Historian E. Podhorizer-Sandel, however, dates the Aktion on August 25 and indicates that the Jews were sent on wagons to nearby Wólka Pełkińska and from there by truck to a forest where they were shot.

The latter date seems more likely, as the local office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), established in Sieniawa only on July 19, 1942, reported to JSS headquarters in Kraków on August 26, 1942: “[F]or the laborers, deportees, abandoned, and children who remained [in Sieniawa], we have set up a kitchen.” It served three meals a day for 150 people but worked to increase this output as the authorities had announced that they should expect more deportees to be resettled to Sieniawa. “We are stressing that from the entire Kries Jaroslau, Sieniawa will be the only town inhabited by Jews, the number of which cannot presently be determined,” the JSS added.⁵

It was only after this first liquidation Aktion that a closed ghetto was established on September 15, 1942, in the center and northern parts of Sieniawa. Poles were expelled from their houses, and all the Jewish inhabitants were relocated to this area. The Germans gradually fenced the ghetto area with barbed wire and constructed at least one guarded gate. A Jew-

ish police force was organized, possibly before the ghetto’s establishment. Apart from the remaining Jews of Sieniawa, there were also Jews from Leżajsk, Łańcut, Żołynia, Grodzisk, and Kańczuga in the ghetto.

A German Gendarme by the name of Seidel was in charge of ghetto affairs. He was assisted by the commander of a Ukrainian police force, Babak, and another Ukrainian named Kozak.⁶

Even after the first liquidation, when new Jews were still being brought into the ghetto from other places where the Jewish communities had just been liquidated, Gross repeatedly assured the ghetto inmates that he would protect them against deportation.⁷

In the course of the ghetto’s establishment, the Germans ordered the Judenrat to set up several labor camps. Gross approved the candidates for labor conscription. The first of three camps, which all lay less than 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Sieniawa, had been set up by September 11, 1942. Some 200 men and 30 women labored in forestry and lived in barracks constructed close to their workplaces. The Sieniawa ghetto was ordered to provide meals for them from its soup kitchen. The monthly cost was estimated at 10,000 złoty. Sieniawa Jews drained of money pleaded to the JSS in Kraków for help: “Other localities in our Kreis cannot help us either, as there are no longer any Jews there at all.” By October 26, 1942, the JSS reported 1,300 Jews living in Sieniawa’s enclosed ghetto.⁸

Earlier in October 1942, another massacre took place. At least eight members of the Judenrat were shot in an Aktion that some survivors described as another liquidation operation, which ended with the murder of many ghetto inmates. A witness, Helen Gruenfeld, a relative of Gross, testified: “The president [of the Judenrat] ran out and screamed, ‘Please save my ghetto!’ And they were so drunk, the SS-men. They started shooting [at] him. There were seven shots and he begged for his life, and then all of a sudden it became quiet.”

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, members of the Judenrat, including Gross, were murdered when they were caught carrying furs and other valuables, which they intended to use to bribe the “governor [Kreishauptmann] in Jaroslau,” in exchange for cancellation of the planned dissolution of the Sieniawa ghetto. The execution took place outside the Judenrat building. Lazar Pes was then appointed as the new chairman. Bernard Schanzer further recalled that when the camps were being organized, the Germans killed all the chairmen of the Jewish Councils from neighboring towns who were living in the ghetto, as well as most of their family members.⁹

By November 1942, the number of Jews in the ghetto had declined to 1,100. The Judenrat and JSS were responsible for providing food to 169 laborers who were then working in the three forestry camps: in Dobra (10 kilometers [6 miles] distant), Milniki (8 kilometers [5 miles] distant), and Koty (4 kilometers [2.5 miles] away from Sieniawa). There were cases of typhus reported among the camp inmates.¹⁰

It is not clear to what extent the Jews in the camps were able to communicate with the ghetto or what the Jews who remained in the ghetto were doing at this time. The ghetto

existed until May 4, 1943. The number of inhabitants at that time and the manner of its liquidation are unknown. In the spring of 1944, an SS detachment exhumed the bodies of the people who had been murdered in Sieniawa during the German occupation, transferred them to Koniaczów, and burned them there.¹¹

SOURCES The Sieniawa ghetto is mentioned in the following publications: Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicja and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 360–362; and E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 95–96.

The following archives were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/952 [JSS]; 301/2200 [Relacje]); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [ASG]); and VHF (# 2380, 4222, 7563, 24980).

Jolanta Kraemer

NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July, 3, 1942.
2. VHF, # 24980, testimony of Sally Bach, 1997.
3. Ibid., # 7563, testimony of Helen Gruenfeld, 1995; # 4222, testimony of Bernard Schantzer, 1995.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/952 (Sieniawa), pp. 3–4, 7; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 3, 1942.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/952, pp. 10, 15.
6. Ibid., RG-15.019M (ASG Sieniawa), reel 17, fr. 46; AŻIH, 301/2200, testimony of Szymon Wulwik, 1945; VHF, # 24980; and # 4222.
7. VHF, # 4222.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/952, pp. 18, 22.
9. VHF, # 2380, testimony of Ben Stelzer, 1995; # 7563; and # 4222.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/952, p. 25; VHF, # 24980.
11. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG Sieniawa), reel 17, fr. 46.

SKAWINA

Pre-1939: Skawina, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krakau-Land, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Skawina is located 15 kilometers (9 miles) southwest of Kraków. There were approximately 360 Jews living in Skawina in 1939. Many fled before the advancing German troops at the start of the September Campaign; by the spring of 1940, there were only 290 Jews left in Skawina, including nine refugees.¹ A Polish (Blue) Police squad and a German Gendarmerie post were based in the town.

The occupying German authorities appointed Salomon Heim as the chairman of Skawina's Jewish Council (Judenrat) and Mendel Spielman as his deputy.² The Judenrat set up a self-help committee in early March 1940. Although unable to open a soup kitchen, it distributed food received from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in

Kraków. It also required that better-situated families should provide daily meals to 10 children from poor families. A complete list of the Jewish families living in Skawina in November 1940, prepared for flour distribution, is available in the AJDC files. It includes the name and surname of the family heads and the number of people in each family.³

In the autumn of 1940, a large number of Jews who had been expelled from Kraków moved to Skawina, nearly doubling the town's pre-war Jewish population. By mid-November 1940, 100 refugees had already been settled; and another 230 were in the process of arranging their accommodation. Each able-bodied newcomer had to register with the local Arbeitsamt (labor office) for work assignment.⁴

By the end of 1940, Jewish shops and businesses had either been closed down or taken over by non-Jewish trustees. At this time, the Judenrat stated that “the only source of income was from forced labor.” In January 1941, 700 Jews were registered in Skawina.⁵

A temporary infirmary was set up for the severely ill refugees in the early spring of 1941. A Women's Committee affiliated with the Judenrat organized a rotation among local families, who took it in turns to bring food to the inpatients to provide them with sustenance. Some patients were later transferred to Kraków.⁶

In April 1941, before the Passover holidays, the Gestapo and the Polish (Blue) Police rounded up 150 men and women enlisted for deportation to Międzyrzec Podlaski. The list was handed over to the Judenrat's chairman one day in advance. A number of those listed went into hiding after learning of their planned deportation; in their place, other Jews were seized randomly.

Available records show that by May 1941 the number of Jews in Skawina had decreased to 556.⁷

On May 22, 1941, the then-deputy of the Judenrat, Mendel Spielman, was appointed as its new chairman, with the approval of Kraków's Kreishauptmann.⁸

The new Judenrat chairman was also appointed as the president of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch that was officially established by the Kraków headquarters on August 7, 1941. The JSS was located on 133 Kolejowa Street. It opened a soup kitchen on August 18, 1941, at 219 Korabnicka Street.⁹

A Judenrat sanitation committee was soon created to prevent the spread of disease. A Jewish female doctor, Czapnicka, supervised it; she was also in charge of the clinic. The sanitation committee consisted of six people tasked with inspecting Jewish households for cleanliness, ordering vaccinations and haircuts, providing bedding replenishment, and maintaining floors and toilets. Poor people could use the public baths free of charge and were ordered to do so once a week. Half of Skawina's Jewish population was vaccinated for typhus. By May 1942, there were still no serious diseases, apart from three cases of tuberculosis.¹⁰

There were 597 Jews registered in Skawina between February and May 1942. These included some Jewish deportees from Slovakia, such as Mikuláš Liptovský, who were trying to locate relatives sent to other towns.¹¹

In the first days of July 1942, the Jews living in Krzeszowice (renamed Kressendorf by the Germans), including those from the villages of Tenczynek and Nowa Góra within Landgemeinde Kressendorf, as well as Jews from the separate Landgemeinden of Liszki and Czernichów, were notified of their upcoming transfer to Skawina. At the time of the transfer from Krzeszowice, a Sonderdienst squad took approximately 140 children, sick, and elderly into a forest near Tyniec, where they were forced to undress and then shot. The victims were buried in three mass graves.

With the arrival of 222 Jews from Landgemeinde Kressendorf, Skawina's Jewish population rose to 812.¹²

The newcomers from Kressendorf were followed by many more. The local government was instructed not to interfere with those Jews attempting to settle in the by now extremely overcrowded town of Skawina, "as long as it was within the town's boundaries."¹³ A number of houses near the train station were emptied of Poles, and Jews were housed in their place.¹⁴

Although there is no evidence that a ghetto was ever formally established, an informal open ghetto was effectively in place by August 1942, at the latest.¹⁵

On August 12, 1942, up to 1,000 Jews (among them a large number of refugees) were brought in from the liquidated ghetto in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska.¹⁶ At that time, on the orders of the Arbeitsamt in Kraków, all Jews employed in agriculture in the vicinity of Skawina were released from their employment. By then an SS unit was quartered in Skawina. Its headquarters, set up in the local factory, received more and more troops. Supplementary Polish police forces were also gathered and quartered in the local school. The SS informed the town's mayor that Skawina's Jews were under their jurisdiction and ordered the Jews to pay three separate "contributions" in a very short time.

The Jews from Myślenice and its vicinity were brought to the Skawina ghetto on August 21, 1942. At this time the ghettoization process was complete, and Jews were no longer allowed to leave the town. Checkpoints were spread out along Skawina's town limits; the identification of those coming in and leaving was checked. At least two Jews were killed trying to leave the town.¹⁷

On August 29, 1942, the ghetto's inhabitants were informed that they were to be deported "to the East for work" and were to report to the market square. In the process of assembling, those slow to arrive or discovered in hiding were killed. The night before, groups of Jews were rounded up and kept in the so-called Catholic House and the new slaughterhouse. The Germans announced shortly afterwards that Poles were forbidden to enter the market square until noon the next day, Sunday, August 30, when the liquidation of the Skawina ghetto would be complete.

The following morning, the deportation commenced with the tormenting of those Jews who showed up with the heaviest luggage. They were ordered to run to the Catholic House and back, then to the train station and back. Children's carriages and luggage were collected in front of the town hall, after which a selection took place. Small children, infants, the old,

and handicapped were loaded onto trucks. All of them were taken to the so-called Pobory Forest and shot on the edge of a previously dug mass grave. Polish workers serving in the German Construction Service (Baudienst) were later forced to bury them.

The remainder of the Jews was divided into two groups. An unknown number of healthy men were ordered to one side of the square and then loaded on trains destined for the Płaszów labor camp. Women and youths over 12 years old were taken to the other side and then sent on freight cars to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁸

An intensive search for escapees from the ghetto was conducted following its liquidation; for example, 4 Jews were shot on September 1, 1942; 6 Jewish men, all with the same surname (Kunstlinger), were shot on September 2; 17 Skawina Jews were murdered on September 3; and another 16 on September 30.¹⁹

SOURCES The ghetto in Skawina is briefly mentioned in E. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim," *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 96; more information on conditions for the Jews concentrated in Skawina can be found in Bruno Shatyn, *A Private War: Surviving in Poland on False Papers, 1941–1945* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1985).

The following archival sources were used in this entry: AŻIH (210/632, 211/965-966, 301/599, 301/799, 301/4470, 301/4572, 301/4720, and 301/5322); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC], 210/632 [Skawina]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 46, 211/965-966 [Skawina]); and VHF (# 28035-3, 2480, and 17120).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/632 (Skawina), pp. 1–3; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46, 211/965 (Skawina), p. 18.
2. Shatyn, *A Private War*, p. 10; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/632, pp. 1, 8.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/632, pp. 11–13, 18; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 46, 211/965, p. 28.
4. Shatyn, *A Private War*, p. 11; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/632, p. 15.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/632, pp. 15, 20; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 46, 211/965, p. 18; and 211/966 (Skawina), pp. 36–37.
6. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 25, 1941.
7. AŻIH, 301/4720, testimony of Dawid Enoch, n.d.; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 46, 211/965, p. 18.
8. *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 2, 1941; and USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/632, p. 30.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 46, 211/965, pp. 23, 28–29; and 211/966, p. 8.
10. Ibid., reel 46, 211/966, pp. 4, 14, 30, 50; *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 2, 1941.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 46, 211/966, pp. 4, 28, 36, 49.
12. Ibid., p. 54.
13. Shatyn, *A Private War*, p. 20.
14. VHF, # 28035-3, testimony of Regina Lockerman, 1997.

15. Podhorizer-Sandel, "O zagładzie Żydów," p. 96. In this article the author specifically uses the term *ghetto* referring to Skawina.

16. VHF, # 2480, testimony of Dorothy Fields, 1995.

17. Shatyn, *A Private War*, pp. 27–29; AŻIH, 301/599, testimony of Zofia Głowacka Hradowa, 1945.

18. Shatyn, *A Private War*, pp. 32–33; AŻIH, 301/599; VHF, # 17120, testimony of Israel Scharf, 1996.

19. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo krakowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHwP, 1984), pp. 92–93.

SŁOMNIKI

Pre-1939: Słomniki, town, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Słomniki, Kreis Miechow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Słomniki, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Słomniki is located about 20 kilometers (12 miles) north-northeast of Kraków. In 1921, the Jewish population was 1,460, out of a total population of 4,797.

German forces occupied Słomniki on September 6, 1939. A number of Jews, mainly young men, fled eastward just before the occupation. However, many subsequently returned in the winter of 1939–1940.

On October 26, 1939, Słomniki became incorporated into Kreis Miechow in Distrikt Krakau within the Generalgouvernement. The German authorities imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures, including the confiscation of property, a curfew, and subsequently a prohibition on Jews leaving the town. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by Israel Moshe Bialebroda. The Jewish Council had to supply forced laborers to the Germans for clearing snow, road construction, quarrying, and draining swamps. Jews with means were able to pay for substitutes to replace them on forced labor details.¹ According to *Pinkas ha-kehilot*, the German commissar of the labor office in Miechów, Beckman, was notable for his brutality; on one visit to Słomniki, he forced Rabbi Huberband to remove all the holy books from the synagogue and burn them in front of the building.

In the period up to the end of 1941, the Jewish population of Słomniki increased by up to 1,000 refugees, including a number of people displaced from Kraków. The community organized public assistance and a soup kitchen for the needy. In the winter of 1940–1941, about 100 young men from Słomniki were sent to a labor camp in Nowy Targ.

Probably in the spring of 1942, the German Security Police selected a few of the most prominent Jews of Słomniki and took them to Miechów, where they were killed.² In the first half of 1942, a unit of Jewish Police was created in Słomniki, which served under the Judenrat.

In late April or early May 1942, the Germans rounded up about 150 able-bodied Jews in Słomniki and deported them to work at two camps near Kraków. Some worked at the Fliegerhorstkommando, agricultural section, in Rakowice, and others were sent to the Siemens factory camp in Płaszów. The

Słomniki Judenrat managed to send them small amounts of money, food, and clothing for a few weeks in the summer of 1942.³ According to Roman Ohrenstein, who was among those included in this deportation, up to this date there was no ghetto in the town. The Jews received bread in accordance with ration cards but had to barter possessions with local farmers to supplement this meager diet. They continued to live in their own homes, but all the decrees meant that living conditions were "just as bad as a ghetto."⁴

The first large-scale deportation Aktion from Słomniki, which was also the first from Kreis Miechow, took place on June 4–8, 1942. Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) records indicate that at this time about 1,200 Jews were deported, and some 800 to 900 Jews remained in the town.⁵ On the night of June 4, hundreds of SS men aided by Ukrainian auxiliaries and Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the town. The German authorities ordered the Judenrat to prepare a list of the Jews who lived in the town's center and its eastern part. That night, Jews from these districts were forcibly evicted using vicious dogs and imprisoned in the synagogue and two Polish schools. Those unable to walk were killed on the spot.

After being held in the schools and the synagogue for three days without food or water, on June 8, the Jews were then transported on trucks to Prokocim, just to the southeast of Kraków, where they were held in the local soccer field for a few hours. Here they were ordered to hand over their valuables. A selection was conducted, and a few dozen able-bodied Jews were sent to the Płaszów labor camp. The old, sick, and frail were also selected out and killed nearby. The bulk of the Jews were then deported by rail to the Bełżec extermination camp on cattle cars, together with other Jews from Kraków, where the first large Aktion had commenced on May 30 and was now concluding.⁶

Following this Aktion, about 900 Jews were still living in the western part of town. At the end of June 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Miechów issued a decree on the establishment of "Jewish quarters" (*Jüdischer Wohnbezirke*) in Kreis Miechow. According to German trial materials, this order instructed the Jews of Michałowice (and probably also other nearby villages) to move to the "ghetto" in Słomniki by July 15, 1942.⁷ The resettlement of the Jews of Michałowice was conducted in a brutal fashion by the head of the Gestapo Aussendienststelle in Miechów, SS-Untersturmführer and Kriminalobersekretär Bayerlein; a number of Jews were shot in the streets of the village.⁸ JSS records confirm that the Kreishauptmann informed the Jews of Słomniki to expect the resettlement of about 450 Jews from the neighboring villages on July 13–14, 1942. Then on July 21, JSS records indicate that initially the mayor of Słomniki did not want to accept these new arrivals. However, he agreed, once an official from the office of the Kreishauptmann gave permission for them to be housed with the other Jews within the borders of the "eventual Jewish quarter" and even permitted some to be housed temporarily in other parts of town, once the official had stated that "there were no plans to establish a [permanent] ghetto in Słomniki."⁹ Thus the order announcing the establishment of a Jewish

quarter in Słomniki appears to reflect the town's use as a temporary concentration point for Jews of the region prior to their deportation, rather than the establishment of a formal ghetto for Słomniki's Jews. Its main purpose was probably to deceive Jews passing through Słomniki about the real nature of the deportation Aktion. Nonetheless, most of the native Jews of Słomniki were by now concentrated in the western part of the town, due to the manner in which the first deportation Aktion was conducted.

On August 2, 1942, the soup kitchen in Słomniki was reopened after the disruptions caused by the first deportation. The Gestapo chief in Miechów, Bayerlein, engaged in selling "certificates" to the increasingly anxious Jews for a price of 10,000 złoty, which were supposed to protect people from deportation; however, during the next deportation Aktion, these certificates proved to be worthless. By mid-August, the Germans had established a transit camp near Słomniki, consisting of a specially fenced area in a field, near the flour mill on the Szerniewa River. On August 20, 1942, most of the remaining Jews of Słomniki were transferred to this area, where Jews from other nearby towns were also brought successively during the last days of August and the first days of September. Among other places, Jews were brought there from Charsznica, Skalmierz, Koszyce, Miechów, Proszowice, and Skała.¹⁰ Many Jews were murdered by the Ukrainian and Lithuanian escorts during these transports, and eventually the transit camp held about 6,000 to 8,000 Jews, including about 1,000 from Słomniki. In the camp, the inmates were held under terrible conditions, exposed to the elements. Only some 200 Jews, including members of the Judenrat, were allowed to remain in Słomniki.

The Słomniki Judenrat managed to organize some food and water for the thousands of Jews crammed into the camp.¹¹ However, more than 40 people died during the first four days, and many others contracted dysentery and typhus. On September 6–7, 1942, the Germans and their auxiliaries liquidated the camp. About 1,000 people were selected and sent to forced labor camps, and hundreds of the infirm and children were shot and buried in nearby pits, some being buried alive. The remaining Jews were loaded onto cattle cars and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.

The remaining Jews in Słomniki were subsequently joined by other Jews who had evaded the roundups in hiding. At this time, the Germans and their collaborators were scouring the region for any Jews who had escaped, shooting those they found on the spot.

In November 1942, the Germans shot the last remaining 200 Jews in Słomniki in the Chodów Forest, along with a number of Jewish fugitives captured in the area. Only a few Jews from Słomniki managed to survive until the end of the German occupation in 1945.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews in Słomniki during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 358–362;

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, vol. 23 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 619; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 241–242, 665–666, 1190, 1200.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/976 [JSS]; 301/1695, 1732, 1808); VHF (e.g., # 20661, 27514, and 27994); and YVA (M-1/E/494).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 27994, testimony of Roman Ohrenstein; # 27514, testimony of David Merin.
2. Ibid., # 27994.
3. Ibid., # 27994; # 27514; AŻIH, 211/976, p. 5, JSS Słomniki to JSS Kraków, May 4, 1942.
4. VHF, # 27994.
5. AŻIH, 211/976, pp. 32, 38, JSS Słomniki to JSS Kraków, May 4, 1942.
6. VHF, # 27514.
7. *JuNS-V*, vol. 23, Lfd. Nr. 619b, p. 119.
8. Ibid., Lfd. Nr. 619a, pp. 89–91.
9. AŻIH, 211/976, pp. 48, 50, JSS Słomniki to JSS Kraków, July 13, 1942, and Notatka, Kraków, July 21, 1942.
10. Ibid., 301/1695, testimony of Mozes Goldkorn; 301/1732, testimony of Mates Brunengraber; 301/1808, testimony of Izrael Anker.
11. YVA, M-1/E/494, testimony of Wolf Lerer.

SOKOŁÓW MAŁOPOLSKI

Pre-1939: Sokołów Małopolski, town, Rzeszów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Sokolow, Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sokołów Małopolski, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

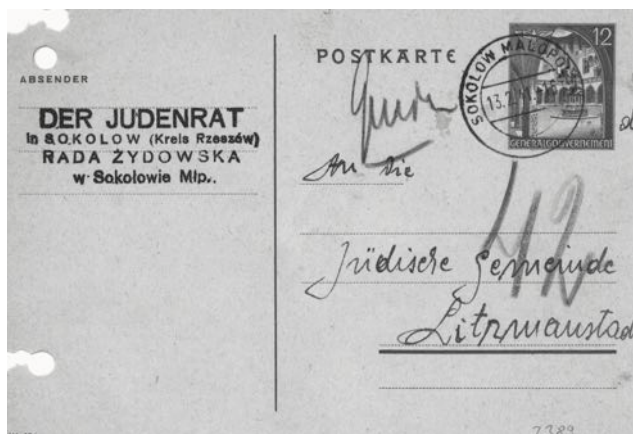
Sokołów Małopolski is located 27 kilometers (17 miles) north-northeast of Rzeszów. On the eve of World War II, there were 1,600 Jews living there.

Following the German occupation of the town in September 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was appointed in the fall. Leon Kaufmann became its chairman. One of the Judenrat's main functions was providing laborers for the Germans.

By December 1939, over 200 Jews who had been deported by the German authorities from Łódź were transferred to Sokołów Małopolski via Rzeszów. Upon their arrival, Sokołów's Jews spontaneously set up a Committee for the Support of Deportees. A soup kitchen opened, distributing breakfasts and dinners. The Judenrat had taken charge of the committee by January 1940.

In March 1940, there were 1,700 Jews living in Sokołów, including 270 deportees from other areas. The number of deportees fluctuated, with several groups of Jews arriving and then leaving Sokołów; by June 1940, the number had fallen to approximately 150.¹

Those Jews who remained in Sokołów worked for a construction company on various projects on and around the



A postcard bearing a rubber stamp in German and Polish addressed from the Judenrat in Sokołów Małopolski to the Jewish community in Litmannstadt (Łódź), February 13, 1941.

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market square. Civilian supervisors named Jeschko, Lindner, and Schäfer often beat these laborers. In winter, Jewish labor was used to clear the streets of snow.²

The Judenrat closed the soup kitchen in the summer of 1940, immediately after the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) stopped sending money. Before this, the AJDC had questioned the Judenrat's policy of not charging for meals and overspending on provisions (bought on the black market), instead of attempting to buy food at the maximum prices fixed by the German authorities in their efforts to prevent speculators; in fact, Jewish charitable organizations were still eligible to buy some food under these regulations.

In September 1940, an AJDC inspector criticized the Judenrat chairman Kaufmann for being "a flincher," taking the easiest way out by simply refusing to reopen the soup kitchen. From then on, the Judenrat only distributed cash, which forced the poor to buy food themselves at inflated prices, whereas the Judenrat could have negotiated to pay bulk prices and could also have saved on fuel costs by operating a communal kitchen. The AJDC did not renew its support, as it considered its money was being spent unwisely.³

By February 1941, a branch of the welfare organization known as the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), with its headquarters in Kraków, opened in Sokołów. It took over the provision of social aid from the Judenrat, which now included Dr. Józef Weissberg, Symche Halpern, and Awadje Breselod. Continuing the politics of the Judenrat, the JSS chose to distribute cash instead of organizing a soup kitchen. Close to half of its 1941 budget was spent supplying conscripted laborers with food and clothing.⁴

According to a JSS report of June 1941, a total of 400 Jews worked in labor camps outside the Kreis, most of them likely in Górno.

In September 1941, all Jews from villages surrounding Raniżów and Sokołów, including Wola Raniżowska, Zielonka, Staniszewskie, Mazury, and Górno, were deported to Sokołów

and Głogów Małopolski. A group of 250 people, mostly farmers, resettled in Sokołów, the remainder in Głogów. Those who were sent to Sokołów had been working at the open labor camp in Górno; their resettlement was to rationalize their labor there.⁵ One Jewish survivor, who arrived in Sokołów in September 1941, described the town at that time as "a kind of a ghetto" overcrowded with refugees but unguarded, unfenced, and with no gates. He claimed that there was no hunger and the town's Jews could still go out and buy food.⁶ At this time, the German Landkommissar Twardon, residing in Kolbuszowa, ordered the Kolbuszowa Judenrat to move 25 Jewish families to Sokołów and Głogów.⁷

A hospital was probably not established in the village until 1942. Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia (Society for the Protection of Health) disinfected dirty apartments from December 1940. One source claims that there was never a serious epidemic in Sokołów and the death rate was not significantly above average. However, on December 20, 1941, the police decree of Kreishaupmann Heinz Ehaus announced Strzyżów, Niebylec, and Sokołów Małopolski as quarantined areas, and all traffic in and out was halted. The penalty for disobeying the order was a 1,000 złoty fine or prison time. There is no information as to when the quarantine was lifted.⁸

At the beginning of 1942, the Judenrat organized linen-sewing, carpentry, and agricultural courses for the youth. Although the courses began in February 1942, the Judenrat subsequently failed to establish workshops that might have offered people some form of employment and therefore perhaps security against deportation for forced labor.

The German authorities established a ghetto in Sokołów on April 27, 1942. It covered approximately 500 square meters (almost 600 square yards) and included Kupiecka and Kochanowskiego Streets, as well as part of Piłsudski. The Poles living there had to leave their homes. Landkommissar Twardon became the commandant in charge of the Sokołów ghetto. Marcuse, a refugee, was head of the Jewish Police.⁹ Survivor testimonies disagree on whether or not the Sokołów ghetto was physically enclosed.¹⁰

By May 1942, the ghetto had 3,000 inhabitants. The local Arbeitsamt (labor office) registered all newcomers aged between 14 and 60 years old. In May 1942, according to *Gazeta Żydowska*, approximately 800 Jews worked daily at the Luftwaffe barracks in Górno; however, it is not clear if all of them were from the Sokołów ghetto. At that time, the commander of the Górno outpost offered dinners to Jewish laborers at 0.40 złoty each. Another 100 to 120 Jews worked in Sokołów cleaning the town and repairing roads.

The Reichshof Gestapo arrived in Sokołów in early May 1942 and shot several Jews whom they believed to be Communists as part of a wider Aktion throughout Distrikt Krakau.

The liquidation of the Sokołów ghetto took place in July 1942. German police officers arrived in Sokołów and shot around 30 ghetto residents, following a selection. Approximately 200 Jews were relocated to Głogów; Jewish professionals were sent to Rzeszów. The remaining Jews were given only two days to transfer to the Rzeszów ghetto. Forty Jews

found hiding were murdered in four separate shootings in the forest near the village of Pogwizdów Nowy.¹¹

Along with those expelled from other towns, Sokołów's Jews were put into shacks outside the Rzeszów ghetto. All were most likely sent to the Bełżec extermination camp in the course of the July 1942 deportations.¹²

In the summer of 1943, Wehrmacht soldiers shot three Jews and executed four Poles accused of hiding them. All were shot and buried on the grounds of Sokołów's elementary school. According to a survivor's testimony, one Jewish man was killed in Sokołów after the end of the war, as he was accused of having been a member of the Jewish Police—an allegation that the survivor deemed to be false.¹³

SOURCES There is no single publication describing in detail the fate of the Jews of Sokołów Małopolski. Brief descriptions of the destruction of the community can be found in Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), p. 181; and Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 276–278.

Documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/645 [AJDC]; 211/983 and 211/931 [JSS]; and 301/4968 [Relacje]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); USHMPA (CD no. 0409, WS # N64867); and VHF (# 30185).

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NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 20, 1940; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/645, pp. 1, 3, 7, 11, 23; Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich. Part 2,” *BŻIH*, nos. 1–2 (1984): 97.

2. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG Sokołów Małopolski); AŻIH, 301/4968.

3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 20, 1940; USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154, 210/645, pp. 1, 21, 24–26, 28.

4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 15, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/645, pp. 14, 24; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 47, 211/983, pp. 1, 3.

5. Franciszek Kotula, *Losy Żydów rzeszowskich 1939–1945: Kronika tamtych dni* (Rzeszów: Społeczny Komitet Wydania Dzieł Franciszka Kotuli, 1999), pp. 68–69; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 45, 211/931, p. 13.

6. VHF, # 30185, testimony of Israel Friedman, 1997.

7. *Kolbuszowa Memorial Book*, available at www.jewishgen.org (a translation of I.M. Biderman, ed., *Pinkas Kolbushov* [New York: United Kolbushover, 1971]), pp. 55–88.

8. USHMPA, CD no. 0409, WS # N64867; USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG); Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, 211/983, p. 24; *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 20, 1940.

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG); *Kolbuszowa Memorial Book*, pp. 55–88.

10. See AŻIH, 301/4968; VHF, # 30185.

11. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 462.

12. Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich. Part 3,” *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4 (1985): 99.

13. AŻIH, 301/4968; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw: GKB-ZHwP, 1984), p. 177.

STARY SĄCZ

Pre-1939: Stary Sącz, town, Nowy Sącz powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Alt-Sandez, Kreis Neu-Sandez, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Stary Sącz, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Stary Sącz is located about 85 kilometers (53 miles) southeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, there were about 434 Jews living in the town.¹

German armed forces occupied Stary Sącz on September 5, 1939. At the end of October, the town became part of Kreis Neu-Sandez, administered by Kreishauptmann Dr. Reinhard Busch. A Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) was established in Nowy Sącz and headed from 1940 by SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Hamann. A unit of Polish (Blue) Police, stationed in Stary Sącz, was commanded by a Viennese official named Neumann. The Germans conscripted Jews for forced labor, mainly cleaning streets, washing latrines, and performing other degrading work. A curfew was imposed on the Jews. A Judenrat was established in the town in the fall of 1939.²

Up to the beginning of 1940, Jews were permitted to remain in their own houses unless the house was on one of the main streets, from which all Jews were evicted as Jews were not permitted to use them. In 1940, the Germans confiscated Jewish houses and businesses. At the end of 1940 and in the first half of 1941, the Kreishauptmann ordered that all Jews living in the smaller towns and villages must move to one of five major towns in the Kreis: Nowy Sącz, Stary Sącz, Limanowa, Mszana Dolna, or Grybów. By 1942, leaving the residential area without permission was punishable by death.³

In 1941, the Germans began to concentrate the Jews in one area on the outskirts of Stary Sącz. Jews from nearby villages and smaller towns, including Krynica, Stadło, Piwniczna, and Rytro, were brought into the town. About 1,000 Jews lived in the crowded Jewish area in the northern part of town, which became an open ghetto. It was administered by the Judenrat and policed internally by the Jewish Police, with Polish (Blue) Police acting as external guards. Due to the prohibition on leaving the ghetto and the meager food rations supplied, many Jews engaged in black market activities. The Germans also prohibited Jews from religious observance, but some Jews held clandestine religious services.⁴

According to a report by the Stary Sącz branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) for the period from June 26 to July 15, 1941, the Judenrat had registered 1,024 Jews, of which more than half had arrived since the start of the occupation. These included 33 merchants, 25 skilled workers, 4 farmers, 5 self-employed individuals, 43 forced laborers, and 257 unemployed. Some 85 Jews were receiving aid. Based on the community

kitchen's report for October 1941, the kitchen distributed paid and unpaid meals to 231 Jews, but 298 more people had applied for assistance.⁵

The Germans intensified their persecution of the Jews during 1941. On September 13, 1941, the Germans shot 20 Jewish women in the Miejska Góra Forest.⁶ On December 13, 1941, a renewed order was issued commanding Jews to wear armbands with the Star of David. The armband had to specify the person's last name, address, and town of residence.⁷ At the end of December 1941, the Germans ordered that the Jews surrender any fur items and hard currency.⁸

On January 6, 1942, the Kreishauptmann announced that Jews could not leave their area of residence without the approval of either his office (Kreisamt) or the labor office (Arbeitsamt). Jews had to obtain an approval from the Kreishauptmann for travel by rail. In the spring or summer of 1942, the Jews from Kreis Neu-Sandez were ordered to hand over to the Germans a contribution of 140,000 złoty, furs, large amounts of tea and coffee, and 500 pots. Somehow the Judenrat in Stary Sącz managed to scrape together their share of this harsh German demand.⁹

On August 14, 1942, the Germans ordered conscripted Poles of the Construction Service (Baudienst) to dig a large ditch in a field near the Poprad River. The Germans sent an order via the Judenrat that all Jews must assemble at the cattle market in the early hours of August 15, 1942. The Order Police and Gestapo from Nowy Sącz carried out the Aktion. A selection was made in the course of which at least 70 people who were elderly, sick, or otherwise unfit for work were sent to one side. They were taken to the mass grave near the Poprad River and shot. The Germans also selected about 140 people from the mass of Jews for three labor detachments, issuing them special work cards stamped by the GPK in Nowy Sącz. One group consisting of 35 people was taken on trucks to perform forced labor at the HOBAG factory in Rytko just to the south of Stary Sącz. A second group, also of 35 people, became the cleanup group (Aufräumkommando) that remained in Stary Sącz to sort the clothes and other possessions of the Jews. Another work group consisting of 70 men was marched off to the Piekło ghetto in Nowy Sącz. The remaining group of more than 300 Jews was escorted by Jewish Police to the closed ghetto on Kazimierz Street in Nowy Sącz.¹⁰ The Germans deported the majority of the Jews from the two Nowy Sącz ghettos to the Bełżec extermination camp between August 24 and August 28, 1942.

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Stary Sącz include "Stary Sącz," in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 278–280; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 1998), Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 269–484 (LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/65, verdict against Heinrich Hamann and others).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Stary Sącz can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1895); IPN;

USHMM (Acc. 1995.A.228; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 47; RG-02.070*01; RG-15.019M, reel 4; RG-50.106*0008; RG-50.002*0156); VHF (# 291, 9874, 10710, 11490, 20997); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc 1997.A.0124, reel 47, report for the period June 26 to July 15, 1941, by the Stary Sącz branch of the JSS.

2. A. Krawczyk, "Hitlerowski aparat okupacyjny na sądecku," in *Okupacja w Sądecku: Praca zbiorowa* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1979), pp. 67, 72, 187; VHF, # 10710, testimony of Moses Goldberg.

3. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 308, 347; Witold Rawski, "Dzieje okupacyjne Starego Sącza i Grybowa," in *Okupacja w Sądecku*, p. 193; VHF, # 10710; Rafael Mahler, ed., *Seyfer Sants* (Tel Aviv: Sandzer landsmanshaftn in New York, 1970), p. 769; Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 99.

4. VHF, # 10710; # 11490, testimony of Leon Sperling; # 9874, testimony of Henry Sperling; # 291, testimony of Murray Goldfinger; and USHMM, RG-02.070*01, p. 4, "Leontyna Davies questionnaire." Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 472, date the establishment of the ghetto in the spring of 1942; this may have been the time at which all Jews residing in Stary Sącz were compelled to move within the Jewish quarter.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, report for the period June 26 to July 15, 1941, by the Stary Sącz JSS branch; and report of the Stary Sącz community kitchen for October 1941.

6. IPN, Ankieta GK "Egzekucje" pow. Nowy Sącz, woj. krakowski; also Alert ZHP, t. VII, z. 12, k. 19.

7. Rawski, "Dzieje okupacyjne Starego Sącza i Grybowa," p. 193.

8. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, p. 328.

9. Rawski, "Dzieje okupacyjne Starego Sącza i Grybowa," p. 193. Shlomo Zalman Lehrer and Leizer Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz* (Southfield, MI: Targum, 1997), p. 309, date the demand for a large contribution in early August 1942.

10. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 635, pp. 385–387; Rawski, "Dzieje okupacyjne Starego Sącza i Grybowa," pp. 193–194; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 4, "Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych," doc. 483. Lehrer and Strassman, *The Vanished City of Tsanz*, p. 310, give the number of Jews shot in Stary Sącz as 100 to 150, and the number of workers sent to the open ghetto in Nowy Sącz as 40.

STRZYŻÓW

Pre-1939: Strzyżów, town, Rzeszów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Strzyżów, Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Strzyżów, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Strzyżów is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Rzeszów. On the eve of World War II, there were 1,300 Jewish residents in the town.

On September 8, 1939, German forces occupied Strzyżów. Maltreatment, plundering, and killings began almost immediately.

A detachment of German Order Police was established in Strzyżów under the command of Hauptmann Otto Koeller and his deputy Wilhelm Kopf. Their subordinates included Hugo Drewitz, Hans Hoffmann, and Wiktor Waszek (Waschek). The latter was especially sadistic towards Jews and was sentenced to 10 years in prison by Rzeszów's Provincial Court after the war. Hauptmann Koeller often carried out executions himself; Polish partisans shot him in Zaborów on July 3, 1944.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established by the new authorities and was chaired by Abraham Braw. The Jewish Council included Yacov (Jakub) Rosen, Aaron Deutsch, Elimielech Waldman, and a manufacturer from Łódź, Zygmunt Schinagiel. By May 1940, Avigdor Diamant was appointed the Judenrat's treasurer, and by November 1940, Nussbaum was also included on the council. Besides Strzyżów proper, the Judenrat was also responsible for the following settlements: Bonarówka, Żyznów, Wysoka, Żarnowa, Grodzisko, and Łętownia.

Itzhok Berglass, the author of the chapter on the Holocaust in the Strzyżów yizkor book who actually spent the war years in Russia, reports that the Judenrat behaved decently towards the town's Jews, doing all that it could to ameliorate the impact of German decrees. Of the two Jewish Police in Strzyżów, only one extorted money from his fellow Jews.¹

On December 15, 1939, the Kreishauptmann in Reichshof sent 247 refugees to Strzyżów, most of whom originally were from Łódź and Kalisz. A commission for refugees was set up within the Judenrat; however, it soon ran into debt trying to provide for their sustenance and housing. The numerous sick among the refugees generated further costs at the local pharmacy and with a private doctor. A few patients had to be sent to the general hospital in Rzeszów. By the end of January 1940, over 60 of them had left Strzyżów.

In the following months the number of refugees steadily diminished by about 20 people a month, as newcomers chose to leave Strzyżów to join their families in other places in the Generalgouvernement or were simply forced to leave owing to the deterioration of living conditions in the town. The Strzyżów Judenrat provided them with funds for their journeys.

By April 1940, there were 1,238 Jews (i.e., approximately 210 families) in Strzyżów; only 140 of them were refugees and deportees. Among them there were 34 Jews from places in Germany (including Stuttgart, Cologne, and Hamburg) and Upper Silesia. In July 1940, only 126 refugees remained in Strzyżów, half of the original number.

By June 1940, 60 to 70 percent of Jewish-owned shops in Strzyżów had been closed down. Jews were no longer receiving their ration cards. Prices of food were high—for example, a 2-kilogram (4.4-pound) loaf of bread cost 5 złoty. The Strzyżów

Judenrat was responsible for sending local Jews to perform forced labor. In the autumn of 1940, 140 of them worked daily.²

On October 2, 1940, the community was informed by Kreishauptmann Ehaus to prepare for the arrival of another 80 deportees from Rzeszów. The Judenrat had a problem housing them, as German companies operating in Strzyżów were demanding more and more space.³

By November 1940, there were 1,240 Jews living in Strzyżów, including approximately 200 deportees (among them now, 58 from Kraków). Out of the total number of Jewish residents, the Judenrat estimated that 220 were less than 18 years old. A soup kitchen that issued breakfasts consisting of one roll and a glass of milk was opened for approximately 120 children daily; it operated only between October 1940 and April 1941.⁴

By June 1941, 190 Strzyżów Jews were being conscripted for labor a few days a week. They worked for two German companies: the Organisation Todt (OT) and Kirchhof. Both companies provided meager food rations and some wages, but the latter had a reputation for mistreating people. Some poorer Jews volunteered to work for food. The labor included paving roads, building tunnels, quarrying stone, and unloading freight. Jews were also forced to remove tombstones from the Jewish cemeteries to pave the marketplace, then to level them to create public space. Besides Strzyżów's Jews, 60 Jewish laborers from the Czudec and Niebylec gminas were added to the road construction brigades. Only a few Jewish men from Strzyżów were sent to labor camps during the German occupation, those camps being at Biesiadka and Pustków.

That summer, there were 32 Jewish businesses still operating, comprising mainly tailors, tinsmiths, and bakers. Apart from their owners, they employed another eight sales assistants. All Jewish farmers (a total of five families) were still able to sustain themselves from agriculture. In June 1941, the community numbered 1,243.⁵

After several outbreaks of disease in Strzyżów in the autumn of 1941, the German authorities ordered the opening of a public bath that cost an estimated 15,000 złoty, as the building had already been partially torn down to widen the street. On December 20, 1941, Kreishauptmann Ehaus announced that Strzyżów, Niebylec, and Sokołów Małopolski were quarantine areas, and all traffic was halted. By February 1942, the bath had not yet been opened. There is no information as to when the quarantine was lifted, but the material situation of the Jews deteriorated rapidly.

On December 17, 1941, the Kreishauptmann in Rzeszów ordered the establishment of Jewish quarters in the Kreis, setting dates for them to be closed. In Rzeszów, the closing order was effective on January 10, 1942; for the remainder of the Kreis, it was February 1, 1942. Soon after the latter date, an unfenced ghetto was announced for Strzyżów's Jews. None of the available sources mention that Jews had to move to a designated area; therefore, they were probably allowed to remain where they were living. This, and the fact that Jews had been forbidden to leave Strzyżów since mid-1940, meant that their situation did not change dramatically with the ghetto's

establishment, especially since the recent quarantine measures had already largely cut them off from the outside world.

In the summer of 1942, Strzyżów's Judenrat tried to halt the expulsion order to the Rzeszów ghetto. Hauptmann Koeller promised to delay the deportation for a few grams of gold. Strzyżów's Jews managed to collect it with the help of the Jews of Krosno. But the moment the bribe was delivered, the Germans set the date for the deportation Aktion.⁶

German forces probably liquidated the Strzyżów ghetto on June 26–28, 1942, as most of the ghettos in the Kreis were emptied at this time and their residents transferred to the Rzeszów ghetto.

It is known, however, that although there was a train station in Strzyżów, its Jews were deported to Rzeszów on carts, for which Hauptmann Koeller ordered them to pay. Tadeusz Sztetela, a Polish Catholic and resident of Strzyżów, remembers how peasants with their wagons arrived in the town square. Jews loaded their belongings onto the wagons, as they were allowed to take everything with them, and quickly headed towards Rzeszów because the Germans had announced that any Jew found in the town after 6:00 P.M. would be shot on the spot. On the way to Rzeszów, the elderly and infirm were killed by the Germans.⁷

The bulk of Strzyżów's Jews were most likely sent to the Bełżec extermination camp in July 1942 during the deportations from the Rzeszów ghetto.⁸

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Strzyżów include the following: Itzhok Berglass and Shlomo Yahalomi-Diamand, eds., *The Book of Strzyżów and Vicinity*, trans. Harry Langsam (Los Angeles: "Natives of Strzyżów Societies" in Israel and the Diaspora, 1990). An unpublished work dealing with the history and the persecution of the Jews in Strzyżów was also consulted in preparing this entry: Zofia Rusek and Danuta Skóra, "Społeczność żydowska w dawnym Strzyżowie i okolicy—historia i wspomnienia" (Strzyżów, 2006).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Strzyżów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/663 [AJDC]; 211/925, 932, 933, and 995 [JSS]; 301/899 [Relacje]); IPN (Dsn 13/11/68/"W" 922); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 11; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reels 44 and 47; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); USHMPA (WS # N64867); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS Strzyżów), reel 47, 211/995, pp. 8, 30; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC Strzyżów), 210/663, pp. 27, 54; I. Berglass, "The Second World War," in Berglass and Yahalomi-Diamand, *The Book of Strzyżów*, p. 238.

2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/663, pp. 1–2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 15, 18, 21, 29, 35, 40.

3. Ibid., pp. 46, 55; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, 211/995, p. 8.

4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, 211/995, pp. 7–9, 14.

5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS Rzeszów), reel 44, 211/925, p. 18, and reel 47, 211/995, pp. 3, 13–14; and Berglass, "The Second World War," pp. 233, 239.

6. Berglass, "The Second World War," p. 242.

7. AŻIH, 301/899, testimony of Samuel Rozen, 1945. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 477–478, date the ghetto liquidation in July 1942. Also see Berglass, "The Second World War," pp. 242–243, 245; Tadeusz Sztetela, *Dzieje Dobrzeczuwa, opowieść o rodzinnej wsi* (Rzeszów-Dobrzeczuw, 2003).

8. Stanisław Poradowski, "Zagłada Żydów rzeszowskich, part 3," *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4, 1985: 99.

TARNOBRZEG

Pre-1939: Tarnobrzeg, town and powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: powiat center, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Tarnobrzeg is located about 140 kilometers (87 miles) northeast of Kraków. In 1939, around 2,800 Jews were living in Tarnobrzeg.

In mid-September 1939, German armed forces occupied the town. Within a week of their arrival, the initial German military administration introduced a program of forced labor for the Jews, which involved road repairs and other heavy manual labor, accompanied by beatings.¹ In October 1939, Tarnobrzeg was incorporated into Kreis Debica, within Distrikt Krakau in the Generalgouvernement. The office of the Security Police and SD in Dębica was primarily responsible for the implementation of anti-Jewish Aktionen in the Kreis, assisted by forces of the German Order Police (Schutzpolizei) and Gendarmerie) and the Polish (Blue) Police.

In September 1939, immediately following the occupation of the town, soldiers of the Wehrmacht killed 5 Jews.² By the end of September 1939, a number of Jews from neighboring towns and other Jewish refugees began to concentrate in Tarnobrzeg. In October 1939, the Germans ordered all the Jews to assemble in the marketplace (*Rynek*), bringing with



German soldiers search Jews in Tarnobrzeg, before permitting their crossing of the San River into then-Soviet territory, September 1939. USHMM WS #50874, COURTESY OF IPN

them all their valuable belongings. More than 4,000 people gathered in the Rynek; members of the SS lined the Jews up in rows, at the end of which there was a table manned by a German officer. The Jews were then robbed of all their valuable possessions and brutally beaten. They were stripped naked, medically examined by a doctor, and forced to sign a document, declaring their voluntary evacuation from the town.³ Subsequently the Jews were divided into groups of 500 to 600 people and were marched towards Radomyśl nad Sanem, just across the San River, more than 35 kilometers (22 miles) to the east. After marching for three days in the pouring rain, those who arrived at the riverbank were forced onto rafts by members of the Gestapo and pushed into the water. Many people drowned, and those who turned back seeking help, including women and children, were shot at by the Gestapo. During this expulsion Aktion, dozens of Jews were killed or drowned in the river. Most made it across to Radomyśl but soon were forced to move on in the direction of Lwów, as the area around Radomyśl was about to be handed over to the Germans. A few hundred of the Jewish expellees from Tarnobrzeg subsequently returned to the town in the period up to the summer of 1941. Most of those who remained under Soviet rule were deported to the Soviet interior in 1940 or 1941, an action that may have saved their lives.⁴

In Tarnobrzeg, the Kreishauptmann ordered the formation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by Aron Tannenbaum. Its main task was the allocation of Jews for forced labor, repairing the road from Tarnobrzeg to Ćmielów. The Jews worked for a private firm and were taken to the site each day in motorized transport. They also received wages for their work, which enabled them to buy some food from the peasants. The Germans took the synagogue and the Bet Midrash and used them for storage purposes.⁵ In November 1940, the Jewish Council issued a desperate appeal for help to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) based in Kraków, as the Jewish population in Tarnobrzeg consisted mainly of deportees, who had no means to repair their apartments and had to live under almost inhuman conditions. Aid was also needed to buy food and clothing.⁶ In February 1941, 320 Jews were reportedly living in the town.⁷

According to the yizkor book, the Jews were not confined within an enclosed ghetto but lived in a Jewish quarter (*Judenviertel*) or open ghetto, which consisted of part of the market square and some of the houses behind it.⁸ According to one source, the ghetto was created in June 1941. Towards the end of 1941 and in the first half of 1942, the number of residents increased due to an influx of Jews evacuated from towns such as Jarosław, Rozwadów, and the surrounding villages. Around this time, 1 Jew was shot for being outside the town without permission. Another Jew was shot in the street by the SS. It is estimated that about 12 Jews were shot altogether before the ghetto's liquidation.⁹

In July 1942, the Germans liquidated the open ghetto in Tarnobrzeg. Rumors of an imminent deportation spread when the Jews from nearby Grębów were brought to Tarnobrzeg and locked in the synagogue. Fearing the worst, the Jews of Tarno-

brzeg prayed or sought to escape or hide. However, all escape routes were already cut off by the SS. On July 19, in the early hours of the morning, the SS and Gendarmerie drove the Jews out of their houses and conducted a selection. The elderly and sick people were taken to the old Jewish cemetery, where they were killed. The remaining Jews were escorted in the pouring rain initially to the town of Baranów Sandomierski; then subsequently, on July 21–22, they were sent from there to the ghetto in Dębica. On July 24, most of the remaining Jews from Tarnobrzeg were included in the transport from Dębica to the extermination camp in Bełżec.¹⁰

The available sources also mention a Jewish forced labor camp in Tarnobrzeg established in the spring of 1941. It was located in the rabbinate and a nearby barracks on Szeroka Street and housed between 40 and several hundred inmates. The workers were mainly involved in road construction for the Bermann Company. Polish sources date the liquidation of this camp in the fall of 1942, but survivor Don Spira recalls being transferred from the Tarnobrzeg labor camp to another camp in Mielec in August or September 1942.¹¹

SOURCES Further information on the history and the fate of the Jewish population of Tarnobrzeg can be found in the following publications: Y.Y. Flaisher, ed., *Kehilat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov (Galitsyah ha-ma-aravit)* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Tarnubzig-Dzikov be-Yisrael, 1973); Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 191–194.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Tarnobrzeg can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/242, 3212, and 3473); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 11; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47 [AŻIH, JSS, 211/1015]); VHF (# 3189 and 25386); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/2395).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3212, testimony of Hersz Engelberg.
2. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 11.
3. AŻIH, 301/242, testimony of O. Kalech, states that 4,500 Jews assembled at the market square and 4,000 arrived in Radomyśl, but in view of the town's pre-war population (estimated at 2,800), these numbers are probably too high. Also see AŻIH, 301/3212; VHF, # 3189, testimony of Pola Schlenger; Flaisher, *Kehillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, pp. 302–303.
4. AŻIH, 301/242; and Flaisher, *Kehillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, pp. 306–307.
5. Flaisher, *Kehillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, pp. 311–312. This source also names several other members of the Judenrat.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47 (AŻIH, JSS), 211/1015, Judenrat Tarnobrzeg to the JSS in Kraków, November 16, 1940.
7. AŻIH, 301/242.
8. Flaisher, *Kehillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, p. 311. Evidence from the archives of the JSS also confirms the existence of a Jewish “quarter” (*dzielnica*); see AŻIH, JSS, 211/1015.
9. Flaisher, *Kehillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, p. 312; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich*

1939–1945: *Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 514.

10. Flaisher, *Kebillat Tarnobrzeg-Dzikov*, pp. 312–313; AŻIH, 301/242. It appears that a few of the able-bodied Jews in Tarnobrzeg were transferred to the Mielec forced labor camp, either from the ghetto (via Dębica) or from the Tarnobrzeg forced labor camp.

11. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 514; VHF, # 25386, testimony of Don Spira.

TARNÓW

Pre-1939: Tarnów, city, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Tarnow, Kreis center, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tarnów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Tarnów is located about 90 kilometers (56 miles) east of Kraków. On the outbreak of World War II, about 25,000 Jews (45 percent of the city's population) were residing in the city.

German armed forces occupied the city on September 7, 1939. Ernst Kundt became the first Kreishauptmann, with

Walter Heinrich as his deputy. In December 1940, Ludwig Stitzinger replaced Kundt as Kreishauptmann, to be succeeded in January 1942 by Dr. Kipke. The headquarters of the Gestapo, Order Police, and Sonderdienst were all in the city, as it was the Kreis center. On September 9–11, 1939, the Germans burned down all the synagogues and *shtiblekh* (prayer houses) in Tarnów. By an order issued on October 20, 1939, the Jews of Tarnów had to wear the Star of David on their clothes. In November 1939, Jewish bank accounts were blocked; on November 12, 1939, the Germans ordered Jews to mark their businesses and the entrances to cafés and restaurants with a white Star of David painted on the buildings. The penalty for disobeying the order was 10 year's imprisonment and a fine; after the creation of the ghetto, the penalty was death. Jews aged 14 to 60 had to enlist for forced labor. Jewish schools and institutions were closed. In the first weeks of the war, many Jews fled to the Soviet occupation zone.¹

In November 1939, the Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Tarnów. Initially, it was chaired by a former head of the Jewish community, Dr. Józef Offner, who quickly resigned. The next chairman, Dawid Lenkiewicz, and another Judenrat member, Ruwen Waksman, escaped to Lwów. A new Judenrat was appointed in 1940, headed by Dr. Szlomo Goldberg and Dr. Wolf Schenkel, who were both arrested by the Germans and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Eventually, Artur Volkman became chairman of the Judenrat. The Judenrat was entrusted with preparing lists of Jews for forced labor and handling social issues. It also provided assistance to inmates of the Pustków labor camp.²

From the beginning of January 1940, Jews were prohibited from moving to other towns, traveling, or using the main streets. They were restricted from entering districts north of Krakowska and Wałowa Streets and west of Brodziński Street. In time, they were also prohibited from looking out of their windows onto certain streets. Jews had to clear the streets of snow and garbage. In April 1940, Jews were forbidden to enter public parks; and on April 17, 1940, a curfew was imposed on the Jews, who could remain outside only until 9:00 p.m. In the spring of 1940, the Germans demanded a ransom of 500,000 złoty from the Jewish community, which it managed to collect in the hope of easing the restrictions. In June 1940, the Germans publicly destroyed Jewish prayer shawls and religious books. The Jews were prohibited from performing the ritual slaughter of animals. In the summer of 1940, the Jews were assembled in the town's square while the Germans plundered their homes. On June 13, 1940, the Germans arrested 753 men in Tarnów, among them 5 prominent Jews. The next day, 728 men were sent on a cattle train to Auschwitz. The "Tarnovian" prisoners were tattooed with numbers from 31 to 758 and marked the beginning of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Almost 200 of them survived; none of these survivors were Jews.³

On August 7, 1940, the wealthier Jews who lived on Kraków and Wałowa Streets received an order to move out of their houses within 12 hours and move to the eastern part of the city—Grabówka, which was inhabited mostly by poorer



A Jewish woman wearing a Jewish star walks on the streets of Tarnów, 1939.

USHMM WS #13538, COURTESY OF IPN

Jews. This was the first step towards the creation of a ghetto, but it was not completed until early in 1942.

On the order of Stadtkommissar Dr. Hein, on October 16, 1941, the wearing of beards and side locks by Jews was forbidden for “sanitary reasons.” For violating the order, a fine of 100 złoty and a 14-day arrest were imposed. At this time, Jews were also banned from the following streets in Tarnów: Kraków, Jasna, Marktstrasse, Wallstrasse, Cathedralstrasse including Kazimierz Square to the circle, the Kleinen and Grossen Treppe, Bastei Treppe, Fischgasse, and Festungsgasse. It was forbidden for Jews to come closer than 100 meters (109 yards) to those streets. The presence of Jews in the whole western part of the city now was strictly forbidden. Some Jews who lived there could only enter the eastern part of the city from the southern pathway on Narutowicz, Lipowa, or Mickiewicz Streets; the Jews who lived near the circle could access it through Brama Pilźnieńska. Going to work located on the forbidden streets was possible only by taking the nearest adjacent cross streets. This order forced most of the Jews to move into the Grabówka district in the east of the city.⁴

On October 16, 1941, the Germans created a Jewish Police unit consisting of about 300 policemen. The Jewish Police was headed by Miller, then Wasserman, and finally by Diestler. Diestler was a German Jew who had held the rank of captain in the Austrian army. His brutality was much feared among Jews. The Jewish Police was located in the building of a bus depot at Magdeburg Square.⁵

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to surrender all fur clothing, winter boots, and skis on pain of death. From December 1, 1941, Jews were prohibited from receiving food packages. A German police officer, Grunow, came to Tarnów and staged an Aktion against the Jews on December 8, 1941: over 100 Jews were arrested, 17 of whom were shot, and the rest were released after a few days. According to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) report, in 1939, 285 children were born, while the death rate was 172 people. By comparison, in 1941, 235 children were born, and the death toll was 540 people.⁶

Most sources date the completion of the ghettoization process in Tarnów in February 1942.⁷ The Germans established an open ghetto in Tarnów that encompassed the following area: left side of Lwów Street; Pod Dębem Square; and Nowa, Folwarczna, Szpitalna, Polna, and Jasna Streets. There were four entrances to the ghetto: two at Magdeburg Square, the third at Pod Dębem Square, and the fourth at Folwarczna Street, near the Judenrat building.⁸

Until 1942, the Jews had managed to live as normally as they could in such circumstances. They were still able to bury the dead at the Jewish cemetery. At the beginning of 1942, all Jews had to register with the German authorities. In 1942, through March 20, there were 251 reported deaths in the ghetto. Death resulted from hunger, exhaustion, an epidemic of typhus, and random shootings. The people felt endangered. The streets were empty by 6:00 P.M. Around 9,500 Jews were receiving social help; the four community kitchens distributed around 7,000 meals per day; there were 78 children in the orphanage; and 51 people resided in the home for the elderly.⁹

On April 1, 1942, on the eve of Passover, the German officers Grunow and SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Rommelmann, on noticing a Jewish woman selling poultry, demanded to know who had performed the slaughter. The Germans stormed into the house of Lipa, a *shochet* (ritual slaughterer), and killed him and his family. The Jewish community was deeply affected by the incident, and many stopped eating meat. On April 24, 56 Jews were murdered following their return to Tarnów from Lwów. In May, the Germans demanded from the Judenrat 500,000 złoty and furniture sufficient for 500 German apartments. At the end of May, the head of the Jewish Police received an order from the Germans to increase the size of the police force.¹⁰

On June 10, 1942, the registration of the Jewish population of Tarnów was completed. Two notices then appeared: the first, signed by SS-Untersturmführer Palten, informed them about the resettlement of the Jews from Tarnów, apart from the hospital staff and the Jews whose identification cards had been stamped; the second notice, signed by SS-Obergruppenführer Julian Scherner, announced that anyone providing aid to the Jews of Tarnów upon their resettlement would be punished by death. The notice also specified that on June 11, 1942, no Jews were to leave their houses, but the houses should remain open. During the first Aktion of June 11–18, which was directed by Kriminalsekretär Wilhelm Rommelmann (who was tried by a Polish court and executed in 1948), German and Ukrainian auxiliary units shot around 6,000 Jews, mainly the sick, the elderly, and children, in the Buczyna Forest at Zbylitowska Góra; they also sent around 3,500 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp and shot around 3,000 Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Tarnów. Following this Aktion, the ghetto was considerably reduced in size.¹¹

On June 19, 1942, Stadthauptmann Gustaw Hackbarth announced the creation of an enclosed ghetto for the remaining Jews in Tarnów. According to the decree, 20,000 Jews, as well as Jewish converts, had to move into the ghetto within 48 hours. From the house on 16 Lwowska Street, the borders of the ghetto ran through the following streets: Zamknięta, Szpitalna, Jasna through Polna Street, right side of Goldhammera, Drukarska, Nowa, to Folwarczna Streets. The area was sealed off with barbed wire. There were four guarded gates leading to the ghetto: two of them at Magdeburg Square, the third at Folwarczna Street, and the fourth at the Pod Dębem Square. Polish (Blue) Police guarded the ghetto externally, and Jewish Police guarded it on the inside. The ghetto was administered by SS-Oberscharführer Hermann Blache, who lived at 24 Lwowska Street. The Jews were prohibited from leaving the ghetto on pain of death. There was a Jewish post office inside the ghetto directed by Bronisława Perlberg. The death penalty also applied for making contact with the Polish population. Some Jews, like Mania Korn, Dr. Lustig, and Ms. Organd, were killed by the Germans for contacting Poles. Jews had to perform forced labor inside and outside the ghetto. Food was scarce, but some people managed to smuggle it in on their return from external work details. There was an orphanage run by Dr. Lieblich, four community kitchens, and a branch

of the JSS; and a Jewish hospital section, which treated patients with tuberculosis, was run by Dr. Eugeniusz Schipper.¹²

After the ghetto was established, there were about 40,000 Jews, including Jews from Tarnów and its vicinity, about 3,000 refugees from Kraków (639 of whom were resettled between March 3, 1941, and December 28, 1941), as well as Jews from Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. The Jews organized their own associations of craftsmen that produced items for the Germans. Work details outside the ghetto were escorted by either the German or Polish (Blue) Police. The workers received little payment, and those who did not work received no official help. The German companies using ghetto labor included Papapol, Bon Boveru, Ostbahn, and Madritsch, among others.¹³

On September 11, 1942, another registration of the Jewish population took place. Some of those who did not get a work stamp sought help with the artisan Raba, who forged stamps for a nominal fee. During the second Aktion on September 12, 1942, which was orchestrated by Rommelmann, the ghetto was surrounded by German and Polish (Blue) Police units. Jews were ordered to assemble at the Magdeburgski Square. After the initial selection, another selection was made in which every tenth Jew was picked out for deportation. Nineteen-year-old Mosze Alban resisted a German by spitting and hitting him, after which the German shot him. On September 13, 1942, around 3,500 Jews were deported to Bełżec. Overall, close to 8,000 Jews from ghettos in Tarnów, Brzesko, Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, and Żabno were deported to Bełżec.¹⁴

The third Aktion took place on November 15, 1942. A few days earlier, a notice appeared announcing that Jews who were hiding in nearby towns and villages could safely enter the Tarnów ghetto. On the day of the Aktion, the Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the ghetto while the Germans rounded up 2,500 Jews, whom they sent to Bełżec. On November 16, 1942, SS-Oberscharführer Blache ordered that the ghetto be divided into ghetto A (for the elderly, children, and people without permanent work) and ghetto B (for all Jews with permanent work papers). The ghettos were divided by a fence. Movement between ghettos was strictly prohibited. There was starvation in ghetto A, but Jews from ghetto B provided clandestine help. By November 1942, all the smaller ghettos in Kreis Tarnow had been liquidated. The Jews who had to clear the area of the former ghettos were transferred to the remaining larger ghettos, including Tarnów, in which around 12,000 Jews were concentrated. Further movement restrictions were imposed on the Jews remaining in the Tarnów ghetto. New armbands were issued, specifying the types of companies where the Jews were working.¹⁵

There were some escapes from the ghetto. In the ghetto there was a group of young Jews from Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, of which the most active were Josek Bruder, Szmulik Springer, and Melech Bienenstok. They managed to obtain weapons and make contact with the Polish underground. They also helped those Jews living outside the ghetto. Josef Birken, one of the leaders, and his sister Franka forged Aryan papers. Another

form of resisting the enemy was observance of forbidden religious practices. For example, Sam Goetz's parents prepared a celebration of his Bar Mitzvah on June 21, 1941.¹⁶

In mid-August 1943, SS-Hauptsturmführer Amon Goeth arrived in Tarnów to liquidate the ghetto. On September 2, 1943, in the early morning, German and Latvian units surrounded the ghetto and removed the internal fence dividing it in two. The Jews were ordered to assemble on Magdeburgski Square. They were notified that they were being sent to the Płaszów camp. Children could not be taken, but mothers secretly smuggled their children with them on the transport. The final roundup and deportation Aktion was conducted on September 2–3, 1943, during which Goeth displayed inhuman cruelty towards the Jews (he was tried in a Polish court and hanged in 1946). About 8,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz; 3,000 were sent to Płaszów; and a group of 300 young and strong Jews were selected to clean out the ghetto (Säuberungskolonne, a purge column).¹⁷

The 300 Jews were located in two buildings at 13 and 14 Szpitalna Street, which constituted the last closed area of the Tarnów ghetto. The Ukrainian guards locked the Jews in the houses after they returned from work. The population of the ghetto increased to about 500 when some Jews came out of the bunkers a few days after the Aktion. These "illegal inhabitants" of the ghetto were shot on their way to Szeged at the end of September 1943. Also, 150 Jews who were no longer needed were taken to Szeged. The last transport of the remaining 150 Jews from Tarnów was sent to Płaszów on February 9, 1944.

Some Jews were able to hide in the Tarnów area. Around 450 Jews caught in different hiding places were assembled at Widok Street. The Germans shot them and burned their bodies. Others managed to find shelter in nearby villages and towns or lived on Aryan papers.¹⁸

SOURCES Publications dealing with the history and destruction of the Jews of Tarnów include the following: Kazimierz Bańburski, Janusz Bogacz, and Janusz Koziół, eds., *Żydzi w Tarnowie. Świat, którego nie ma* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 2003); Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK "Kraj," 1992); Adam Bartosz, *Żydowskim szlakiem po Tarnowie: In the Footsteps of the Jews of Tarnów* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 2002); Adam Bartosz and Janusz Koziół, *Tarnowski cmentarz żydowski* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 2005); Abraham Chomet, ed., *Tarnów: The Life and Decline of a Jewish City* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Residents of Tarnow, 1954); Sam Goetz, *I Never Saw My Face* (Danbury, CT: Rutledge Books, 2001); Leszek Hońdo, *Żydowski cmentarz w Tarnowie* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2001); Ian Lichtig, *Memories: An Incredible, True Story of Survival under the Holocaust* (New York: I. Lichtig, 1996); William Kornbluth, *Sentenced to Remember. My Legacy of Life in Pre-1939 Poland and Sixty-Eight Months of Nazi Occupation* (London: Associated University Presses, 1994); Rebeka Lipiner, *Kartki ocalałe z płomieni* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 1989); Aleksandra Pietrzykowska and Stanisław Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 1990); Stanisław

Wróbel, *Opowieści o dawnym Tarnowie* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, 2003); *Proces ludobójcy Amona Leopolda Goetha przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym* (Kraków: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna przy Centralnym Komitecie Żydów w Polsce, 1947).

Documents on the fate and extermination of the Jews in Tarnów can be found in these archives: AŻIH (301/436, 570, 571, 580, 836, 1090, 1101, 1111, 1182, 1208, 1591, 1668, 2040, 2053, 2059, 2081, 3228, 3247, 3432, 3433, 3434, 3436, 3437, 3446, 3548, 3579, 3703, 3705, and 3860); IPN (AGK, ASG, sygn. 11, pp. 750, 764, and sygn. 413, pp. 8–9); PAP-Tarn (sygn. PTW 346/41, 347/41); SOT (sygn. 150–152, 158); SPT (Zg 1154/46, 1155/46, 1156/46, 1207/46, 1208/46, 1220/46, 1224/46, 1235/46, 1236/46, 1255/46, 1296/46, 199/47, 94/48, 95/48, 96/48, 98/48, 99/48, 132/48, 133/48); USHMM (RG-15.019M, reels 4 and 15; RG-15.020M; RG-15.072M; RG-02.168, 169, and 204; RG-50.002*0049; RG-50.030*0218; RG-50.120*0012 and *0114; Acc.1997.8; Acc.1998.31; Acc.2004.637; Acc.1994.A.427; Acc.1995.A.517; Acc.1995.A.526; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reels 1, 47, 48); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/215; and O-41).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3228, testimony of Halina Kornilo; 301/3548, testimony of Eugeniusz Schipper; Hońdo, *Żydowski cmentarz w Tarnowie*, p. 25—the order issued by Ernst Kundt in Tarnów preceded the decision of Hans Frank about the marking of Jews on November 10, 1939.

2. Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 17, 26–27, 37.

3. Ibid., pp. 23–24; Hońdo, *Żydowski cmentarz w Tarnowie*, p. 25; Bartosz, *Żydowskim szlakiem po Tarnowie*, pp. 53–54; Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), p. 13.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, Anordnung issued by Stadtkommissar Dr. Hein, October 16, 1941.

5. Bańburski, Bogacz, and Kozioł, *Żydzi w Tarnowie*, p. 53; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, p. 14; AŻIH, 301/3579, testimony of Naftali Spanglet.

6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, report of Tarnów JSS to Kraków, January 19, 1942; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 28–29.

7. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 516. Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 814, dates it on February 19.

8. Hońdo, *Żydowski cmentarz w Tarnowie*, p. 10; Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, pp. 54–55; Urteil gegen Karl Oppermann and Gerhard G., LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/68, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 710, p. 327.

9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, report of Tarnów JSS to Kraków, March 20, 1942, and notes from trips to Tarnów and Plesnia, March 26, 1942; Hońdo, *Żydowski cmentarz w Tarnowie*, pp. 25–26.

10. Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 31–34.

11. AŻIH, 301/3432, testimony of Leon Leser; 301/3433, testimony of Józef Kornilo; 301/3434, testimony of Izaak Iz-

rael; 301/3436, testimony of Lola Gimpel; 301/3437, testimony of Łucja Rausch; 301/3446, testimony of Franciszka Kryształ; 301/3705, testimony of Artur Spindler; Elżbieta Kobierska-Motas, *Ekstradycja przestępców wojennych do Polski z czterech stref okupacyjnych Niemiec 1946–1950*, Część II (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu-Institut Pamięci Narodowej, 1992), p. 193; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 36, 38–45; *JuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710; Urteil gegen Hermann Blache, LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/63, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 571.

12. Goetz, *I Never Saw My Face*, p. 31; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada Tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 24, 47–50; Arthur Spindler, *Outwitting Hitler, Surviving Stalin: The Story of Arthur Spindler* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1997), pp. 31–42; Naftali Frankel, *I Survived Hell: The Testimony of a Survivor of the Nazi Extermination Camps (Prisoner Number 161040)*, (New York: Vantage Press, 1991), pp. 46–70; Kornbluth, *Sentenced to Remember*, pp. 76–84; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach”; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, report of Tarnów JSS, July 26, 1942; AŻIH, 301/2059, testimony of Blanka Goldman; 301/2081, testimony of Janina Schiffówna; 301/3228; 301/3579; *JuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710, pp. 327–328; USHMM, RG-50.030*0218, testimony of Martin Spett.

13. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach”; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 47, letter of Tarnów JSS to Kraków, September 4, 1940; and letters of the Tarnów Judenrat to the Stadtkommissariat of September 19, 1940, and October 30, 1940; and reel 48, report of Tarnów JSS to Kraków, March 18, 1942; RG-15.072M; E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 90.

14. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, p. 55; Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie żydów,” p. 98; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada Tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 54, 57, 73–82; *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 571, and vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710.

15. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów,” p. 98; AŻIH, 301/3579; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 66–68; *Proces ludobójcy Amona Leopolda Goetha*, pp. 161–169, 257–261, 304, 440–442; *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 571, and vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710.

16. Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 53–54, 62–64; Josef Birken, “Udział szomrów tarnowskich w ruchu oporu,” *Mosty*, no. 23 (April 1947); Goetz, *I Never Saw My Face*, pp. 26–28.

17. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, pp. 54–55; Kornbluth, *Sentenced to Remember*, pp. 96–104; AŻIH, 301/1090, testimony of Samuel Grunkraut; 301/1591, testimony of Erna Landau; 301/2040, testimony of Giza Beller; *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 571, and vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710.

18. Bańburski, Bogacz, and Kozioł, *Żydzi w Tarnowie*, p. 58; Pietrzykowa and Potępa, *Zagłada tarnowskich Żydów*, pp. 84–85; *JuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710, p. 363.

TUCHÓW

Pre-1939: Tuchów, town, Tarnów powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland 1939–1945: Tuchow, Kreis Tarnow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tuchów, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Tuchów is located 88 kilometers (55 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. At the outbreak of World War II, around 500 Jews (25 percent of the population) were living in Tuchów.

The German armed forces occupied Tuchów on September 7, 1939. On September 11, Wehrmacht soldiers shot 12 Jews from Tuchów in the Karwodrza Forest. In November 1939, the Germans burned down the synagogue and destroyed the Jewish cemetery, using Jewish tombstones (*matzevot*) to pave roads. As soon as the Germans entered the town, they began maltreating the Jews by cutting the beards of Orthodox Jews, looting Jewish businesses, and destroying homes. In December 1939, all Jewish men aged 13 and older were ordered to appear at the local school. The Germans selected 15 men and murdered them in the nearby village of Tarnowiec. The Jewish community paid a bribe to the Germans so that the corpses could be brought back to town for a religious Jewish burial. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by Emil Wachs was appointed by the Germans to keep records of the Jewish population and to enlist Jews for forced labor.¹

In 1941, the Germans resettled Jews into Tuchów from neighboring towns and villages, including Ryglice and Gromnik. According to records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Tarnów, on September 30, 1941, there were 536 Jews in Tuchów. The Judenrat and the local branch of the JSS used their scarce resources to assist the refugees as much as possible. In January 1942, the community kitchen distributed 150 meals daily, but it lacked sufficient food to supply all those in need. On March 4, 1942, the JSS opened a public kitchen in Tuchów for about 50 Jewish children.²

Since the Nazis prohibited religious observance, the Jews of Tuchów worshipped secretly, and the home of the Weiss family became a prayer house. In May 1942, the Germans discovered this secret house of worship and murdered six elderly Jews who were praying.³

In 1942, the Germans established a ghetto in Tuchów, which was administered by Karl Oppermann and Hermann Blache, of the Security Police in Tarnów, and by a man named Prussok, who was sent to the Tarnów region from the Schutzpolizei in Breslau (Wrocław). A Jewish Police unit was set up in the ghetto, which was located in the southern part of town and enclosed with barbed wire. On its establishment, about 2,500 Jews were confined in a ghetto consisting of only 17 houses. (During the entire existence of the ghetto, some 3,000 Jews passed through it.) The Jews worked on local farms, as well as in workshops. The Jews in the Tuchów ghetto did not receive food from the German authorities, but the JSS and the Judenrat distributed food purchased with their scarce resources. There were random shootings of Jews inside as well as outside the ghetto, and the bodies were buried at the Jewish cemetery.⁴

In mid-June 1942, the German Schutzpolizei officer Prussok publicly executed six Jews in the town square. On June 23, 1942, Karl Oppermann shot seven Jews, including the chairman of the Judenrat. On orders issued by the Kreishauptmann in Tarnów on July 15, 1942, Jews from the towns of Kreis Tarnow, except from the city of Tarnów itself, were required to move into ghettos established in Dąbrowa Tar-

nowska, Brzesko, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, and Żabno by July 23, 1942. In September 1942, units of German and Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the Tuchów ghetto. The Jews were commanded to assemble in the town square. After a selection, the Jews were taken to the train station and loaded into cattle trains and were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.

Only 43 Jews were spared deportation. They formed the Aufräumkommando, which was ordered by the Germans to clear the ghetto and sort Jewish belongings. The work was finished at the beginning of December 1942. The German Gestapo officer from Tarnów, Oppermann, ordered that the Jews be locked in a building until their resettlement to Tarnów. The next day, Oppermann inspected the building in which the Jews were being held and shot a Jewish man, Grunewald. In December 1942, Oppermann shot 26 Jews at Ogrodowa Street in Tuchów. Once the remnant of Jews from the Tuchów ghetto had been brought to the Tarnów ghetto, Oppermann ordered all of them to be shot. A few managed to escape. The survivors related their stories at the trial of Karl Oppermann in Germany, where he was sentenced to life imprisonment.⁵

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Tuchów include “Tuchów,” in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984).

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Tuchów can be found in the following archives: IPN (AGK, ASG, sygn. 11, pp. 771–775); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124, reels 47 and 48; RG-15.019M, reels 4 and 15; and RG-50.002*0056); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK “Kraj,” 1992), pp. 95–96; and USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 4, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych.”

2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reels 47 and 48, letter of the JSS Kraków headquarters to Tarnów branch, January 24, 1942; letter of Tarnów JSS to Kraków, March 11, 1942; protocol of Tarnów JSS, September 30, 1941.

3. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 4, p. 774, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych.”

4. Ibid., reel 15, p. 229, “Kwestionariusz o obozach”; Urteil gegen Karl Oppermann and Gerhard G., LG-Bo, 16 Ks 1/68, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 710, pp. 378–383.

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 4, pp. 771–773, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych”; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, protocol of Tarnów JSS, July 31, 1942; *fuNS-V*, vol. 32, Lfd. Nr. 710, pp. 378–383.

TYCZYN

Pre-1939: Tyczyn, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Reichshof, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Tyczyn is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Rzeszów. There were 720 Jews living in Tyczyn on the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Soon after the occupation, the Germans ordered the Jewish community to leave within 24 hours and cross over to the Soviet-occupied Polish territories. The initial order was postponed for a few days. At the last minute, the evacuation was “called off for four weeks and then they stopped to talk at all about departures,” as noted by survivor Mina Perlberger in her diary.¹

The ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*) mayor selected five established leaders of the community to serve in the Judenrat. Wheat merchant Moszek Goldman was appointed as its chairman. Jakob Eisen was the Judenrat’s secretary. Its office was located in Tuchman’s house on the market square. The Judenrat’s first order was to register all Jews in Tyczyn and its vicinity aged 12 and older. A second registration in the winter of 1939–1940 served to identify a prisoner’s profession and current workplace. Unemployed Jews were assigned to hard labor in the fields, on road construction, and in wet areas, performing swamp drainage.²

According to George Salton (born 1928), in the summer of 1940, Jews were “no longer allowed to travel from Tyczyn to Rzeszów without specific written documents from the police.” Perlberger, a prisoner who worked as a black market trader, recalled being fined 10 to 25 złoty for this offense. The Jews were also forbidden to leave their houses after 9:00 P.M.; this was particularly problematic, as most of the smuggling to Rzeszów took place at night when the Germans would stop patrolling the roads.³

In May 1941, there were 953 Jews in the town, including 250 refugees, the majority of whom had arrived in Tyczyn on December 15, 1940. Many were former Kalisz and Łódź residents. The Judenrat’s requests for assistance were dismissed by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), as it described the Judenrat’s welfare efforts as being of “the most primitive kind”—that is, that the services were limited to the distribution of donated food and clothing, sometimes by way of a lottery. At this time 560 residents were requesting help.

A number of Jewish men were seized from the streets and taken to labor camps in Babice, 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) from Tyczyn, for the summer of 1940 (or 1941).⁴

In May and June 1941, a large detachment of German soldiers stationed in Tyczyn demanded the provision of forced laborers. These soldiers were engaged in training and did not bother the Jewish community. Following their departure, with Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union, some of Tyczyn’s residents, who had fled east at the beginning of the war, returned. Their lodgings were organized by the local administration in homes that German soldiers had recently vacated.

In the spring of 1941, a refugee from Kalisz named “Hanka” and an elderly man, Mates Wachs, were shot. From the fall of that year, the Gestapo and SS began to visit Tyczyn almost every week, conducting house searches and confiscations and fining the Judenrat for various offenses. As regards the visits of the Kreishauptmann, Perlberger wrote: “[He was] searching every home for young females. He was well known for his sa-

distic, sexually degenerate way of hitting with his riding whip, only females.”⁵

Perlberger noted in her diary that as of “February 1942, it was a death sentence for the Jews to cross a border to another city [*sic*].” This was most likely the result of the December 17, 1941, order by the Kreishauptmann to create ghettos in the Kreis. In Rzeszów, the order was effective on January 10, 1942, with the closing of the ghetto, and in the remainder of the Kreis it applied from February 1, 1942.

An open ghetto—unfenced and unguarded—was established in the center of Tyczyn in March 1942. The Jews were still allowed to move around Tyczyn, but as Perlberger noted: “You can’t cross the border from Tyczyn, because you will be killed on the spot.” Jews living in nearby villages (e.g., Hermanowa) were given three days for relocation to the ghetto. In Hermanowa, each family had to wait for the Germans to oversee their departure from their homes and collect the keys. Perlberger’s family was forced to sign a document surrendering possession of their immovable property. There was little housing available in Tyczyn because Jews from other localities who were ordered to transfer to the Rzeszów ghetto had moved to the Tyczyn ghetto instead. The Judenrat was charged with assigning accommodation, which typically amounted to one room per family.

According to George Salton, as of the spring of 1942, the Polish (Blue) Police and the SS were permanently present in Tyczyn, patrolling the streets. Violence and killings escalated. One day, 14 men were rounded up and shot at the Jewish cemetery. At this time, the Germans ordered the Judenrat to deliver laborers for transfer to a labor camp in Biesiadka. As the men on the Judenrat’s list went into hiding, the Germans threatened the community with the substitution of their women for labor in Biesiadka. It took the Jewish Police three days to deliver the demanded number of laborers.

Several contributions, some in the form of overdue taxes, were imposed on the community in the months preceding the ghetto’s liquidation. Five Jewish hostages were shot. Tensions and anger rose within the community because of the way the Judenrat had handled these demands; for example, the amount each family had to pay was based on the Judenrat’s estimation of their means. Perlberger records that Polish policemen extorted money and various possessions from the Jews. The community was also reportedly ordered to pay to Poles all the debts owed to them, on pain of death. A local farmer blackmailed Perlberger’s family.⁶

In late June 1942, the commander of the SS summoned the Judenrat and informed them of the impending resettlement to the Rzeszów ghetto. Judenrat chairman Goldman was arrested. The same day posters were put up: “It was typed and carried the seal and signature of the German Distrikt administrator. It read: ‘Within one week, all Jews residing in Tyczyn and vicinity must be relocated to the Rzeszów ghetto.’” Secondary sources report that relocation took only three days, from June 25 to 27, 1942. The German and Polish (Blue) Police escorted columns of wagons to Rzeszów. The Jews were able to take with them very little in the way of belongings.

Several people were killed in the course of the ghetto's liquidation, including Berl Kuflik.⁷

The Rzeszów ghetto was liquidated in the course of deportations to the Bełżec extermination camp that began in July 1942; its final destruction took place in November 1942.

SOURCES Useful in the preparation of this entry was the book by George Salton, *The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002). The following publications contain brief references to the destruction of the Tyczyn Jewish community: Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 533; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpaciu* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), p. 183; Stanisław Poradowski, “Zagład Żydów rzeszowskich,” pt. 3, *BŻIH*, nos. 3–4 (1985): 80, 86, 89–90.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (210/694 [AJDC], 211/1048 [JSS]); USHMM (Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M; and RG-02.054); and VHF (# 26577).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1048 (Tyczyn), p. 3; RG-02.054 (“Buried Alive: A Diary by Mina Perlberger” [typescript], pp. 53–55).

2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/694 (Tyczyn), p. 5; Salton, *The 23rd Psalm*, p. 26.

3. Salton, *The 23rd Psalm*, p. 34; USHMM, RG-02.054, pp. 10, 77, 101.

4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/694, pp. 2–7; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1048, pp. 1–3; RG-02.054, p. 10.

5. Salton, *The 23rd Psalm*, pp. 37–41; USHMM, RG-02.054, p. 122.

6. Salton, *The 23rd Psalm*, pp. 44, 48; USHMM, RG-02.054, pp. 83, 93–97, 102–104, 122–123, 125; VHF, # 26577, testimony of George Salton, 1997.

7. Salton, *The 23rd Psalm*, pp. 49, 53; USHMM, RG-02.054, pp. 125–130.

USTRZYKI DOLNE

Pre-1939: Ustrzyki Dolne (Yiddish: Istrik), town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Nizhn'o-Ustriki, raion center, Drogobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Ustrzyki Dolne, Kreis Sanok, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Ustrzyki Dolne is located 34 kilometers (21 miles) southeast of Sanok. The 1921 census registered 1,767 Jewish residents in Ustrzyki. German forces occupied Ustrzyki briefly in September 1939 before handing over control to the Soviet Union. Following their attack on the Soviet Union, German forces reoccupied the town in late June 1941.

Most of the information on this entry is based on two detailed testimonies by Herman Iwler, which he gave to the Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw in 1948 and 1949. Iwler never uses the term *ghetto*, although from his

descriptions—especially those given in his 1948 testimony—a form of open ghetto most probably existed in Ustrzyki.¹ Also, *Pinkas ha-kehilot* states that Jews were evicted from their homes and concentrated in a dilapidated area of the town. This publication, however, does not state when the ghetto was established. The ghetto most likely remained unfenced, as neither of these sources mentions any form of enclosure.²

Nonetheless, Jewish movement was restricted from the onset of the German occupation in 1941. For example, at this time the German authorities prohibited Jews from crossing the market square and the main street, the latter starting from the pharmacy building where the Gestapo offices were located. In addition, Ustrzyki Dolne's Jews could only use side streets—and those only until 7:15 P.M. They were ordered to wear armbands with an emblem of the Star of David. Those caught without an armband were punished with 25 lashes or sometimes shot.

In the second half of 1941, an outpost of the Gestapo was established in Ustrzyki Dolne; among the more notorious Gestapo men based there were Johann Bäcker and a man named Doppke. Others who served there included Müller, Schmidtchen, and von Malottki.³ The Germans also set up a Ukrainian police force commanded by Ustianowski. The Ukrainian militia conducted searches of Jewish households and confiscated food. Locals were forbidden to sell goods to Jews. Jewish shops were closed.⁴

The German authorities designated a local veterinarian, Schimel (or Schiml), as the Judenrat chairman. Schimel himself selected the remainder of his staff: Rapaport (dentist), Szymon Reich, Dawid Scheinbach (wholesaler), Sterner Jr. (lawyer), Dawid Harman, and Mojżesz Horowitz; the latter later resigned.

The first forced labor conscription for local Jews was to build a Russian prisoner-of-war (POW) camp in Ustianowa. The Judenrat provided each of the 60 to 80 laborers with a daily ration of 25 grams (0.9 ounces) of bread and a bowl of soup.

In April 1942, 150 Jews were sent to work in a sawmill and at a refinery. At the same time, the local Gestapo conscripted a separate group of 60 to 120 Jews who were required to reinforce the banks of the Strwiąż River; to build a bridge, a shack, garages, and stables; and later to regulate the river's waters. The foreman, Szymon Walzman, often beat his laborers. Early in the summer of 1942, Jewish farmers from the vicinity were also forced to work for the Germans. For example, owners of horses and wagons were made to transport wood from disassembled Soviet shelters and bunkers found in the surrounding forests.⁵

In June 1942, the Germans ordered all Jewish residents over 65 years old to report to the Judenrat. Prior to this, Bäcker had gone from house to house registering them. Approximately 200 registered men and women were transferred to a local jail that evening (an exact date is not known); 50 of them were shot that same night in the courtyard of the Judenrat's office, while others were taken away in vehicles and shot in a forest near Berechy. According to historian Andrzej Potocki, the murder took place in Brzegi Dolne. Other publications

claim the murder took place earlier, on May 5, 1942, and cite 300 victims.⁶

Following this mass killing, the Gestapo made several trips to nearby villages including Ropienka, Olszanice, Czarna, Stefkowa, and Wańkowa, shooting many Jewish residents but sparing horse and buggy owners. In Lutowska, the Ustrzyki Gestapo ordered all Jews to report to the market square: 800 of them were selected and killed; the remainder were transferred to Ustrzyki Dolne together with the looted possessions of the murdered Jews gathered by Doppke and Bäcker.⁷

In July or August 1942, the Jews from surrounding villages were also brought into Ustrzyki to join the ghettoized Jews living there. Iwler describes it as follows: “All of them were driven past the Gestapo, where they were searched [by Gestapo men], who ripped apart their down comforters and killed two children, allegedly for being dirty. At the beginning of spring 1942, the Germans had prohibited Jews from going beyond the limits of the villages.” The Judenrat placed the deportees with other Jewish families. Following the arrival of the rural Jews, according to Iwler, some 3,000 Jews were concentrated in Ustrzyki. At that time—weeks before its liquidation—it was most likely announced that the ghetto was to be closed, with strict orders that nobody could leave it.⁸

Individual executions of ghetto residents continued throughout the summer. Reportedly, Doppke conducted them at night in front of the Judenrat building. His victims were most often accused of having cooperated with the Soviets. The Judenrat was instructed to dispose of the bodies, and they were carried away for burial using the doors of the Judenrat office, which had been taken off their hinges. Executions were so frequent that there was a nightly guard duty especially assigned for this purpose.

Residents of the ghetto were aware of the approaching deportation Aktion and the clearance of neighboring Jewish communities; for example, conscripted sawmill laborers witnessed passing cattle trains loaded with people. The Judenrat maintained that they contained Soviet POWs. According to Iwler, “[T]he Judenrat instructed us to go to work smiling, with heads up so as to not to incur the anger of the Germans.”

A registration of the ghetto inmates took place in August 1942. Those who received special stamps on their *Kennkarten* (identity cards) were allegedly to be spared from the resettlement. This group of 60 to 70 Jews was purportedly slated for forestry work.⁹

On September 2, 1942, the Judenrat announced that the workday would end at noon and that Ustrzyki's Jews should prepare for their transfer to a labor camp in Zasław, 24 kilometers (15 miles) away. The community was told that they would be housed there in barracks and would work in a paper factory. “Those who refused to go were to be shot,” testified Iwler, adding that the Judenrat used this occasion to trick Jews by offering to accept bribes in return for enlisting them for deportation. The order was then rescinded that same day, after which it was announced that 50 individuals were to remain behind, working at the sawmill. Ustrzyki's Judenrat

then sought to extract more funds by offering places on a “new list” of those who were to remain in Ustrzyki Dolne.

The deportees were allowed to take all their possessions by wagon. The column left Ustrzyki under escort at night, on September 2, 1942, and it arrived at the Zasław camp the next morning, on September 3, 1942. Jews from other localities also were being concentrated there. A separate registration was conducted to identify those Jewish men from Ustrzyki fit for labor. Women, children, and the elderly were separated out.

Ustrzyki's Judenrat president was shot in Zasław. Most of the Jews concentrated there were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp within a week, the first transport leaving on September 6, 1942; the second, on September 8.¹⁰

SOURCES Reference to the fate of the Ustrzyki Jews can be found in the following publications: Andrzej Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica* (Brzozów: Związek Gmin Brzozowskich and Muzeum Regionalne PTTK w Brzozowie, 1993), p. 51; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 1365; Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 59–62; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 39 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), Lfd. Nr. 799, pp. 236–259.

The following archival sources were used to prepare this entry: AŻIH (211/1061 [JSS]; 301/3558, 301/4314 [Relacje]).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3558, testimony of Herman Iwler, 1948.
2. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 59–62.
3. *JuNS-V*, vol. 39, Lfd. Nr. 799, pp. 240, 244.
4. AŻIH, 301/3558. In 1973, Bäcker was sentenced to life in prison by a German court; see Potocki, *Podkarpackie judaica*, p. 51.
5. AŻIH, 301/4314, testimony of Herman Iwler; and 301/3558.
6. Ibid., in 301/3558 Iwler testified that the killings in Lutowska took place before those of the elderly Jews murdered in Ustrzyki.
7. *JuNS-V*, vol. 39, Lfd. Nr. 799, p. 244.
8. AŻIH, 301/3558.
9. Ibid.; also 301/4314.
10. Ibid., 301/3558; 301/4314.

WIELICZKA

Pre-1939: Wieliczka, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Krakau-Land, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Wieliczka is located about 16 kilometers (10 miles) southeast of Kraków. In 1939, an estimated 1,500 Jews were living there.¹

The Wehrmacht occupied Wieliczka on September 7, 1939. By that time, the majority of the town's male Jewish

population had fled. Due to the virtual absence of males, the women, old, and sick also performed forced labor at first. Eventually, the German authorities forced women to become members of the Jewish Council (Judenrat).

Bronisława Friedmann chaired the seven-woman Judenrat. The following women were also members of the Judenrat: Berla (or Berta) Rakower, Berla (or Berta) Zellner, Hania Feidenfron, Helena Brishorn, Salomea Küchler, and Złata Komhamer.

The Judenrat's first order was to collect a contribution of 8,000 złoty demanded by the Germans. The town's women had to travel to Kraków, where their husbands were hiding, to get the money. They were also required to furnish the offices of the German Gendarmerie (commanded by Wagner) and of the Sonderdienst that were set up in Wieliczka. Three months later, the men started to return gradually, but they were still afraid to cooperate with women in the Judenrat.²

A German named Frenzel was appointed as Stadtkommissar in Wieliczka; he was very susceptible to bribes. In 1940, SA officer Hermann Rosig replaced him.

Although Jewish businesses and houses were registered and repeatedly plundered, the situation in Wieliczka stabilized following Rosig's appointment. Word spread quickly that the town was a safe haven for Jews, and this attracted refugees. Moreover, its proximity to Kraków played a major role in influencing approximately 350 Jewish families to move to Wieliczka. A larger wave of Kraków refugees arrived in Wieliczka in the early summer of 1940. The Judenrat tried to relieve the suffering of the poor by opening a soup kitchen on November 10, 1940.

In December 1940, the German authorities set up the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which was commanded by lawyer Maksymilian Liebeskind. By the end of 1941, the force had expanded to 20 members.

The creation of the Kraków ghetto in March 1941 led more Jews to move to Wieliczka to escape the harsh conditions of ghetto life. According to Maria Bill-Bajorkowa, the German authorities set a limit of 5,000 Jews for Wieliczka. All those who were not registered were to be shot. Official Judenrat statistics, which registered 4,000 Jews in June 1941, 4,300 by the end of October 1941, and 4,900 in April 1942, may have been falsified, as many testimonies suggest that the number of Jews in Wieliczka actually surpassed the set quota.³

Wieliczka did not have an enclosed ghetto or even a separate Jewish quarter; the Jews continued to live where they wanted in the town, mixed in with the Poles.⁴ However, by late 1941, Wieliczka's Jews were required to stay within the town's limits, on pain of death. There was considerable overcrowding in Wieliczka, as the original Jewish population had more than trebled by the spring of 1942.

A branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization was established in Wieliczka in July 1941 to take over the organization of welfare from the Judenrat. Chairwoman Friedmann was nominated as the organization's president, and the lawyer Ludwik Steinberg from Kraków was appointed as her deputy, with Salomon Heller as the third member. Through

their efforts, a second soup kitchen was launched at the end of the same month, serving up to 200 meals daily. It was set up for the refugee "intelligentsia" and referred to as the "B" kitchen or "kitchen for the impoverished middle class." By February 1942, the "A" kitchen, for the poor, served on average 700 meals daily (i.e., 454 grams [16 ounces]) of vegetarian soup, of which 30 percent were free of charge. The "B" kitchen prepared up to 300 meals per day (a soup and two vegetable sides), charging 1.50 złoty per meal at a discount.⁵

By September 1941, male refugees from Kraków took over the Judenrat. Its new deputy, Grossman, later wrote that he and Steinberg (appointed as the chairman) made their participation in the Judenrat conditional on receiving a free hand to select its remaining members. The other members were: the lawyer Zygmunt Landau from Kraków, Leo Münzer from Bielsko as secretary, and four local Jews (Dr. Izidor Rakower, Roman Joachimsman, Chaim Loffelholz [Loffecholz], and Jakub Zellner). According to Zellner, Salomon Gelles, Ożjasz Goldstein, and Bronisława Friedmann were also included in the Judenrat, although Friedmann served only a short time.⁶

From the very beginning of the war, Friedmann had advocated opening a Jewish hospital in Wieliczka, but the authorities continually denied their permission. A clinic was established on August 21, 1941, with the arrival of a number of doctors from Kraków. Organized and managed by Dr. Otmar Reiner, it was located in the Judenrat building on 11 Seraf Street and admitted patients daily. Patients were treated free of charge in the clinic; however, doctors requested to be paid for house visits.

Permission to set up a hospital was finally granted in May 1942, but the authorities stressed that additional approval would be required to open it. The Cheder School building on Bolesław Szpunar Street was subsequently renovated and equipped for this purpose.⁷

The most significant JSS activity was its provision of a daily breakfast, starting in October 1941, for up to 200 children (3–12 years old). It consisted of 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread with marmalade and a glass of chicory coffee with milk or porridge. By the summer of 1942, 78 children in their care were from Wieliczka, while 130 were the children of refugees.⁸

After partial deportations from the Kraków ghetto in June 1942, Wieliczka's Jews became concerned about their own fate. Their rabbis, as from the beginning of the war, commanded the community to endure all German brutalities with submissiveness, repeating: "Let the beast devour." The idea of opening workshops and thereby saving themselves by working for the Wehrmacht rose within the Judenrat; some sources cite that it was actually Stadtkommissar Rosig's idea. At the time, Rosig promised that nothing bad would happen to Wieliczka's Jews, and he was "showered with diamonds" again.

"Town Workshops," an agency linked to those operating already in Bochnia, opened in mid-June 1942 in a local school. Its largest branches consisted of tailors and furriers who repaired winter clothing for the Wehrmacht.

With increasing reports of Jews being deported from other locations, Wieliczka's Jews paid bribes of up to 50,000

złoty to obtain unpaid positions in the workshops, yet only about 700 could secure a workplace. All believed that deportations from Wieliczka would be partial and would not affect Jews who worked. A number of those who could not afford bribes reportedly sent denunciations to the Kraków Gestapo.

It was at this time that the Judenrat intensified their efforts to obtain permission to open the hospital, believing that its patients would be spared from the deportations. A list of 100 patients for admission was prepared, but securing a place on that list cost thousands of złoty.⁹

In early August 1942, Kraków's Stadtkommissar Rüger and Rosig demanded a contribution of 1 million złoty from the Wieliczka Judenrat to be paid by August 22. The Judenrat negotiated it down to half a million. The community was already aware that such contributions generally preceded deportations. In those days, many Jews prepared bunkers or secured a hiding place with local Poles. A significant number fled Wieliczka.

On August 20, 1942, Rosig ordered the Judenrat to prepare for the arrival of 3,600 Jews on August 22. These were from Niepołomice, Mogiła, Łapanów, Dobczyce, and Gdów. At the time, Rosig told the Judenrat that he intended "to expand the 'Jewish quarter' considerably." The Wieliczka Jewish community was informed about the sudden concentration by posters. Signed by Rosig, they announced that the resettlement would "enlarge the 'Jüdische Wohnbezirk' and provide Jews with sustenance."¹⁰ Therefore, the concept of a ghetto, or separate Jewish quarter in Wieliczka, was exploited by the Germans to dupe the Jews into thinking they would not be deported, while Wieliczka itself became a temporary concentration point and staging post for the deportations.

The Jews of Niepołomice, Gdów, and Łapanów were informed of their resettlement approximately seven days in advance. They were allowed to take all of their belongings with them and waited for their wagons to be packed. The Gdów Jews were intimidated to such an extent that they prevented anyone from evading the deportation, for fear of possible German reprisals.¹¹ An estimated 3,000 to 3,500 Jews arrived in Wieliczka. The authorities announced that from then on all Jews found outside Wieliczka would be shot, as well as any Poles hiding them. As a result, many Jews were shot at the roadside on the first day following the deadline.¹²

The Wieliczka Judenrat was unable to house everyone. Approximately 700 of the newcomers were accommodated in a barracks in the Nowy Świat quarter of Wieliczka that was designed to hold no more than 70 people. Poles that lived on the outskirts of the town were forbidden to give shelter to the newcomers, who were ordered to concentrate in the center of Wieliczka. By this time, the town had been surrounded by a number of German units, Polish auxiliary police, and later also by the Jewish Police brought from the Kraków ghetto. Despite this, some people were still able to escape, often with the help of local Poles.¹³

On August 26, 1942, Kunde, Heinrich, and Becher arrived from Kraków with a list of 128 employees of the Town Workshops whose *Kennkarten* (identity cards) were to be stamped

prior to the transfer of them and their families to the Bochnia workshops (a total of 500 people). The authorities at this time demanded another contribution of 150,000 złoty and 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of coffee. That same night they informed the Judenrat that all Jews should report to the field near the train station by 5:00 A.M. on August 28, 1942. Rosig maintained that the community would be sent to Ukraine for work.¹⁴

On August 27, 1942, the hospital that the Germans had allowed to open just three days prior to the deportation Aktion was liquidated. Its patients and about 40 doctors and nurses were brought to the forest and shot.¹⁵

On the day of the deportation a selection took place near the train station. Approximately 700 elderly and infirm people were loaded onto trucks and taken to the Niepołomicki Forest, where they were shot. Others, found in hiding or trying to escape, were killed in the town. About 700 young men were selected for forced labor and sent to Pustków, the *Julag* in Kraków, and other labor camps. The remainder were loaded onto the waiting train late in the afternoon and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. It is estimated that at least 6,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec of the around 8,000 Jews concentrated there just before the deportation Aktion. A small cleanup detachment of up to 300 Jews remained in Wieliczka to sort out remaining Jewish property. Following alleged Jewish sabotage in Bochnia—the setting of a fire in the workshops—the 128 laborers that remained in Wieliczka were dispatched to Skawina for liquidation.¹⁶

SOURCES Published information on the Jewish community of Wieliczka during the Holocaust includes Shemu'el Me'iri, ed., *Kehilat Vilits'kab: Sefer zikaron* (Irgun yots'e Vilits'kah be-Yisrael, 1980); and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 667a.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/712 [AJDC]; 211/1092-1095 [JSS]; 301/573, 301/776, 301/1120, 301/1183, 301/2320, 301/2052, 301/3411, 301/3266, 301/4117, 301/5321, 301/5425, and 301/6245 [Relacje]; 302/143 [Pamiętniki]; FVA (# 15); USHMM (RG-02.208M [Pamiętniki]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 50; RG-15.084M [Relacje]; VHF (e.g., # 27085, 30751, 42577, and 45865); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 50, 211/1092 (Wieliczka), p. 30.

2. Ibid., pp. 1, 30; AŻIH, 301/5425, testimony of Maria Bill-Bajorkowa, 1952; 301/1120, testimony of Tauba Zyslowitz, n.d.; Michael Zellner, "The Nazi Atrocities in Wieliczka," in Me'iri, *Kehilat Vilits'kab*, p. 39.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1092, pp. 30, 67; 211/1094, pp. 49–50, AŻIH, 301/5425; and 301/2052, testimony of Hirsch Grossbard, 1946.

4. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, p. 358.

5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 20, 1941, and February 20, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1092, pp. 26, 30, 34, 64.

6. AŻIH, 301/2052; 301/1183, testimony of Meilech Zeliner, 1945; *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 20, 1942; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1093, pp. 38–40.

7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 27, 1941; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1092, pp. 44, 72–73; 211/1093, pp. 30, 39; and AŻIH, 301/5425.

8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1092, p. 40; and 211/1095, p. 29.

9. AŻIH, 301/573, testimony of M. Hollaender, 1945; 301/3266, testimony of Salomea Flawmhaft, 1947; and 301/1183; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 50, 211/1093, p. 44; and 211/1095, pp. 37–38.

10. AŻIH, 301/2320, testimony of Leib Storch, 1947; 301/2052; 301/573; 301/3266.

11. Ibid., 301/4117, testimony of Fajwel Kornberg, n.d.; 301/5321, testimony of Anna Steinberg, n.d.

12. Ibid., 301/2052; 302/143, memoir of Maria Bajorkowa, a fragment published also in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 40–46, and Me'iri, *Kehilat Vilits'kab*, pp. 63–81.

13. AŻIH, 302/25, testimony of Michał Weichert; and 302/143, testimony of Maria Bill-Bajorkowa. A number of Jewish testimonies refer to the help they received from Poles—e.g., 301/6245, testimony of Zofia Chorowicz-Rosenbaum, Edmund Fischler, Lonka Fischler-Tempka; 301/3266.

14. Ibid., 301/2052.

15. Mieczysław Skulimowski, “Zagłada szpitala żydowskiego w Wieliczce w roku 1942,” in Me'iri, *Kehilat Vilits'kab*, pp. 81–88, also published in *Przegląd Lekarski* 22(1) (1966): 101–105; it is based mainly on Bill-Bajorkowa nad Zeller testimonies and includes a partial list of the murdered doctors.

16. AŻIH, 301/573; 301/5425; 301/2052; and *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 667a, pp. 367–370. Some sources date the deportation on August 27, 1942—e.g., AŻIH, 301/1183; and 301/3411, testimony of Herman Schnur, 1947.

WIELOPOLE SKRZYŃSKIE

Pre-1939: Wielopole Skrzyńskie, village, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wielopole Skrzyńskie, Kreis Debica, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wielopole Skrzyńskie, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Wielopole Skrzyńskie is located about 148 kilometers (92 miles) east of Kraków. According to the 1921 census, there were 550 Jewish residents, constituting 54.7 percent of the total population of Wielopole Skrzyńskie.

Upon the village's occupation, the Germans established a Judenrat chaired by Chaim Meller, together with Abraham Langer (treasurer) and Mendel Kanner. In May 1940, the Judenrat reported 763 Jews, including 135 refugees, living in the village. Of that number, 70 had arrived from Inowrocław in December 1939. Other refugees were mostly from Łódź or other localities within Kreis Debica. In late 1940 and 1941, dozens of Jews were sent to a forced labor camp in Pustków near Dębica.¹

The Gestapo from Dębica oversaw life in the village, and it often extorted valuables from its Jewish inhabitants. According to A. Rubin, the Germans executed two Jews caught outside the village, buying food from farmers in January 1941.

On May 1, 1940, the Judenrat opened a soup kitchen. It served on average 45 breakfasts and dinners per day. On Saturdays those receiving food from the soup kitchen were assigned to local families for a meal. The kitchen closed in November 1940 due to a lack of money. It reopened briefly, only to close again in June 1941.²

In March 1941, 112 Jews from Kraków were deported to Wielopole. By mid-April 1941, their number had risen to 250, as some of the Kraków Jews who were initially assigned to Mielec were later directed to Wielopole.³

In May 1941, the Judenrat wrote to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków, stating that none of the Jewish businesses were under trustee management. In June 1941, a branch of the JSS was set up in Wielopole with three officials: Szaje Tajtelbaum (chairman), Chaim Mejer Lipschitz (deputy), and Jakub Barth. It managed to reopen the kitchen on November 1, 1941, producing 70 meals daily. Those who could afford it paid 10 groszy per meal; most customers received their meals for free.⁴

Secondary sources date the establishment of the ghetto in the spring of 1942, at which time Jews were forbidden to live in certain parts of Wielopole and were resettled to a few narrow streets. The ghetto was not enclosed, but its inhabitants' freedom of movement was severely restricted.

In March 1942, approximately 170 Jews were deported to Mielec to work in aircraft factories. Norbert Friedman testified that the Germans surrounded the village one day and announced that if men volunteered for the labor camps, their women and children would not be resettled. Friedman was one such volunteer.⁵

By May 1942, the JSS had found agricultural employment for 100 Jews. They worked on the surrounding large estates, including in Mała (about 8 kilometers [5 miles] northwest of Wielopole), and on other nearby homesteads.⁶

The ghetto was liquidated on June 26, 1942, when the community was resettled to the ghetto in nearby Ropczyce. In the course of the liquidation—or shortly thereafter—50 to 56 elderly Jews were shot and buried in a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery. Some of them were brought from the village of Mała. Among the victims were Arszcz Schaja Hiller, Feiga Mała Hiller, and Samuel Leidner.⁷

The ghetto in Ropczyce was liquidated on July 23, 1942, when the majority of its population was escorted to the nearby town of Sędziszów Małopolski and then deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.

SOURCES The ghetto in Wielopole is briefly mentioned in the following publications: E. Podhorizer-Sandel, “O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 95; Andrzej Potocki, *Żydzi w Podkarpackiem* (Rzeszów: Libra, 2004), pp. 189–200; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 928; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 3,

District Krakow (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008), pp. 354–355.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/713, 211/344, 211/1096-1097); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]); and VHF (# 3022).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/713 (Wielopole Skrzyńskie), p. 4; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1096 (Wielopole Skrzyńskie), pp. 4, 10–11, 13.
2. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AJDC), 210/713, pp. 14, 17; Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1096, p. 4a.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/344 (Dębica), pp. 26, 34, 55, 67.
4. Ibid., 211/1096, pp. 20, 26, 43.
5. VHF, # 3022, testimony of Norbert Friedman, 1995.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/1097 (Wielopole Skrzyńskie), pp. 21, 23.
7. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo rzeszowskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984), pp. 199–200.

WOLBROM

Pre-1939: Wolbrom, town, Miechów powiat, Kielce województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Wolfram, Kreis Miechow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wolbrom, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Wolbrom is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) north-northwest of Kraków. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 4,276 (59 percent of the total), rising by 1931 to 5,450 Jews.¹

When the German invasion began on September 1, 1939, many young men from Wolbrom, Jews and non-Jews, were mobilized into the Polish armed forces. Some were killed in action or captured and taken to Germany, but soon afterwards the prisoners of war (POWs) were sent home. When the German army entered the town, it had been emptied of young Jewish men. Dozens of Jews were immediately shot. The Germans drove the Jews out of town in the direction of Zawiercie, and a number died of exhaustion on this forced march. After two weeks they were allowed to return.²

On a daily basis the Germans abused and humiliated prominent members of the community. They forced the rabbi, doctors, nurses, and pharmacists to sweep the streets. Other Jews were put to work repairing the rail line to Olkusz and Chrzanów. A Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Moshe Aharon Wolochinsky, was established. A Jewish police force was also recruited. Refugees from Upper Silesia, Kraków, and Łódź, seeking a more secure place, arrived in Wolbrom. Former residents who had left town before 1939 came home. Some who were in the Soviet-occupied area of pre-war Poland crossed the cease-fire line to rejoin their families.³

The Judenrat was responsible for extracting the money and goods demanded by the German authorities, organizing

forced labor, monitoring the 7:00 p.m. until dawn curfew, and enforcing the order for Jews to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David on their sleeves. Jews were required to stay in their own dwellings, refrain from travel to other towns (except with a permit obtainable for a suitable bribe), shave their beards, and not eat white bread. Meat, butter, and eggs, most of which the Germans took from local farmers, were also forbidden to the Jews. Clothing and leather goods were confiscated from Jewish shops, as well as gold and silver, and put into military storehouses. The displacement of people from areas destined for annexation to Germany brought additional refugees to Wolbrom, which was near the new border. When the Jews of Kraków were driven out of the city and their apartments given to SS and Gestapo officers, hundreds more Jews arrived in Wolbrom. The local community struggled to absorb them, mostly in their own homes, with some put up in communal buildings. The Judenrat established a public kitchen, which by October 1940 was feeding up to 200 Jews, so no one went hungry despite the deplorable conditions.⁴

According to the records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch in Wolbrom, in May 1941, just prior to the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the German authorities established an open ghetto, which consisted of 177 houses located in the vicinity of the synagogue.⁵ From the summer of 1941, conditions for the Jews in Wolbrom worsened considerably. By early 1942, a much more brutal Gendarmerie officer, Leutnant Baumgarten, had taken over from Leutnant Müller in command of the 15-man Gendarmerie post on the outskirts of town. Under this new leadership, the Gendarmerie significantly increased the tempo of random killings, abuse, coercion, and demands for money, gold rings, silver synagogue ornaments, and fur coats.⁶ The few goods and valuables that people had in their homes were confiscated. The price of food shot up, resulting in increased shortages and hunger, and the overcrowded conditions exacerbated the deteriorating situation. On April 1, 1942, 4,940 Jews were registered as living in the Wolbrom ghetto, or more than 20 per house.⁷

In July 1942, the Germans set up a clothing factory in the Bet Midrash HaGadol (community study center), and all tailors were ordered to report with their sewing machines. In August the German authorities demanded 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of gold, which the Judenrat managed to collect in the naive hope that this would appease the occupiers.⁸

The SD office in Kraków organized the first Aktion in Wolbrom in early September 1942. Word spread that on Thursday, September 3, the rabbi and synagogue leaders had hidden the Torah scrolls in a crate and buried it in the old Jewish cemetery—a sure sign that disaster loomed. On Friday the SS notified the Judenrat that everyone was required to report to the market square by 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, including the old and the weak. They were to bring up to 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of food and clothing and leave the doors of their houses unlocked. Anyone attempting to flee or hide would be shot on the spot. The Jews made ready for the fateful day; some hid valuables in their homes. A number of them committed suicide by overdosing on pain-relieving

medicine. On Saturday, September 5, the SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and units of the Polish (Blue) Police surrounded the Jewish quarter. As people gathered in the square they saw wagonloads of conscripted Polish youth of the Baudienst carrying shovels and axes. Probably in excess of 6,000 people, including deportees and refugees, were assembled in the square. The initial step was to load about 300 elderly and weak people onto carts (as if to spare them the march to the train station) and take them to the Olkusk Forest opposite the Jewish cemetery, where they were stripped, shot, and thrown into open pits. The rest of those assembled were herded into a marshy area opposite the station.⁹

Jews from two neighboring towns (which had no train station) were brought to Wolbrom. Around 12:00 A.M., about 1,000 arrived from Żarnowiec. At 4:00 P.M., more than 1,000 from Pilica were brought in, swelling the assembly to more than 7,000. Towards evening the Germans separated out about 2,500 men, aged 18 to 50 and fit for work, and designated them for forced labor. The rest were sent east in cattle wagons to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰

The workers, joined by Jews who had been hiding, were held in the community study center. For example, 23-year-old Willie Sterner gave himself up after hiding for three weeks, once he learned the fate of the rest of his family. Over the next few weeks, representatives of German factories came to claim the workers, in groups of several hundred, for forced labor, sending many of them to the Płaszów camp. Their number dwindled to about 150, who were put to work burying the dead and gathering abandoned household goods for shipment to Germany.¹¹

From mid-September 1942 until the liberation of the town at the end of 1944, nearly 400 Jews, who were found or denounced while in hiding, were shot at the Jewish cemetery. At the beginning of November 1942 the final contingent of Jews was sent to Bełżec from Wolbrom.¹²

SOURCES The yizkor book, edited by M. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Residents of Wolbrom in Israel, 1962), contains sections in Hebrew and Yiddish and has a few articles covering the war years and the Holocaust in Wolbrom. The ghetto in Wolbrom is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 569.

Documentation concerning the ghetto in Wolbrom can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/1131; 301/1699, 3263); BA-L (B 162/14504); IPN (Bühler Trial); ITS; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/1131); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, pp. 22, 412–417.
2. Ibid., pp. 24–25.
3. Ibid., pp. 25, 56–57.
4. Ibid., pp. 26–27; Bericht des Kreishauptmanns in Miechów für September, October 4, 1940, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen*

während des zweiten Weltkrieges (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 217.

5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1131 (Wolbrom), p. 41. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, pp. 28–30, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto in April 1942.

6. BA-L, B 162/14504 (II 206 AR 1356/69), verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 27/71, July 11, 1973, p. 8.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1131 (Wolbrom), p. 41. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, pp. 28–30.

8. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, p. 57.

9. BA-L, B 162/14504, verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 27/71, July 11, 1973, pp. 9–12; Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, pp. 58–59, 87; AŻIH, 301/3263.

10. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, p. 60; AŻIH, 301/3263.

11. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, p. 40; Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 760–761. Willie Sterner was later transferred to the Płaszów camp but managed to escape with aid of Aryan papers smuggled into the camp by Kazimiera Strzałka, who was later recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

12. Geshuri, *Wolbrom irenu*, p. 40; AŻIH, 301/1699.

ŻABNO

Pre-1939: Żabno, town, Dąbrowa Tarnowska powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zabno, Kreis Tarnow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Żabno, województwo małopolskie, Poland

Żabno is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) east-northeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, between 500 and 600 Jews were living there.¹

Once the Germans occupied the town, the Jews were subjected to humiliations and restrictions. Jews had to wear armbands bearing the Star of David, and even children caught not wearing their armbands properly were severely beaten and could be shot. Soon after the start of the occupation, Jewish children were denied schooling. There were food shortages in the town, and people encountered difficulties in getting enough to eat. The Jews were prohibited from going more than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) beyond the limits of the town, which reduced their ability to scavenge for food.² The Jews also were required to perform forced labor, with most being sent to work in agriculture on the estates in the surrounding countryside.

In May 1940, the Judenrat conducted a census of the Jewish population in Żabno, which served as the basis for reports prepared by the Żabno branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS).³ In November 1940, the Żabno Judenrat established a community kitchen that distributed 70 meals per day.⁴ According to the Żabno JSS report for August 1941, there were 634 Jews in the town. Among those Jews 20 were merchants, 15 were skilled workers, 187 were laborers (35 of whom were in labor camps), and 183 were unemployed. Jews owned 35 businesses at that time. While 250 Jews were receiving some sort of assistance, another 250 Jews in need were still seeking help. The community kitchen fed 220 people, 11 Jews received



Group portrait of Jewish children in front of a stage set of a Purim celebration in Żabno, March 1941.
USHMM WS #32691, COURTESY OF ANN SHORE (HANIA GOLDMAN)

monetary assistance, 10 individuals received medical assistance (although there was no hospital in the town), and 50 Jews received additional help.⁵ By September 1941, the number still seeking assistance had increased to 253; the community kitchen gave out 280 meals per day; 25 people received financial assistance; 4 received medical help; and 75 received bread and flour. The report indicates that 37 Jews performed forced labor.⁶ The next Żabno JSS report for October 1941 shows that the number of Jews receiving assistance had increased to 320, while another 345 Jews seeking assistance had to be turned away empty-handed.⁷

On March 10 or 11, 1942, members of the Order Police from Dąbrowa Tarnowska and the Gestapo from Tarnów dragged between 30 and 40 Jews from their houses and shot them near the brick factory. The bodies were buried in one mass grave at the Jewish cemetery in Żabno. After the event, a few Jews fled from the town and hid with peasants in the countryside, in some cases in return for payment.⁸

The Żabno ghetto was established at the beginning of May 1942. About 700 Jews were confined within it.⁹ The ghetto was administered by the Order Police from Dąbrowa Tarnowska and the Tarnów Gestapo. There was overcrowding inside the ghetto, and the Jews lived in a state of uncertainty and fear. Some people referred to the Jewish area as the *gettele* (little ghetto) hoping that now their persecution would be diminished, as they only lived together with other Jews. They did not want to believe those Jews who claimed that the purpose of ghettoization was to concentrate the Jews to facilitate the German anti-Jewish Aktions.¹⁰ The German persecution of the Jews continued—on May 9, 1942, the Gestapo shot a Jewish man.¹¹ According to Polish court documentation, between March 12, 1942, and August 31, 1942, the Germans shot around 50 Jews in Żabno and its vicinity. The bodies

were buried in three mass graves at the Jewish cemetery in Żabno. The shootings were carried out by members of the Gestapo from Tarnów and of the Order Police from Dąbrowa Tarnowska in conjunction with the Polish (Blue) Police and a member of the Sonderdienst named Fanyusz. Thus it appears that a dozen or so more Jews were shot in the period up to the liquidation of the ghetto.¹²

According to an order issued by the Kreishauptmann in Tarnów on July 15, 1942, Jews from the towns of Kreis Tarnów, except for the city of Tarnów itself, were required to move to concentration points in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Brzesko, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, and Żabno by July 23, 1942.¹³ It is not known how many additional Jews were brought into the Żabno ghetto as a result of this order. Unfortunately, very few sources exist that can shed light on living conditions in the Żabno ghetto, as most of those Jews who survived escaped from Żabno before the ghetto was established.

The Żabno ghetto was liquidated in mid-September 1942, around the same time as the second large-scale deportation Aktion in the city of Tarnów. From the summer of 1942, the main officer dealing with Jewish affairs at the Tarnów Gestapo was an official named Rommelmann, who probably was responsible for coordinating the deportations in Kreis Tarnów on the orders of the SS- und Polizeiführer in Kraków. At the time of the deportations, Kreishauptmann Dr. Kipke issued proclamations threatening Poles with the death penalty for concealing Jews and ordering them not to buy or receive Jewish property.¹⁴ Most of the 650 or so Jews that remained in the Żabno ghetto were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. About 40 Jews were left behind to clear out the area of the ghetto. At the end of October 1942, the Jews organized an escape into the nearby forests. Their fate remains unknown.¹⁵

The German occupation forces were driven out of Żabno by the Red Army in January 1945. Only 15 Jews are known to have survived the war and returned to Żabno, and most of these soon emigrated from Poland.

SOURCES Publications dealing with the history and persecution of the Jews in Żabno include the following: “Żabno,” in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 139–141; and “Żabno,” in Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK “Kraj,” 1992), pp. 97–98.

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Żabno can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3446); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 53; RG-15.019M, reels 3 and 15); and VHF (# 39906).

Joanna Śliwa

NOTES

1. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, pp. 97–98; also see www.jewishinstitute.org.pl/en/gminy/miasto/650.html.

2. Story of Ann Shore [Hanna Goldman] in Howard Greenfeld, *After the Holocaust* (New York: Greenwillow Books, 2001), p. 8; VHF, # 39906, testimony of Ann Shore.

3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 53, report of Żabno JSS, September 1–30, 1941.

4. Ibid., letter from Żabno Judenrat to JSS in Kraków, November 20, 1940.

5. Ibid., report of Żabno JSS, August 1–31, 1941.

6. Ibid., report of Żabno JSS, September 1–30, 1941.

7. Ibid., report of Żabno JSS, October 1–31, 1941.

8. Story of Ann Shore, in Greenfield, *After the Holocaust*, pp. 8–9; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” doc. 165. See also Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 270–271.

9. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, p. 98; www.jewishinstitute.org.pl/en/gminy/miasto/650.html; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, “Kwestionariusz o obozach,” doc. 78.

10. VHF, # 39906.

11. OKK, “Wykaz spraw . . .,” Zg 1946, p. 388.

12. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 3, “Kwestionariusz o egzekucjach masowych i grobach masowych,” doc. 166.

13. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, protocol of the JSS in Tarnów, July 31, 1942. See also *Gazeta Żydowska*, July 31, 1942.

14. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 710a, pp. 390–391; and vol. 35 (2005), Lfd. Nr. 775, p. 303. On Rommelmann, see also AŻIH, 301/3446.

15. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, p. 98.

ZAKLICZYN

Pre-1939: Zakliczyn, town, Tarnów powiat, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Kreis Tarnow, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: województwo małopolskie, Poland

Zakliczyn is located about 72 kilometers (45 miles) east-southeast of Kraków. On the outbreak of World War II, there were around 600 Jews (40 percent of the total population) living in Zakliczyn.¹

The German army entered Zakliczyn on September 5, 1939. The Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Zakliczyn, chaired by Jakub Appel. Other Judenrat members included Mendel Ebenholz, Michał Frant, Izak Kirschenbaum, Roman Finder, and a woman—with the surname Weinstock.²

In 1940, around 220 Jewish refugees from Kraków (50 people), Krynica, and from the countryside arrived in Zakliczyn. The situation of the Jews living in the town was terrible: there was not enough food, medicine, or housing.³ In the first months of 1941, around 38 Jews from Zakliczyn were sent to the Pustków labor camp.⁴ Jews also performed forced labor on road construction in the area. In June 1941, the Zakliczyn branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established, with Pinkas Kupfer as chair and Emil Lerner as his deputy.⁵ In October 1941 an epidemic of typhus broke out among the Jewish population of Zakliczyn: about 6 Jews contracted the disease.⁶ In December 1941 a kitchen for around 50 children was opened in Zakliczyn. Apart from re-

ceiving meals, the children celebrated Jewish holidays such as Hanukkah.⁷ The JSS was forced to close the community and children's kitchens in April 1942, due to lack of food. The Jewish inhabitants suffered from hunger and diseases related to malnutrition.⁸

On July 10, 1942, the Germans established a ghetto in Zakliczyn, which was sealed on July 23, 1942, at 9:00 A.M. The Jewish community had to pay the Germans a “contribution” of 50,000 złoty and surrender furniture and other valuable items.⁹ According to an order issued by the Kreishauptmann in Tarnów on July 15, 1942, Jews from the towns of Kreis Tarnow, except from the city of Tarnów itself, were required to move to concentration points in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Brzesko, Tuchów, Zakliczyn, and Żabno by July 23, 1942.¹⁰ The Zakliczyn ghetto was an enclosed ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. There was only one gate located on the side that bordered the town square. The ghetto was located between the left side of Mickiewicz Street and Piłsudski Street, covering an area of around 500 square meters (598 square yards). The ghetto was under the authority of the Kreishauptmann in Tarnów, Dr. Kipke, his deputy Dr. Pyrnus, and SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Rommelmann of the Security Police in Tarnów.¹¹ In the ghetto there were workshops for tailors and cobblers. The Jewish Police was established under the direction of Chaim Ebenholz. Its members included Hersz Frant, Kantorowicz, Stenek Schreiber, Handel, Spitzer, Mendel Finder, Schneiderman, Leon Dener, Dow Mikołajewicz, Hausman, Józef Schlanger, and Irom.¹²

More than 2,000 Jews from Zakliczyn and its vicinity were concentrated in the ghetto. Jews from Wojnicz (356), Czchów (290), Ciężkowice (286), Iwkowa (183), Uszwia (147), Pleśna (58), Gromnik (57), Radłów (33), Szczurowa (14), Gumniska (11), and Wietrzychowice (4)—in total, 1,439 additional people—were forced into the ghetto. As communication with people outside the ghetto was cut off almost completely, and the Jews had virtually no financial resources left, there was starvation among the ghetto's inhabitants. Some of the Jewish refugees who arrived in Zakliczyn had already been resettled several times and were unable to bring with them much in the way of personal belongings. They were housed in barns and attics, with no sleeping mattresses, since the Jewish quarter consisted of only about 160 rooms and was unable to accommodate all the new arrivals. Around 20 people had to share one room. Until the end of summer people even slept outside. Before the influx of resettled Jews, about 50 Jews from Zakliczyn were receiving meals at the community kitchen. Thereafter the community kitchen had to feed 825 people.¹³ There was a Jewish medical unit in the ghetto directed by Dr. Helena Schajer-Ehrlichowa and Dr. Józef Bester.¹⁴

In mid-September 1942, German police forces liquidated the ghetto in Zakliczyn. The Jews were deported by rail from the Gromnik station to the Bełżec extermination camp. About 72 adult Jews and 1 child, mainly the members of the Jewish Police and the Judenrat and their families, were spared deportation. The Jews, planning on escaping to the forest, began to

organize weapons with the aid of some Poles, but they were denounced to the Gestapo. On December 12, 1942, SS-Unterscharführer Rommelmann shot about 50 Jews in Zakliczyn, who were buried in a mass grave near the synagogue. The Germans ordered the synagogue to be dismantled afterwards. Around 20 Jews still remained to clean up the area of the ghetto. Five Jews had to bury the dead, and 4 Jewish girls were taken to the Tarnów ghetto. The remaining 16 Jews were taken to the Brzesko cemetery to be shot. Only 1 Jew was able to escape from this last remnant.¹⁵

Among the few survivors from the Zakliczyn ghetto were Regina (Rivka) Riegelhaupt and her two daughters Lea and Judit, who were smuggled out of the ghetto dressed as Polish peasants by a Polish acquaintance, Andrzej Piechniczek, shortly before the ghetto's liquidation. They survived by hiding with a number of poor peasants until the liberation but nearly starved. Others were not so lucky. German police from Zakliczyn shot Maria Pierzyński on January 20, 1944, for sheltering two Jews, Benjamin and Roman Sukman.¹⁶

SOURCES Publications dealing with the history of the Jews of Zakliczyn and their fate during the Holocaust include the following: "Zakliczyn," in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 146–147; "Zakliczyn," in Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK "Kraj," 1992), pp. 96–97.

Documents on the fate of the Jews in Zakliczyn can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1758, 2038, 2051, and 3733); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 52; RG-15.019M, reel 14); VHF (# 19005, 27431, and 31437); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, p. 96.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, letter of Zakliczyn Judenrat to JSS headquarters in Kraków, December 8, 1940; AŻIH, 301/1758, testimony of Sala Ebenholz.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, Zakliczyn JSS report of April 1, 1942, and letters of Zakliczyn Judenrat to JSS headquarters in Kraków on November 3 and 22 and December 8, 1940; VHF, # 31437, testimony of William Nattel.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków regarding the typhus epidemic, October 19, 1941; VHF, # 19005, testimony of Arthur Neigut; and # 31437.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, Kraków JSS headquarters to Zakliczyn regarding the Zakliczyn JSS branch, June 9, 1941.
6. Ibid., Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, November 17, 1941, and Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków regarding the typhus epidemic, October 19, 1941.
7. Ibid., Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków regarding kitchen for children, April 9, 1942, and Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, November 9, 1941.
8. Ibid., Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, April 15, 1942.
9. Ibid., note about the conversation with Dr. Spira from Kraków, July 23, 1942.

10. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 48, protocol of the JSS in Tarnów, July 31, 1942.

11. Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica*, p. 96; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, "Kwestionariusz o obozach"; Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, August 1, 1942, and Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków of August 1, 1942 (regarding the establishment of the Jewish district in Zakliczyn); AŻIH, 301/2051, testimony of Izrael Dawid Mikołajewicz; 301/2038, testimony of Stefan Sztuka; and 301/3733, pp. 3–4, testimony of Regina Riegelhaupt Kempnińska; Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979). Rommelmann was sentenced to death by a Polish court on March 25, 1948, and executed on November 9, 1948.

12. AŻIH, 301/1758.

13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, letter of Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, August 1, 1942, and on the same date (regarding the establishment of the Jewish district in Zakliczyn); AŻIH, 301/2051.

14. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 52, letter of Zakliczyn JSS to Kraków, August 1, 1942.

15. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 14, województwo krakowskie, pp. 42–43; AŻIH, 301/2051; 301/2038; and 301/1758; VHF, # 27431, video testimony of Israel Mikel.

16. AŻIH, 301/3733; Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 601; and Anna Poray-Wybranowski, *Polish Righteous: Those Who Risked Their Lives* (Canada: A. Poray), no. 460, Maria Pierzyński.

ŻMIGRÓD NOWY

Pre-1939: Żmigród Nowy, town, Kraków województwo, Poland; 1939–1945: Zmigrod Nowy, Kreis Jasło, Distrikt Krakau, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Nowy Żmigród, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Żmigród Nowy is located about 140 kilometers (87 miles) southeast of Kraków. On the eve of World War II, 800 Jews were living in Żmigród Nowy.

The German army occupied Żmigród Nowy on September 8, 1939. They immediately started to impose restrictions on the Jews. Jews were prohibited from moving freely, were forced to wear armbands with the Star of David, had to pay "contributions" to the Germans, and were required to perform forced labor. On September 14, 1939 (the first day of Rosh Hashanah), German soldiers entered the synagogue and beat those worshipping there. On October 5, 1939 (the last night of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot), the Germans set fire to the synagogue and ordered the Jews to raze the building to the ground.

In November 1939, the Germans established a civil administration in the newly formed Generalgouvernement. Żmigród Nowy was incorporated into Kreis Jasło, within Distrikt Krakau. Regierungsrat Dr. Walter Gentz was the Kreishauptmann from February 10, 1941.¹ The Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) was commanded from 1940

to 1943 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Wilhelm Raschwitz. Stationed in Żmigród was a unit of German Gendarmerie under Paul Roliff, which controlled the Polish (Blue) Police.

At the end of 1939, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Żmigród Nowy headed by Hersz Eisenberg, which was subordinated to the Judenrat in Kreis Jasło on April 29, 1940. The Germans ordered the Judenrat to conduct a census of the Jewish population. The Judenrat was entrusted with distributing food and providing medical and housing assistance. It also prepared lists of Jews for work details to repair roads and bridges and to dig trenches. The forced laborers received meager food rations and suffered from disease. Every day about 50 Jews were sent out for road construction work for the German company of Emil Ludwig at Lipowce near Dukla. From the spring of 1941, several transports of Jews were sent to various forced labor camps from Żmigród.²

In 1940, Jews were brought into Żmigród Nowy from the surrounding villages. A public kitchen was established that initially distributed almost 200 meals per day. In February 1941, the aid committee of the Judenrat reported that 114 daily meals were supplied, 115 people received housing help, and 25 Jews received financial assistance. That same month a Society for Health Protection was created, headed by Hersz Eisenberg. In March and April 1941, 100 Jews from Kraków, 150 from Łódź, and 200 from Jasło were brought to Żmigród, raising the Jewish population to 1,500 and producing overcrowding. In addition, the Jews were ordered to surrender all valuable items to the Germans and, in December 1941, all fur clothing.

The increased Jewish population led to food shortages. On July 25, 1941, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch in Żmigród sent a telegram to the main office in Kraków warning that 300 people were starving because the community kitchen had no food. On January 13, 1942, about 300 additional Jewish refugees from Jasło arrived in Żmigród. Attempts by the Judenrat to prevent this transfer were in vain. Living conditions in Żmigród deteriorated further; the JSS complained of a lack of medicine and reduced food rations due to the influx of refugees.

A "Jewish residential area" (open ghetto) was established in Żmigród Nowy in the first half of 1942. It was inhabited by the Jewish population of Żmigród and its vicinity, as well as by refugees. On its establishment, it contained about 1,300 Jews. The Żmigród Jewish residential area was not fenced in, but signs were put up around the open ghetto warning Jews that they were forbidden to leave the borders of the town on pain of death. The first Jewish victim of the Germans was "mute Dovid" who left the town to get flour from a peasant and was shot by the German police officer Kreil in 1942. There was immense overcrowding in the ghetto, and living conditions became unbearable. At the beginning of 1942, the authorities demanded 100,000 złoty from the Judenrat, threatening to kill chairman Eisenberg. In February 1942, the Judenrat made plans for Jews to be employed as craftsmen as a way for the Jews to become useful to the Germans and perhaps avoid deportation. Work outside the town also enabled some Jews to barter items illegally and smuggle food back into the ghetto.³

In May 1942, the JSS created a sanitary unit, which collected bedding and clothing for the poorest Jews, cleaned the living quarters, and distributed soap. The JSS also established a day care for 90 children, who were also fed in the public kitchen and received medical care. On June 17, 1941, the JSS created a mother and child committee headed by Rab Hersch that provided food to 72 Jewish children and 15 infants.⁴

On July 7, 1942, all the Jews in the Żmigród ghetto were ordered to assemble on the soccer field. At that time, there were around 2,000 Jews in the ghetto. German, Polish, and Ukrainian police units surrounded them. The able-bodied were ordered to register for work with representatives of various German companies. All Jews were required to hand in their valuables. Members of the Gestapo brutally murdered the chairman of the Judenrat in front of the other Jews. A group of 1,250 Jews, composed mostly of women, children, the sick, and the elderly, was taken by truck to a forest near Hałbów, where the Germans shot them and buried them in a mass grave. On July 12, 1942, around 150 Jews were sent to the Płaszów concentration camp. On August 15, 1942, a group of Jews was sent to the Zasław labor camp near Kraków. The remaining Jews of Żmigród were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp at the end of the summer in 1942.⁵

About 70 or 80 Jews managed to escape the July 1942 deportation Aktion and hid in the forests, but most were hunted down by German and Polish police. For example, on April 25, 1943, the Gestapo shot 16 people, including 2 Jewish children. They took the Jews from a local prison and shot them in a mass grave near the Jewish cemetery in Żmigród. In the second half of 1943, 3 Jews from Żmigród were caught by the Germans and brought to the Jasło prison, where they committed suicide.⁶

After the war the Jewish community of Żmigród was not revived. The survivors immigrated to Israel and the United States. After World War II, Żmigród regained its status as a town and was renamed Nowy Żmigród.

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Żmigród Nowy include the following: "Nowy Zmigrod," in Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 3, *Galicia and Western Silesia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), pp. 152–154; and the memoir by Leo Rosner, *The Holocaust Remembered—A Child Survivor's Account of Imprisonment and Redemption 1939–1945* (2003).

Documents on the extermination of the Jews in Żmigród Nowy can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1764); BA-L (B-162/14484); IPN (Dsn 13/5/67/"W" 1093; Dsn 13/5/67/"W"/393; OK Rzeszów S 13/67/R; Sąd Grodzki w Jaśle Zg 8/47; AGK Tarnów-Rzeszów, sygn. 5, k. 167); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 54; RG-15.019M, reels 10 and 17; RG-50.002*0033; RG-50.002*0039; RG-50.431*0788); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, B-162/14484 (II 206 AR-Z 827/63), verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972, pp. 11–13; Dr. Gentz,

who committed suicide in 1967, succeeded Regierungsrat Dr. Ludwig Losacker in this post.

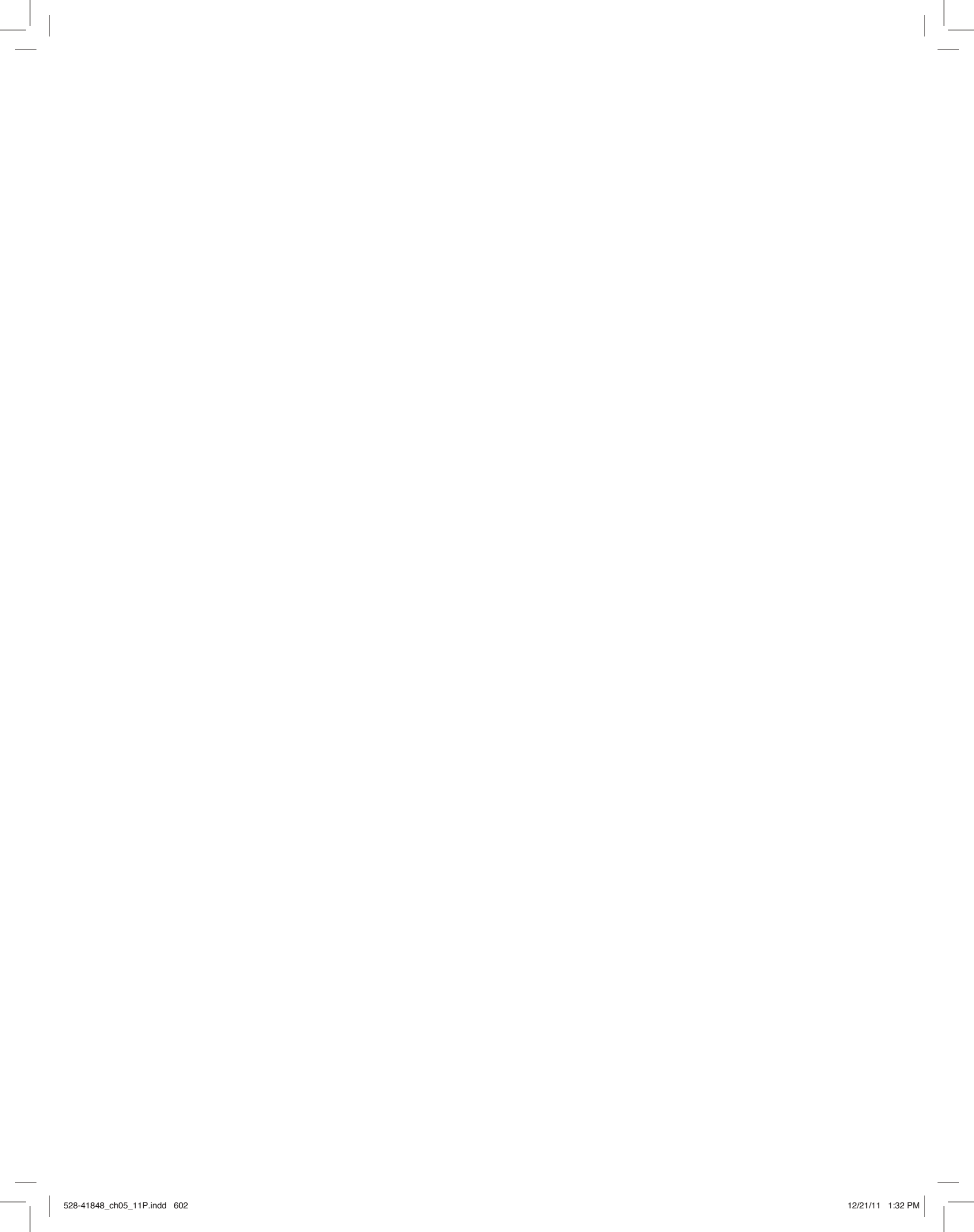
2. USHMM, RG-50.002*0033; and RG-50.002*0039.

3. IPN, Tarnów-Rzeszów, sygn. 5, k. 167; and Dsn 13/5/67/“W” 1093; A. Eisenbach, “Ludność żydowska w Królestwie polskim w końcu XIX w., *BŻIH*, no. 30 (1959): 94; BA-L, B-162/ 14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972; USHMM, RG-50.002*0033; RG-50.002*0039; and Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 54.

4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 54.

5. BA-L, B 162/14484, verdict of LG-Arns, 6 Ks 4/70, December 5, 1972; Stanisław Zabierowski, *Rzeszowskie pod okupacją hitlerowską* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 181–182; and AŻIH, 301/1764, testimony of Moses Einhorn, January 17, 1946.

6. IPN, Dsn 13/5/67/“W” 1093; Dsn 13/5/67/“W”/393; OK Rzeszów S 13/67/R; and Sąd Grodzki w Jaśle Zg 8/47; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reels 10 and 17.



LUBLIN REGION



People walk along a commercial street near the Lublin ghetto entry sign, ca. 1941–1942. The sign reads, “GHETTO! Entry for Wehrmacht (personnel) is forbidden.”
USHMM WS #65614

LUBLIN REGION (DISTRIKT LUBLIN)

Pre-1939: parts of the Lublin, Lwów, and Warsaw województwa, Poland; 1941–1945: Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: parts of the Lublin and Podkarpackie województwa, Poland, and the L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Distrikt Lublin was established on October 26, 1939, as one of the initial four Distrikte of the Generalgouvernement. Spanning 26,660 square kilometers (10,294 square miles), the Distrikt, composed of territories from pre-war Poland, encompassed almost the entire Lublin województwo, a territorial sliver from the Warsaw województwo, and small parts of the Lwów województwo required to extend its southern frontier to the San River.

Some 2.4 million people resided in the Distrikt, including 240,000 to 300,000 Jews. The Jewish population fluctuated, initially because tens of thousands fled German occupation by crossing into neighboring Soviet-occupied Poland.



General Governor Hans Frank leads a tour in the Lublin ghetto, following completion of a deportation Aktion, June 2, 1942. Pictured from left to right in the front row are an unidentified German army officer, unidentified General Government official, SS-Gruppenführer Richard Wendler, Frank, unidentified Luftwaffe officer, Ernst Zörner, Otto Wächter, Ernst Kundt, and an unidentified SS officer.

USHMM WS #61417, COURTESY OF ARCHIWUM DOKUMENTACJI MECHANICZNEJ

On October 26, 1939, Friedrich Schmidt was named the first governor of Distrikt Lublin. Ernst Otto Zörner, the former mayor of Dresden and German-occupied Kraków, succeeded him on February 21, 1940. Kreishauptmänner governed 10 Kreise, centered in Biała Podlaska, Biłgoraj, Chełm, Hrubieszów, Janów, Krasnystaw, Lublin, Puławy, Radzyń Podlaski, and Zamość. A Stadthauptmann oversaw the municipality of Lublin. Odilo Globocnik, the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) of Distrikt Lublin, was the senior police official in the Distrikt, subordinated to the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement. Through February 1942, civilian officials oversaw Jewish affairs.

German civilian authorities, present in the Distrikt from October 4, 1939, used increasingly more uniform antisemitic decrees to deprive Jews of their social, economic, and cultural rights. From October 10, Otto Strössenreuther, the Kreishauptmann in Janów, met weekly with the newly appointed heads of local collaborationist civilian administrations, initially native Poles appointed wójtowie (singular, wójt) and mayors, to convey various orders. At the December 14 meeting, he required Jewish Councils to sell armbands with Jewish stars for 2 złoty and mandated the Jews to wear them by January 5, 1940. In late December 1939, Strössenreuther forbade Jews from selling or transferring property. At the January 5, 1940, meeting, he excluded Jewish children from primary education.¹

Absent from the order portfolios in Kreis Janow, the only place where such early documentation wholly survived, are decrees by Generalgouverneur Hans Frank mandating forced labor and Jewish Councils (October 26 and November 28, 1939). In more eastern areas, where a brief Soviet occupation delayed the civilian administration's establishment, survivors recall that the SS issued the marking decrees and civilian officials ordered the Jewish Councils established.² Created across the Distrikt by January 1940, the Jewish Councils initially were composed of pre-war community leaders.

David Silberklang has suggested the well-documented rivalry between civilian authorities and Globocnik for control of Jewish policy made the former reluctant to establish ghettos. Mid-August 1940 raids conducted by the SS on Jewish communities throughout Distrikt Lublin for labor camp conscription at Bełżec convinced them that ghettoization would facilitate Globocnik's drive. "By not establishing ghettos," Silberklang explains, "civilian authorities in effect made the job of the SS more difficult and increased their own involvement in Jewish affairs. Without a ghetto, the SS would need increasingly to turn to the civilian authorities."³ As a result,



SS-Gruppenführer Odilo Globocnik, the SS and Police Leader of Lublin, reviews troops [after November 9, 1942].
USHMM WS #09538, COURTESY OF IPN

in September 1941, the Kreishauptmänner reported ghettos existed in just 11 places: Biała Podlaska, Irena, Lublin, Opole, Piaski Luterskie, Zamość, and the towns of Kreis Radzyn (e.g., Kock, Lubartów, Łuków, Międzyrzec Podlaski, and Radzyń Podlaski, with Ostrów, on September 1, transferred to Kreis Lublin-Land).

The research conducted for this volume indicates that the September 1941 lists should not be the benchmark to determine the extent of ghettoization in Distrikt Lublin. By then, at least 26 ghettos had been established. Some had disappeared. Others had not yet been created. Required to resettle Jews in the Distrikt from December 1939 and to respond to related demands for increased security, German authorities had established a complex policy to confine and isolate Jews, of which ghettos were just a part.

The first ghetto was established in Puławy (October 1939), where war devastation left little available space for the Kreis administration. A larger effort to concentrate Jews came in October and November, when Radzyn Kreishauptmann Hennig von Winterfeld designated Ostrów and Kock the *Juden-reservate* (Jewish reservations) for the Kreis's 32,430 Jews. From mid-October through November, the SS transferred thousands of Jews to the *Reservate*. In Lubartów, an open ghetto, of a few streets, was established for workers (and their families) retained for labor.

In Kreis Pulawy, an informal Reservat emerged from late December 1939, after the Puławy ghetto was disbanded and the SS forcibly expelled its residents to Opole. May 1940 bans on Jewish residence in spa towns brought the expulsion of the Jews from Nałęczów. Expellees not sent to labor camps ended up in Opole, the only place where Kreishauptmann Alfred Brandt permitted all Jewish newcomers to register.⁴

These early efforts to concentrate Jews vaguely echoed Adolf Eichmann's use of a sliver of Distrikt Lublin, near the San River, for a Judenreservat for expellees from Vienna, Katowice, and Morawska-Ostrava. Under the Nisko Plan (October 1939), the so-called useful Jews among the first 3,587 (of 4,088)

deportees constructed a retraining camp in Zarzecze. Those deemed nonuseful were pushed over the Soviet frontier.

The Nisko Plan slowed ghettoization in Distrikt Lublin, as expulsions, such as the Chełm death march (including about 3,000 Jews from Chełm, Hrubieszów, and Dubienka) on November 30–December 1, 1939, gained the upper hand. On December 6, Winterfeld changed course, ordering hundreds of Jews in Radzyń to Sławatycze, a border town, to await expulsion. In Zamość, Kreishauptmann Helmuth Weihenmaier, believing an expulsion imminent, imprisoned 150 Jews from Włocławek. The Radzyń expellees received permission to return to Kreis Radzyn in April 1940, on the formal suspension of the Nisko Plan. Only some were allowed to resettle in Radzyń. Returnees were required to be vetted by the Jewish Council, to pay a fee, and to reside in the historic Jewish neighborhood, recognized as an open ghetto in the late spring of 1940.

Ghettoization was shaped even more decisively by the October 30, 1939, decision to expel to the Generalgouvernement a projected 1 million Polish Christians and Jews from territories the Germans were annexing to the Reich to make room for ethnic German settlers from the Baltic states and Volhynia. Janina Kielboń conservatively estimates that 30,140 Polish Jews (including 5,570 prisoners of war [POWs]), 32,000 Polish Christians, and 24,000 ethnic Germans were resettled in Distrikt Lublin between 1939 and 1940. An additional 3,220 Jewish expellees (including 1,200 from Stettin and 1,020 from Kraków) arrived that year.⁵

Kielboń has shown that the Warthegau deportees were distributed across the Distrikt (probably to speed the expulsions and to secure local Polish authorities' acquiescence, as Heinrich Himmler, the director of the resettlement initiative, required they assume responsibility for the expellees). In most Kreise, Jewish deportees were divided among many Jewish communities, where the appropriate Jewish Council and subsequently the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, formally established in Kraków in January 1940, became responsible for them. An exception was in Kreis Krasnystaw, where Izbica and Turobin were designated from December 1939 for the resettlement of Polish Jewish deportees. Reich deportees were divided between fewer localities. The Stettin expellees, for example, were settled in Bełżyce, Głusk, and Piaski Luterskie.

In Ostrów, where 5,000 Jewish expellees had arrived by early January 1940, Winterfeld began permitting local Jews expelled to the Reservate to return home and instead designated Kock for Jewish newcomers.⁶ In Kock, no ghetto replaced the Reservat because Winterfeld refused to provide rations to unemployed Jews or to permit the Kock JSS food purchases from cheaper government resources, thereby making the deportees the responsibility of the local Jewish community. In Ostrów, a ghetto replaced the Reservat. Winterfeld provided rations (initially bulk food grants), enabling the JSS to distribute meals to 850 Poznań deportees. The assistance probably was required, as the Jews formally were confined to a ghetto.



Jews line up in front of a public kitchen sponsored by the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) office in Biała Podlaska, 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #18548, COURTESY OF ŻIH IMIENIA EMANUELA RINGELBLUMA

The arrival of Polish Christian expellees sometimes hastened ghettoization, but rationing policies constrained official recognition of what had occurred. In Szczepieszyń, pressures to house the newcomers resulted in the establishment of a ghetto in the winter of 1940–1941. However, the ghetto (and another open ghetto, established in the summer of 1940 in Biłgoraj) officially did not exist, as Biłgoraj Kreishauptmann Werner Ansel never provided nutritional assistance to unemployed Jews. For this reason, the Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto to purchase food. Similarly, the Krasnystaw Jewish Council, in official correspondence, mentioned not a ghetto, ordered by Kreishauptmann Hartmut Gerstenhauer on August 9, 1940, but spoke of the relocation of the Jews to a new neighborhood. In Chełm, circumstantial evidence indicates the Cholmer Aktion (September 2–December 14, 1940), which brought 28,365 Polish Christians to a relocation camp and saw the permanent Polish population grow by 10 percent (the largest increase in the Distrikt), sparked the German mayor's ghettoization decree on October 30, 1940.

In 1940, ghettos also were established in Łęczna (January), Kazimierz Dolny (March), Wisznice (November), and Piaski (December 31). In these cases, officials also were responding to local conditions. Emil Ziegenmeyer, Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, ordered an open ghetto established in Łęczna because his official residence was located there. In Wisznice, designated for Ukrainian settlement, newly appointed local authorities confined the Jews to the first closed ghetto in the Distrikt, enabling Ukrainian newcomers to appropriate their residences. The Wehrmacht's use of Kazimierz for rest and recreation leaves contributed to ghettoization there.

Elsewhere, the decision to transfer responsibility for expellees onto Jewish communities delayed ghettoization. For this reason, too, when expulsions resumed in November 1940, with the formal abandonment of the Madagascar Plan, some 3,436 Jews from Kraków, expelled by April 1941, initially were distributed among almost every Jewish community in the



Jews are rounded up for deportation in the Wisznice ghetto, 1942.

USHMM WS #03831, COURTESY OF ELIEZER AND JENELLY ROSENBERG

Distrikt. In mid-December 1940, at least 3,000 Jews from Mława and Ciechanów arrived in Kriesie Biała Podlaska and Radzyń. On February 15 and 27, some 2,006 Viennese expellees were directed to Opole. On March 5, another 981 Viennese deportees were resettled in Modliborzyce. On March 10–13, 3,000 Jews from Konin arrived in Kreis Krasnystaw.

Preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941) spurred the next significant round of ghettoization. Ghettos were established in Irena and Janów Podlaski (January), Ryki and Opole (March), Lublin and Wąwolnica (April), Łuków and Zamość (May), and Zwierzyńiec. The presence of significant military installations or the quartering of troops almost always prompted the decrees.

Hobbled by rationing policies, the JSS established the deepest welfare programs in ghettos, such as Chełm, where Jews received rations and could not safely leave, and ghettoization was complete. The fact most Jews in the Distrikt lived outside of ghettos and until the spring and again in the summer of 1941 could move around relatively freely permitted some to evade ghettoization and nearby communities to respond to the plight of those in ghettos. During the winter of 1940–1941, the Jewish communities of Sławatycze and Parczew transported thousands of kilograms of donated and purchased food to Mława expellees confined to the Wisznice ghetto.

Privileged Jews, usually craftsmen, medical personnel, and others employed by the Germans, often resided outside of ghettos (e.g., Radzyń, Wisznice, Piaski, and Lublin) at times in specifically designated areas (e.g., Szczepieszyń and Zamość). Typhus outbreaks from December 1939 and epidemics (in the spring of 1941 and the fall of 1941 through the winter of 1942) in overcrowded Jewish (and non-Jewish) communities likely made some Distrikt authorities recognize that ghettos would be seedbeds of infectious diseases and prompted the decision to allow some Jews to live outside the ghetto. In Chełm, Kazimierz, and Opole, where ghettoization was complete, non-



Jewish deportees from Vienna live in crowded barracks in Opole, ca. 1941.

USHMM WS #45838, COURTESY OF LILLI SCHISCHA TAUBER

Jews were permitted to enter the ghetto to seek out the services of craftsmen.

On January 17, 1941, Zörner established the basis for a new form of concentration by recommending Kreishauptmänner and mayors contain Jews to fewer places, ostensibly to cut down on illegal trade and smuggling but really to keep Jews out of militarized areas and towns.⁷ The orders saw Ziegenmeyer place northern Kreis Lublin-Land off limits to new expellees and to designate Bychawa, Chodel, and Bełżyce not as ghettos but rather as *Judensammelorte* (assembly points for Jews) for future expellees. The Konin expellees were divided between Izbica and Józefów, effectively the *Sammelorte* for new Warthegau deportees to Kreise Krasnystaw and Bilgoraj. On January 23, 1941, Janów Kreishauptmann Hans Asbach first deployed the recommendation locally ordering 1,000 Jews (mainly Łódź deportees) expelled to Radomyśl nad Sanem, a community of fewer than 311 native Jews. The larger Radomyśl nad Sanem gmina served in practice as the *Sammelort* for all new Jewish deportees to the Kreis, including in November some 400 from Kraków.⁸

Expulsions to what in effect were *Sammelorte* sometimes forestalled ghettoization. In Biała Podlaska, the Jewish Council reported a ghettoization decree, initially issued on January 4, 1941, was rescinded after 1,507 mainly Kraków expellees accepted “voluntary resettlement” to Podedwórze-Opole and Piszczac. Forced to live in barns, the Podedwórze-Opole expellees began returning almost immediately, prompting authorities to establish a ghetto in Biała Podlaska by the early summer of 1941.

In Lublin, where 10,000 Jews were expelled on March 10–13, 1941 (initially to the *Sammelorte* of Kreis Lublin-Land), and voluntary resettlements soon followed, the expulsions were intended to establish a small ghetto, officially for 25,000. (Some 14,149 Jews refused resettlement, making the ghetto population much larger.) In Zamość, too, 900 (mostly Warthegau) expellees were forcibly transferred to

Komarów or Krasnobród before a ghetto was established. To prevent their return, Kreishauptmann Helmuth Weißenmayer extended to the expellees the same rations he provided nonworking Jews in the Zamość ghetto.

Expulsions resulted in significant reductions in the size of some ghettos. In Krasnystaw, after 950 to 1,250 Jews were expelled in May to the Zakrzew gmina, just 250 to 300 were left in the ghetto. Similar expulsions in Kazimierz led to the establishment of a labor ghetto and the creation in Wąwolnica of a ghetto for those with direct family ties to the locality.

Opole, long used to dump unwanted Jews, was the only informal *Sammelort* transformed into a ghetto. Its barbed-wire fencing was replaced in June by a 2.5-meter-high (8.2-foot-high) wooden fence. In June, a fence also was erected around the Piaski ghetto. Yet, that same month, authorities rejected the request of the wójt in Bełżyce (like Piaski, in Kreis Lublin-Land) to transform the *Sammelort* into a closed ghetto, because no fencing material existed. In practice, authorities preferred territorial solutions, such as expanding preexisting *Sammelorte* (e.g., in Radomyśl).

Many survivors recall overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions, and hunger existed in ghettos. However, as the Jews desiring to remain in Lublin, Kazimierz, and Biała Podlaska attest, conditions were comparatively better in most ghettos than in the *Sammelorte*. The worst material conditions for Jews in the Distrikt probably were in Józefów, Radomyśl, and Izbica, with the latter perhaps not officially declared a ghetto before the summer of 1942.⁹

In Radomyśl, some 600 Kraśnik expellees were crowded into the synagogue or lived 10 to a room with native Jews. Food reserves for the Polish Christian population, swelled by 600 Warthegau newcomers, were so limited the wójt feared the Jews would starve. Most survived by begging for food in the countryside. In November and December 1941, after Frank imposed the death penalty on Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement found without permission outside their places of registration and a Jew from Radomyśl was shot dead, the local JSS chair noted that “almost the entire town [almost all the Jews] were condemned to extinction.” By mid-January 1942, 25 to 30 Kraśnik expellees had died from a lack of food.¹⁰

Frank’s proscriptions did not see any place where Jews resided transformed into open ghettos. The only ghetto established in the autumn of 1941 was in September, in Urzędów. It was organized to provide the Heinkel Company (Heinkel Werke) a captive winter labor pool to transform a factory in Dąbrowa-Bór into an airplane repair facility.

In none of the approximately 25 responses to the April 1942 JSS ghetto questionnaire did a Jewish official describe the entire locality as a ghetto. Positive responses, including in Janów Podlaski, Lubartów, Łęczna, Łuków, Ostrów, Wisznice, and Zwierzyniec, indicate that ghettos in the Distrikt were defined narrowly as residential areas, of a limited number of houses. Negative responses were received from among others such as Biłgoraj, Hrubieszów, Kock, Międzyrzec, Modliborzyce, Parczew, Piszczac, Terespol, Włodawa, and Wojsławice. Rather, Frank’s orders were understood as part of a complex group of

decrees, which had restricted Jewish movement in different degrees, at various times and places.¹¹

The final phase of ghetto construction occurred during the deportations to killing centers. Around October 13, 1941, Himmler ordered Globocnik to begin work on the Bełżec extermination facility and appointed him to organize, oversee, and implement Operation Reinhard throughout the Generalgouvernement, elevating him above Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, his formal superior. On the eve of the expulsions, the SS increased labor camp conscription quotas. Civilian authorities issued new identification cards to separate so-called productive Jews from the remainder of the population. To facilitate the expulsions, the Lublin ghetto in February 1942 was fenced and partitioned, with the smaller ghetto on March 16 designated for those who worked for the Germans and the much larger ghetto A for those slated for expulsion.

The deportations in the Generalgouvernement began in Lublin, with the expulsion of 30,000 Jews to Bełżec from March 17–28 and March 31–April 14, 1942. (Several thousand were killed in or outside of Lublin.) To root out fugitives, the SS ordered those retained for labor relocated to a closed ghetto in Majdan Tatarski. On April 20, 2,500 to 4,000 illegal ghetto residents were shot, leaving just 3,300 to 4,000 Lublin Jews in the remnant ghetto.

The deportations expanded to touch almost every community during March and April 1942. The first wave targeted small numbers of mainly elderly. However, in Kraśnik, most of the Jews were sent to Bełżec on April 12, 1942, as the Kreis administration, scheduled to move there, needed their homes. In Irena, Izbica, Końskowola, Krasnystaw, Kraśniczyn, Lubartów, Opole, Rejowiec, Piaski, Tyszowce, and Zamość, a considerable part of the Jewish population was gassed at Bełżec so their places could be filled temporarily by foreign deportees.

Approximately 85,000 foreign Jews arrived in Distrikt Lublin between March 13 and June 20, 1942, as part of Operation Reinhard. The deportees included 19,000 to 25,000 Germans, 6,000 Austrians, 14,000 Czechs and Slovaks from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and 39,899 Slovaks and Hungarians from Slovakia. About 63,000 passed through one of the designated consolidation or collection points, officially known as *Hauptunterbringungs- und Umschlagpunkte* (literally, main accommodation and loading/unloading points). A few thousand deportees were sent to labor camps, while transports carried another approximately 18,000 directly to killing centers. A few places (e.g., Piaski, Izbica, and Rejowiec) became revolving doors.

From May 6, 1942, the expulsions became more systematic, moving across Kreise, from Pulawy, Krasnystaw, Cholm, Zamosc, Hrubieszow, and Biala Podlaska before temporarily halting on June 12. At least eight remnant ghettos (e.g., Kurów, Rejowiec, Tomaszów Lubelski, Tyszowce, and Hrubieszów) were established for the few Jews retained for labor. Some ghettos (e.g., Opole and Irena) were used to consolidate Jews from nearby communities and thereby bring them closer to railway connections. The Jews almost all were killed at the Sobibór extermination camp, opened in May.

The mass shooting in July and early August 1942 of 1,700 Jews in Józefów and 2,187 in Łomazy shattered the lull, extended killing operations into Kreis Bilgoraj and renewed them in Kreis Biala Podlaska. From mid-August, the expulsions systematically enveloped Kreise Cholm, Zamosc, and Lublin-Land (via Piaski). The expulsions appeared more tentative in Kreise Biala Podlaska and Radzyn and parts of Kreis Pulawy because killing operations at Treblinka, opened in July, had bogged down. (The choice of killing center was determined by the fact that the Jews lived near the main railway line to Treblinka or its Lublin switching junction in Dęblin.) Repeated sweeps in October and early November focused on sending those earlier retained for labor in remnant ghettos to killing centers or to the Majdanek concentration camp, along with almost all Jews in Kreise Janow, Cholm, Biala Podlaska, and Radzyn not imprisoned in labor camps.

To facilitate the expulsions, new collection ghettos were established in Tarnogród, Kraśnik, Zaklików, Międzyrzec, Włodawa, and Izbica. Some Jews (mainly men) were imprisoned at nearby labor camps (e.g., Krychów, Majdanek, Poniatowa, Trawniki, Budzyń, Małaszewicze Duże, etc.), at new labor camps (e.g., Bełżyce, Cholm, Kraśnik, Jatkowa, etc.) established at the time of the expulsions, and in northern Distrikt Lublin (e.g., Kreise Biala Podlaska and Radzyn) in fenced remnant ghettos (e.g., Kock, Komarówka Podlaska, and Parczew).

Officially, orders from October 28, 1942, permitted Jews to reside outside of labor camps in just eight remnant ghettos: Izbica, Piaski, Włodawa, Końskowola, Międzyrzec, Łuków, Parczew, and Zaklików. In practice, no such ghetto existed in Zaklików. Some collection ghettos (e.g., Rejowiec) existed alongside the remnant ghettos until the spring of 1943. They, like the longest-lived remnant ghettos, also were used as labor ghettos (e.g., Łuków, Międzyrzec) or as temporary sites to imprison Jews (e.g., Końskowola) from outside the Distrikt during transportation bottlenecks or backlogs in murder operations at Bełżec or Sobibór. Liquidated in stages, the last ghetto, in Międzyrzec, disappeared in July 1943, with the execution of its 200 to 300 Jewish residents.

In researching ghettos in Distrikt Lublin, documentation was examined for 120 communities. Materials discovered in contemporary Jewish materials, including American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and JSS records, resulted in the addition of several communities (e.g., Rossosz, Urzędów, and Zwierzyniec) never previously thought to have had ghettos. For some communities (e.g., Łomazy), entries were included when new documentation indicated no ghetto existed, but nonetheless it was still open to question. Documentation was found to have been misinterpreted for some places (e.g., in Firlej) but mostly to have been too sparse in others (e.g., in Kamionka, Kodeń, and Michów), long believed to have had ghettos.

Wherever possible, contributors included a discussion of Reservate, Sammelorte, and Hauptunterbringungs- und Umschlagpunkte, while maintaining the focus on ghettos, the

subject of the volume, and on representing as accurately as possible how German authorities and Jews (contemporaries and survivors) understood them. The absence of entries for some places (e.g., Radomyśl, Józefów, Podedwórze-Opole, and Kraśniczyn) known to have been communities in which Jews were concentrated provides a reminder that ghettos were but one part of a complex, evolving German policy, designed to exploit and to isolate Jews while facilitating the transformation of Distrikt Lublin into one of the Holocaust's primary killing grounds.

SOURCES Secondary works with regional coverage about the history of Jews in the Distrikt Lublin ghettos include Tatiana Berenstein, "Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," *BŻIH* 21 (1957): 21–92; Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); M.J. Fajgenbaum, *Podlaskie in umkum: Notitsn fun burben* (Munich: Aroysgegebn fun der Tsentraler Historisher Komisyse baym Ts. K. fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948); Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996); Janina Kiełboń, *Migracje ludność w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939–1944* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1995); Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944*, trans. Orah Blaustein (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1984); Robert Kuwałek, "Getta tranzytowe w dystrykcie lubelskim," in Dariusz Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 138–160; Zygmunt Mańkowski, "Pierwsze miesiące okupacji niemieckiej w Kraśniku (październik 1939–maj 1940)," *Regionalista*, no. 7 (1997): 58–63; Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999); Dieter Pohl, *Von der "Judenpolitik" zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007); David Silberklang, "Defining the Ghettos: Jewish and German Perspectives in the Lublin District," in Jonathan Petropoulos, Lynn Rapaport, and John K. Roth, eds., *Lessons and Legacies*, vol. 9, *Memory, History, and Responsibility: Reassessments of the Holocaust, Implications for the Future* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010), pp. 106–123; David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003); and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999).

Works providing coverage of various Reserve schemes and the radical population relocation programs that shaped

ghettoization in the region include, among others, Götz Aly, *"Final Solution": Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews*, trans. Belinda Cooper and Allison Brown (London: Arnold, 1999); Christopher R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004); Philip Friedman, "The Lublin Reservation and the Madagascar Plan: Two Aspects of Nazi Jewish Policy during the Second World War," in Ada June Friedman, ed., *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), pp. 34–59; Se'ev Goshen, "Eichman und die Nisko-Aktion im Oktober 1939," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 19:1 (3 January 1981): 74–96; Jonny Moser, "Nisko: The First Experiment in Deportation," *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* 2 (1985): 1–30; and Joseph Poprzeczny, *Odilo Globocnik: Hitler's Man in the East* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004).

Also important are the relevant volumes of *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945, województwa: białkopodlaskie, chełmskie, lubelskie, siedleckie, tarnobrzezkie, zamojskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP and GKBZHP-IPN, 1984–1994).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APL; APL-Chełm; APL-Kraśnik; APL-Radzyń; APZ; AŻIH; BA-BL; BA-L; FVA; IPN; IPN-Lu; NARA; USHMM; VHF; YIVO; and YVA. Many museums in the Lublin województwo, including in Lublin, Kraśnik, Łęczna, Lubartów, Łuków, Zamość, and the State Museum in Majdanek (APMM), also are important repositories for unique archival documentation.

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NOTES

1. Mańkowski, "Pierwsze miesiące," pp. 58–60.
2. AŻIH, 301/4333, testimony of Berko Finger, p. 1; 302/122, testimony of Mieczysław Garfinkel, pp. 6, 8–9.
3. Silberklang, "The Holocaust," p. 184.
4. VHF, # 31584, testimony of Rose Welner.
5. Kiełboń, *Migracje*, pp. 26–35, 140.
6. AŻIH, 301/2013, testimony of Mojżesz Apfelbaum, pp. 1–3.
7. Musiał, *Zivilverwaltung*, p. 134.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/871, p. 49.
9. AŻIH, 301/72, testimony of Leon Feldhändler, pp. 4–8 (Izbica), which dates ghettoization in Izbica to the fall of 1942. See, however, also Mark Roseman, *A Past in Hiding: Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New York: Metropolitan, 2001), pp. 186–197.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/870, pp. 12–13; 211/871, pp. 39–40, 61; 211/872, pp. 6, 16.
11. See, for example, for Annopol, VHF, # 14967, # 477, # 3843, respectively, testimonies of Eli Fishman, Benny Kleiman, and Josef Krystal.



Borders as of 1942

BARANÓW NAD WIEPRZEM

Pre-1939: Baranów nad Wieprzem, village, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Baranow, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Baranów, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Baranów lies atop a high bank of the Wieprz River, some 60 kilometers (37 miles), by road, northwest of Lublin. Its 1930 population of 2,071 included 1,092 Jews.

In the second week of September 1939, the Luftwaffe bombardment killed an unknown number of Baranów Jews as they were on the road, fleeing west to Ryki, some 16 kilometers (10 miles) distant. On September 17, a Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied Baranów. The soldiers held a group of Jewish and Christian Poles hostage in the synagogue but released the prisoners unharmed several days later. The local military commander ordered the Jews to surrender valuables. German soldiers ransacked Jewish shops and residences in the ensuing searches.¹ The German military commander appointed a local Polish collaborationist civil administration, led by a wójt (head), for the larger pre-war Baranów nad Wieprzem gmina, of which Baranów served as the administrative center.

In 1940, German civilian authorities occasionally arrived from Puławy to impose financial and material demands on the Jews. During one such visit, the Jews were ordered to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Aron Cukierman. Accompanied by local members of the Polish (Blue) Police, the Germans usually demanded monetary contributions and took a number of Jews as hostages, pending receipt of the payments.² However, because local Polish authorities in Baranów tended to look the other way, the Jews managed to circumvent some of the anti-Jewish decrees imposed on all Jews living in the Generalgouvernement. As a result, most Baranów Jews initially were able to restore a part of their pre-war lives, though sometimes illicitly. When Jews, for instance, were forbidden from attending schools, parents in Baranów organized informal instructional circles for their children.

Because the Jews initially lived in much better conditions than their counterparts in many places in the Generalgouvernement, Baranów quickly flooded with refugees. By mid-December 1940, 350 refugees had swelled the Jewish population to 1,500. Among the refugees were a substantial number of Jews expelled from Puławy in late December 1939. In January 1941, 400 Jewish refugees were residing in Baranów. In June, the refugee population crested at 483 (140 families).³ Abraham Edelist, a printer and pre-war kehillah officer from Puławy, established a committee to assist the refugees. From December 1940, he also chaired the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) office in Baranów. Abraham Aichenstein (Eichenstein), the rabbi of Baranów, represented local Jews on the committee.⁴

Tensions created by the arrival of so many refugees came to a head on March 19, 1941, during a Judenrat meeting at which Edelist presented a plan to divide a charity shipment of herring. A group of local Jews stormed the meeting, assaulted Edelist, and threatened to abscond with the fish, unless he

agreed to distribute charity items more equitably between the refugees and local Jews.⁵ Ordered by the Jewish Council to apportion the herring as the protestors demanded and then admonished by JSS authorities in Lublin and Kraków for not distributing the fish as required, Edelist and Aichenstein believed they had no choice but to resign.⁶

By late July or perhaps on August 1, 1941, an open ghetto was established in Baranów. On July 10, Edelist mentioned to Dr. Marek Alten, head of the JSS in Distrikt Lublin, that the Baranów Jews had learned that Alfred Brandt, the Puławy Kreishauptmann, had issued orders, to remain in effect until October 1, forbidding Jews from leaving their places of registration.⁷ The orders were made permanent in October, when Hans Frank forbade Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement from leaving their places of residence.

Survivor Pinchas Zajac notes the decree binding the Jews to Baranów was followed in the summer of 1941 by orders for all Jews living in houses along the main streets to move into houses located on alleys and back streets. Because the Polish owners of the houses also were required to move, Zajac describes the decree as establishing a ghetto in Baranów. (The Poles mostly took over the residences the Jews had been forced to vacate.)⁸ Hela Arbeiter, another survivor, mentions in her testimony the existence of a specifically designated Polish neighborhood in Baranów, a point that may indicate the housing reshuffle concentrated the Jews into a designated residential quarter.⁹

In mid-July 1941, on the eve of the establishment of the Baranów ghetto, the newly appointed JSS officials, all leaders of the protest movement, undermined further the material conditions of the most impoverished Jews by using the food allotment for Baranów to establish a for-profit canteen at a local labor camp. On July 20, the Judenrat dissolved the committee and, supposedly on the orders of Brandt, assumed control for all Jewish welfare relief in Baranów.¹⁰ The original JSS leaders were invited to join a reorganized committee, on which the Jewish Council chair also served. Though Aichenstein agreed, Edelist, like many refugees, had decided to leave Baranów for Lublin upon learning of the impending decree binding Jews in Kreis Pulawy to their places of registration.¹¹

Because the JSS correspondence for Baranów focuses almost entirely on the problems that beset the organization and the ongoing effort of the Jewish Council and the Kraków JSS to recover lost funding, it contains none of the documentation traditionally used to provide statistical measures of forced labor quotas, labor camp conscription, and the health and welfare of Jews confined to ghettos. Zajac recalls the only way for the Jews to secure nourishment after the ghetto's establishment was to sneak out of Baranów under cover of darkness to barter material possessions for food with peasants in nearby villages. He mentions that, by early 1942, almost all the able-bodied male population was interned in labor camps. Those who remained behind in the ghetto—mostly the elderly, women, and children—were dying of illnesses, including those associated with malnutrition and starvation.¹² Because of the poor conditions and rumors that Brandt soon would

order the ghetto fenced, some Jews, beginning in 1942, began to escape from Baranów, mostly to the ghetto established in Żelechów (Distrikt Warschau).¹³

On May 8, 1942, a group of 10 to 12 SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries arrived in Baranów to expel the Jewish community. Informed about the expulsion orders days earlier, some families had found hiding places with Poles in nearby villages. Unaware of the orders, others believed the SS had come to eat an early dinner with members of the local Polish (Blue) Police.¹⁴ After the meal, the SS, the Ukrainian auxiliaries, and Polish police ordered all the Jews to assemble along Puławy Street. As many as 500 Jews, mostly young men probably already working at local labor camps, were held back from the expulsion. The rest of the Jews, at least 500 people, were ordered onto peasant carts. Zająć believes the Jews were driven to the train station in Puławy and ordered there onto trains destined for the Sobibór death camp.¹⁵ However, many scholars, including David Silberklang, maintain the Baranów Jews were sent to Sobibór via the railway station in Dęblin.

Many of the more than 100 Jews who fled from the deportation initially built hiding places in nearby forests. After some fugitives were pursued and killed by Polish partisans hostile to Jews, most sought refuge in a number of communities from which Jews had not yet been expelled, including in Kamionka (Lubartów powiat) and Adamów (Łuków powiat).¹⁶ In late summer and early fall 1942, local German authorities began ordering unregistered Jews in these two communities to report to Końskowola. Some Baranów Jews perished in a typhus epidemic there. Many others managed to escape the liquidation of the Końskowola collection ghetto in early October.¹⁷

Forced to seek refuge in the forests, the Jewish fugitives were almost all hunted down and shot during sieges of the wooded areas around Baranów and Ryki organized in late 1942 and early 1943 by the German SS, SS Ukrainian auxiliaries, and members of the Polish (Blue) Police.¹⁸ Others, including Zająć's parents and brother, perished in similar searches conducted by the SS for partisans in February 1944. Contacts with a group of Communist partisans, commanded by Dąbrowski, contributed to the Jews' survival, though tensions between Poles and Jews in the unit remained high.¹⁹ Fewer than 25 Baranów Jews survived the war.

SOURCES In addition to noting that an open ghetto and a Jewish quarter were established in Baranów in late 1941, the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 116–118, and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 56–58, maintain Brandt ordered the Jews confined to a closed ghetto in April 1942, but local authorities failed to implement the decree. David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss. Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 177–178, 271, notes Brandt, in a memo on September 12, 1941, emphasized, among other points, that he had no plans to estab-

lish additional ghettos in Kreis Pulawy. The memo can be found at APL, 498/0/273, with copies at YVA. Silberklang's research also provides insight into the railway route by which the Baranów Jewish community was sent to Sobibór.

Archival documentation pertaining to the history of the Baranów Jewish community during World War II includes AŻIH (210/248, 211/137, pp. 39–43, 211/194, 301/272, 301/996); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, ŻSS], 211/194; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH, AJDC], 210/248; RG-50.120*0181); VHF (# 31126); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.120*0181, testimony of Pinchas Ziontz (Zająć).
2. Ibid.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), ŻSS, 211/194, pp. 2, 5, 23, 25–30.
4. Ibid., p. 2.
5. Ibid., pp. 15–16, 21–23.
6. Ibid., p. 17; and 211/137, p. 41 (Edelist and Aichenstein to Alten, June 1, 1941).
7. USHMM, 211/137, p. 42 (Edelist to Alten, July 10, 1941).
8. USHMM, RG-50.120*018.
9. AŻIH, 301/272, testimony of Hela Arbeiter, p. 2.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/194, pp. 44–45, 49–50, 54.
11. Ibid., 211/194, p. 54; 211/137, p. 42.
12. USHMM, RG-50.120*0181.
13. VHF, # 31126, testimony of Yehezke'el Gluzman.
14. Compare AŻIH, 301/272, p. 1, and 301/996, testimony of Pinchas Zająć, pp. 4–5.
15. Ibid., 301/996, pp. 3–4.
16. USHMM, RG-50.120*0181; AŻIH, 301/272, pp. 3–5.
17. AŻIH, 301/272, pp. 5–6.
18. Polish participation noted in USHMM, RG-50.120*0181.
19. AŻIH, 301/272, p. 6; USHMM, RG-50.120*0181.

BEŁŻYCE

Pre-1939: Bełżyce, town, Lublin powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Bełżyce, Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Bełżyce, Lublin powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Bełżyce lies 26 kilometers (16 miles) by road southwest of Lublin. In August 1939, 2,100 Jews lived there.¹

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Bełżyce on September 16, 1939. Over the next two weeks, soldiers passing through Bełżyce on the way to Lublin broke into shops and homes to rob and beat Jews. On Rosh Hashanah (September 21), a German unit arrived to humiliate the Jews.² By January 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) had been established.

From late 1939, a growing number of Jewish deportees arrived in Bełżyce. Among the first were expellees from Puławy.³ In February 1940, 300 deportees arrived from Stettin.⁴ In February 1941, 360 deportees arrived from Kraków. A March

3 transport, of 101 Kraków expellees, brought the number of deportees in Bełżyce to 681.⁵ Emil Ziegenmeyer, the Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, also named Bełżyce, Chodel, and probably Bychawa the three localities in Kreis Lublin-Land in which to resettle a part of the 15,000 Jews expelled from Lublin, in order to establish on March 27 a small ghetto in the city. On March 10, the deportation's first day, members of Police Battalion 306 forcibly expelled some 500 Lublin Jews to Bełżyce. More Lublin Jews arrived over the following weeks.⁶ Even after many Lublin deportees illicitly returned home, the Bełżyce Jewish population in late May stood at 3,499, including 1,199 refugees and deportees, making it the second largest in Kreis Lublin-Land. Only Piaski Luterskie, which that same month had 4,803 Jews, was larger.⁷

After the Stettin deportees arrived, German authorities ordered the Jewish Council reconstituted. Physician Adolf Flater, a former Stettin synagogue leader, was named council chairman. Paul Bauchwitz, a distinguished Stettin World War I veteran, became vice chair. Some native Jews (the wealthiest pre-war merchants), including Berek Goldsztejn (Stein) and timber merchant Szmul Arbuz (Arbus), received seats on the 12-member council. Stettin deportees filled almost all the council's administrative positions. Erich Silbermann was postmaster. His wife Cläre taught at the Jewish school. Puławy expellee Gołda Teich recalled the Stettin deportees were overrepresented on the Jewish police force.⁸ Albert (Israel) Dombrower, another Stettin deportee, headed the Bełżyce Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) delegation.

On June 18, 1941, Stanisław Szubartowski, the Bełżyce wójt (head), proposed the expanded Jewish population be confined to a closed ghetto, near the market square. His superiors, citing material shortages, denied the request.⁹

Bełżyce nonetheless appeared on a list of ghettos Ziegenmeyer submitted to German authorities on September 19,

1941. However, Ziegenmeyer described Bełżyce as a "Jewish assembly site" (*Judensammelort*), rather than a ghetto. Ziegenmeyer likely named Bełżyce, Bychawa, and Chodel as *Sammelorte* when he permitted Jews expelled from Lublin to settle there, during a second expulsion wave in April. Because the list was compiled in response to a Reich Interior Ministry inquiry about available space in Distrikt Lublin for incoming Jews, the three localities and Piaski, which Ziegenmeyer claimed as the only ghetto in his Kreis, probably also were the places the Kreishauptmann envisioned resettling additional Jews. He cautioned that Poles would have to be expelled from the localities to accommodate any Jewish newcomers.

In Bełżyce, a formal Jewish quarter, or open ghetto, probably was not established. Gołda Teich describes her brother-in-law living in the pre-war Polish neighborhood. Jews were banned from walking on main streets and the market square. A 7:00 P.M. curfew was imposed. Some Jews were shot for ignoring the restrictions. The first were 11 men and 1 woman whom Gendarmes, probably from the post in Bychawa, found walking on streets from which Jews were banned, one day in February 1941.¹⁰ Shortly thereafter, the post was moved from Bychawa to Niedrzwica Duża. In November and December, Hans Frank ordered all Jews in the Generalgouvernement confined, on penalty of death, to the borders of the localities in which they resided.

In the spring of 1941, poor sanitary conditions, the result of overcrowding, led to a typhus outbreak, which was declared an epidemic by April 29. The sick filled the 21-bed hospital. Another 46 were quarantined. Though typhus cases initially ebbed, an epidemic again was declared in October. On November 12, Flater, also the head of the Jewish hospital, requested medical supplies from the JSS in Kraków. Flater contracted typhus but recovered. The epidemic raged until mid-December.¹¹ By January 1941, 60 Stettin expellees, some 13 percent of the 462 deportees sent to Distrikt Lublin on the third Stettin transport, had died. (A part of the transport's passengers had been resettled in Piaski and Głusk.)¹² In April 1942, the JSS distributed over 1,000 Passover meals. A charity drive collected used clothing for the needy.¹³

Twice weekly, Gendarmes from the Niedrzwica Duża post visited Bełżyce. Lublin expellee Róża Mitelman recalls their visits always cost some Jewish lives. She reports the Gendarmes used prohibitions on kosher slaughter as a "pretext" to arrest and kill Jews. Mirka Wiener remembered four members of the Zylbernadel family as among those murdered for the illegal (religious) slaughter and sale of meat.¹⁴

By 1942, many Jewish conscripts worked as agricultural labor on nearby estates, including in Jastków, or for local Poles. Others worked on local road construction projects.¹⁵

On May 11 or May 23 (the Shavuot holiday), 1942, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, assisted by the Jewish Police, rounded up between 430 and 580 men (under age 35) and marched them to the Majdanek concentration camp.¹⁶ The deportation likely was to accommodate some 1,200 Jews from Thuringia and Saxony (mainly from Dresden and Leipzig) who arrived on May 12.¹⁷ On May 19, Ziegenmeyer recommended the Bełżyce



Gera and Alfred Borchert celebrate their wedding in Bełżyce, October 29, 1940. The photograph was sent to Walter Jacobsberg in Shanghai. USHMM WS #25773, COURTESY OF WALTER JACOBSBERG

Jews, by then some 3,639 in number, as well as Jews from five other communities, for resettlement.

On Yom Kippur or Hoshana Raba (September 21 or October 2) 1942, the 1,300 Jews in Chodel were expelled to Bełżyce and from there to killing centers.¹⁸ The next day, the SS and a group of Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded Bełżyce. After killing the patients at the Jewish hospital, they ordered all Jews to report to the square. There, the Jewish Police identified several hundred young men and women for immediate deportation to Majdanek. Teich, among the deportees, reports that the women were the first large group of female Jews interned at the concentration camp.¹⁹

Between October 9 and 12, 1942, Jews from nearby localities were consolidated in Bełżyce. Among the deportees were all the Jews from the pre-war Bychawa, Jastków, Wojciechów, Piotrowice, Brzeziny (including 325 in Puchaczów), and Krzczonów gminy.²⁰ Dawid Białogród (Stanisław Nowakowski), a Warsaw refugee to the Piotrowice gmina, remembers the Jews, about 345 in number, were simply told to report to Bełżyce.²¹ The 59 Jews in Krzczonów probably received similar orders. In the Bychawa gmina, the SS first ordered consolidated, in Bychawa, a settlement of nearly 3,000 Jews, the Jewish residents of the pre-war Bychawa, Niemce, and Osmolice gminy. The Osmolice expellees included 107 former residents of Kraków's Ester Street asylum, deported to Distrikt Lublin in February 1941.²² The SS escorted the Jews to Bełżyce. Among the Jastków deportees were agricultural laborers from the Jastków estate, where a labor camp had been established in July 1942. After the evacuation, some 125 inmates remained.²³ The arrival in Bełżyce of more than 4,000 Jews brought the number who passed through the Sammelort to just above 10,000.

On October 13, 1942, the SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded Bełżyce. All Jews were ordered to the square. There, the SS divided men, women, and children from one another. Men fit for labor were loaded onto trucks destined for the Poniatowa forced labor camp or the labor camp established in the Piaski ghetto.²⁴ Some 300 people, including the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police, were retained for a labor camp in Bełżyce. Children, women, the elderly, and others deemed unfit for labor were ferried by truck to the Niedrzewica railway station. Chaim Grabel, among the deportees, reports that the Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination center. He recalls 130 men and 30 women were held back at Treblinka for labor. The remaining Jews were gassed.²⁵ Most historians believe the deportees (perhaps a part) were sent to the Sobibór extermination center.

A fenced labor camp was established in Bełżyce near the old synagogue for the 300 Jews retained for labor. Another 700 to 1,000 mainly Bełżyce Jews, who had evaded deportation, entered the camp. Among them was Grabel, who had escaped from Treblinka. He and several other survivors refer to the camp as a closed ghetto. Many inmates initially sorted Jewish property in Bychawa and probably in other localities from which Jews had been deported. However, the postwar Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Court Inquiries

about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation reports that the camp's raison d'être was for Jewish laborers to complete construction of the road from Bełżyce to Niedrzewica. An SS official from Lublin formally served as the camp commander. Day-to-day responsibility for the Jews fell to the private German firm overseeing the road construction project.²⁶

In early 1943, the SS sent a part of the Bełżyce inmates to the Trawniki forced labor camp, probably together with most of the agricultural laborers at Jastków. The Bełżyce deportees, all older Jews, included the Mossbachs.

In May, the Bełżyce ghetto was liquidated. SS-Oberscharführer Reinhold Feiks (Feixs), commander of the Budzyń forced labor camp from December 1942 until August 1943, oversaw the Aktion.²⁷ At 4:00 A.M., Feiks and a group of SS Ukrainian auxiliaries ordered the Jews assembled. Feiks held back for labor at Budzyń some 100 women and 200 to 300 men. He and the auxiliaries shot dead the remaining 500 to 600 inmates, including 100 men, 150 children, and 250 to 350 women.

Few Bełżyce Jews survived the deportations. At Trawniki, Cläre Mossbach (Silbermann) sent postcards to a Quaker friend and, after she failed to respond, to a mutual acquaintance to notify her of Erich's death.²⁸ Teich reports the Majdanek deportees almost all were gassed or had perished, many in a spring 1943 typhus outbreak. She and her sister are among the only known Bełżyce deportees transferred to Bliżyn in the summer of 1943. In November, during Aktion Erntefest, SS and police units executed the Jewish prisoners at Trawniki and Majdanek. In Budzyń, Feiks hanged Bauchwitz, supposedly for being so assimilated into German culture he defied the camp commander's anti-Jewish stereotypes. In May 1944, as the Red Army approached the Lublin region, the surviving Budzyń inmates were transferred to a number of camps, including Wieliczka, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Starachowice, Mielec, Ostrowiec, and Auschwitz. Many, including Szmul Arbus, perished during the evacuation of these camps.

Almost all of the approximately 100 Bełżyce Jews believed to have survived the German occupation were Budzyń deportees. Only Berek Rycer and a handful of others were sheltered by local Poles near Bełżyce.

SOURCES Secondary sources with coverage of the Bełżyce Jewish community during the war include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 98–101; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 58–61. Adam Kopciowski, "Dzieje Żydów bełżyckich," which first appeared in *Studia z dziejów Bełżyc* (Bełżyce, 2006), is widely available online.

The letters of deportees Cläre and Erich Silbermann are included in Else Behrend-Rosenfeld and Gertrud Luckner, eds., *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski: Briefe Deportierter aus dem Distrikt Lublin 1940–1943* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch

Verlag GmbH, 1970), pp. 116–130; detailed testimonies from survivors Manfred Heyman and Erich Mosbach are published, respectively, in Martin Gilbert, *The Boys: The Untold Story of 732 Young Concentration Camp Survivors* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), and Jacob Peiser, *Die Geschichte der Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Stettin*, 2nd, expanded ed. (Würzburg: Holzner Verlag, 1965); and a transcription of an English-language interview, conducted in Israel with survivor Yaffa Reis, a daughter of Szmul Arbus, appears on the Bełżyce home page at the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich. Contemporary Jewish press coverage includes “Bełżyce,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 29, 1942, no. 63, p. 6.

A discussion of the ghetto lists compiled in September 1941 by Kreishauptmänner in Distrikt Lublin appears in Dieter Pohl, *Von der “Judenpolitik” zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), pp. 92–94; Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), pp. 137, 222–223; and David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss. Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 176–180. A German-language transcription of Ziegenmeyer’s May 19, 1942, recommendation to deport the Bełżyce community is available in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: GKB-ZHWP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 52–53.

Archival documentation for the Bełżyce Jewish community includes AŻIH (e.g., 211 [134, pp. 10, 62; 138, pp. 42, 73–74; 139, p. 57; 199–200; 648, pp. 16, 18, 24; 649, pp. 10–11, 19–21; 650, pp. 14, 16, 29; 651, pp. 13–14, 16, 18, 20, 28; 652, pp. 6–12, 23–24; 653, pp. 10, 16, 47; 654, pp. 3, 9, 10, 23, 27]; 301 [50, 222, 228, 715, 716, 1169, 1443, 1449, 1812, 4398, 5003]); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 174/67/1-4); USHMM (e.g., Acc. 1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, 211]; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG] [reel 15, 49/57–58]); VHF (e.g., # 23633); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/199, p. 42.
2. AŻIH, 301/50, testimony of Hela Foerstman (Fersztman), pp. 1–2.
3. Ibid., 301/1812, testimony of Gołda Teich, p. 2.
4. Ibid., 301/50, pp. 3–4; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/199, p. 6, 211/652, pp. 6–12, 23–24.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/649, pp. 10–11, 19–21, 211/650, p. 14.
6. Ibid., 211/649, pp. 24–29; AŻIH, 301/1514, testimony of Róża Mitelman, p. 3.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/651, p. 16.
8. AŻIH, 301/1812, pp. 2–3.
9. APL, GDL 273, pp. 46–47.
10. AŻIH, 301/1812, pp. 2–4.
11. Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen*, pp. 123, 125, 128; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/199, p. 71.
12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/199, p. 6.
13. Ibid., 211/200, p. 18.
14. AŻIH, 301/1514, pp. 3–4, 301/1169, testimony of Mirka Wiener, p. 1.

15. Ibid., 301/1812, p. 3.
16. Compare ibid., 301/222, testimony of Noach Becher, p. 1, and 301/1812, pp. 3–4.
17. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/199, p. 29; Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen*, p. 129.
18. Compare AŻIH, 301/1812, pp. 4–5, and 301/222, p. 1.
19. Ibid., 301/1812, pp. 4–5.
20. Ibid., 301/4398, testimony of Berek Rycer, p. 1.
21. Ibid., 301/5003, testimony of Dawid Białogród, p. 1.
22. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/648, pp. 6–8, 10, 12, 32.
23. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/58.
24. AŻIH, 301/1514, p. 4.
25. Ibid., 301/228, testimony of Chaim Grabel, p. 1.
26. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 49/57.
27. AŻIH, 301/1514, pp. 5–6, 301/1169, p. 2, 301/1449, testimony of Sala Feigenman, pp. 2–3.
28. Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen*, p. 130.

BIAŁA PODLASKA

Pre-1939: Biała Podlaska (Yiddish: Biala Podlyashe), town, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Biała Podlaska, Kreis center, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Biała Podlaska, Lublin województwo, Poland

Biała Podlaska is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) north-northeast of Lublin. In 1939, approximately 7,500 Jews were registered in the town, most of them working as traders, craftsmen, or artisans.¹

German troops first occupied Biała Podlaska on September 13, 1939. Since under the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact the town was originally assigned to the Soviet Union, units of the Red Army took over from the Germans on September 26. However, the Soviet troops retreated in early October and Biała Podlaska returned to German control. About



Jewish survivors stand in an open mass grave among the exhumed bodies of the victims of a shooting Aktion in Biała Podlaska, April 25–May 2, 1946. The Yiddish sign reads, “Exhumation of the Jewish martyrs who were murdered by the beastial Hitlerite murderers/Biała Podlaska, April 25, 1946.”

USHMM WS #30857, COURTESY OF ARLENE CHASIN STROWMAN

600 Jews from the town fled with the Red Army into Soviet-occupied territory.²

Shortly after reoccupying the town, the German authorities, assisted by local Poles wearing armbands, started to seize Jews from the streets for forced labor. Hundreds of Jews were requisitioned every day to clear the rubble from buildings damaged at the time of the invasion and to clean public buildings and German barracks.³

On October 26, 1939, under the new civil administration, the town became part of Distrikt Lublin, serving as the center of Kreis Biała Podlaska. From November 29, 1939, until December 20, 1942, the Kreishauptmann was SA-Standartenführer Hubert Kühn, who previously had worked in the Reich Propaganda Ministry.⁴ Other German offices in the town included posts of the Criminal Police, the Gestapo, and the SD, all subordinated to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Lublin. These offices were subsequently consolidated into the so-called Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office). Serving as head of the Gendarmerie were individuals named Ruddeck, Christoph, König, and Becker. Between October 1940 and the end of 1943, part of Police Bataillon 307 was also based in Biała Podlaska.⁵

In November 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) under the leadership of Izaak Pirzyc was established. The Judenrat attempted to maintain pre-war communal activities, organizing, for example, a public kitchen for the needy and a Jewish hospital. In addition, the community maintained two public libraries.⁶

From the fall of 1939, the German authorities imposed a series of discriminatory measures against the Jews. In November 1939, Jews were forbidden to leave the town without permission; on December 1, all Jews were obliged to wear armbands bearing the Star of David. German officials robbed the Jews, confiscated their businesses, imposed taxes, and demanded large "contributions."⁷ The yizkor book notes that at this time the local Housing Office began requisitioning Jewish homes for non-Jews. Local collaborators, such as Mayor Antony Walewski and his deputies S. Szczypanski and Bajlicki, actively participated in the confiscation of Jewish apartments.⁸

At the end of 1939, about 2,000 Jews who had been deported by train from Suwałki and Serock arrived in Biała Podlaska. They were permitted to bring almost no luggage with them. Some were accommodated in Jewish apartments and others in the synagogues and prayer houses, which were very cold in winter. Their presence severely aggravated the poor living conditions in the town, and some departed shortly afterwards for Warsaw.⁹

In early 1940, about 500 Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) from the Polish army were marched on foot to Biała Podlaska from Lublin, where they were placed in a POW camp located in a barracks on the road towards Brześć Litewski. Subsequently, some of these Jewish POWs managed to sneak out of the camp and join the Jews in Biała Podlaska. On May 15, 1941, most of the Jewish POWs in the camp were transferred to the west to Końskowola.¹⁰

In March 1940, the Germans ordered the systematic registration of all Jews available for work.¹¹ The conscripted Jewish workers were sent mainly to factories and workshops in Biała Podlaska and its environs. In addition, some seven labor camps were established at construction sites. For example, some Jews worked expanding the airfield at the pre-war airplane manufacturing facility, where the Luftwaffe had established a military base. Jews were paid between 3 and 10 złoty per day for forced labor, depending on their skills.¹² In July 1940, all the Jewish men were assembled, and a number were selected and sent to forced labor camps near Bełżec. After a few months the Jewish Council was able to secure their return.¹³

In December 1940, about 1,000 Jewish deportees arrived in Biała Podlaska from Mława. The expectation of more deportees arriving in early 1941 caused the authorities to consider responses in terms of Jewish residential patterns. According to the records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS):

On January 4, 1941, the representatives of the Jewish community in Biała Podlaska were informed by the authorities about a project to resolve the problem of the resettlement, of what in the near future will be 4,000 people. . . . [The proposed German solution was to transfer most of the Jews, including natives, to camps.] The remainder of the Jews will be relocated to a Jewish quarter, to be comprised of just 48 properties.¹⁴

However, this ghettoization order was "postponed" because the expected deportees did not begin arriving in large numbers until March.¹⁵

On the arrival of more than 1,000 Jewish refugees from Kraków in March, the decision was made instead to disperse the Jews "voluntarily" to other places in a so-called Lublin solution. For example, 550 of the Kraków expellees were sent on March 22, 1941, to Piszczac, and older Jews from Biała Podlaska were resettled to nearby villages, including on March 27, 1941, some 350 native Jews were sent to Podedwórze-Opole. In addition, by April 1941 another 607 Kraków deportees had been sent from Biała Podlaska to Podedwórze-Opole.¹⁶ One survivor recalled: "At the beginning of 1941, the 'roundups' began. The unemployed and elderly were brought to Opole [i.e., Podedwórze-Opole]."¹⁷

In the late spring of 1941, as the Germans began to prepare for war against the Soviet Union, many Jews were requisitioned for the construction of fortifications. Other Jews had to work on road construction, building barracks, in sawmills, or installing water pipes. A large number of Jewish women worked on the Halasy estate, which had formerly belonged to Duke Potocki. Around this time the so-called Vineta barracks camp for Jewish workers was also established in Biała Podlaska.¹⁸

In June 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of measures to fight the spread of typhus, which severely affected the Jews. For example, all trade between "Aryans" and the Jewish population was banned, and non-Jews were

forbidden to enter Jewish houses. These regulations severely restricted the ability of Jews to obtain food, causing prices to increase further.¹⁹ The typhus epidemic became particularly serious in the winter of 1941–1942, resulting in a number of deaths among the Jewish population.²⁰

In the meantime, many of the “voluntary deportees” had been returning to Biała Podlaska, and more refugees were arriving. This situation and the typhus epidemic probably led Kreishauptmann Kühl to establish a more formal Jewish quarter or ghetto in Biała Podlaska. Some Jewish survivor accounts date the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1941.²¹

The account in the yizkor book uses the term *Jewish quarter* when describing events in 1941 but does not describe specifically what this meant. It notes, however, that in the fall of 1941, the office of the Judenrat was moved to Grabanowska Street with the aim of eliminating the last few Jews who were still living outside the designated Jewish area (“di angemerkte grenetsn fun yidishn revir”).²² Nonetheless, the JSS records indicate that it was not until April 1942 that Kreishauptmann Kühl ordered the JSS to move its community kitchen from Stadtplatz 19 into the ghetto area, which had been accomplished by June 1942.²³

Jewish survivors also deal with the issue somewhat ambiguously: some use the term *ghetto*, but others use phrases such as “Jewish zone,” “Jewish residential area,” or “Jewish quarter.” The ghetto was never fully enclosed. Survivors recall that initially the ghetto inmates were able to leave and return as they pleased to buy groceries from the local peasants in exchange for clothing or other goods.²⁴ However, by the end of 1941 any Jew caught outside the Jewish quarter could be shot on sight.

A unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was also established with authority inside the Jewish quarter in the fall of 1941; by the summer of 1942, its strength had increased to 50 men.

In the spring and summer of 1942, the SS and Gestapo conducted mass shootings of Jews in the forests surrounding Biała Podlaska.²⁵ On June 6, 1942, rumors spread that the Jews of Biała Podlaska were soon to be driven from the town. The office of the Kreishauptmann ordered that all Jews without work identity cards from the labor office had to report for “resettlement” on June 10. After receiving the order, many Jews disobeyed the instruction and fled into the forests. On June 10, about 700 Jews assembled at the synagogue courtyard at 5:00 A.M. More were gathered during the course of the day with the aid of the Jewish Police and were handed over to the Sonderdienst (ethnic German police) at the railway station. The next day, the victims were forced into freight cars and deported to the extermination camp at Sobibór. In total, about 3,000 Jews from Kreis Biala Podlaska were deported.²⁶

On the night of August 4, 1942, a group of 19 Jews was shot. The area of the Jewish quarter was reduced following this Aktion. On August 7, the Judenrat reported that the Jews had until 6:00 A.M. the following morning to move into the reduced ghetto area. According to the yizkor book, the Jewish quarter—which previously had been located between Gra-

banowska Street (with the synagogue courtyard alleys, apart from the houses with access to the [New] Market Square [Plac Wolności]), Janowska Street (just the right side), Prosta (from the court building onward), and Cmentarna Street—was now to be enclosed within these streets: Grabanowska (without the synagogue alleys), Prosta (only from Grabanowska to Przechodnia), Janowska (the side to Przechodnia), and Przechodnia (just the right side).²⁷

On August 12, a wave of kidnapping of Jewish men by German Gendarmes and Ukrainian auxiliaries began in Biała Podlaska. The Jewish Council complained to the German authorities, and as a result about 400 Jews, including most of the members of the Jewish Council, were deported to the Majdanek concentration camp. From there most of them were sent on to a labor camp at Gołęb for work on the railroad.²⁸

On September 22, the day after Yom Kippur, a German official from Biała Podlaska gave the Jews in the Konstantynów ghetto until September 25 to report to the ghetto in Biała Podlaska. On September 25, the Jews still in Konstantynów were marched, probably together with the remaining Jews in Janów Podlaski, to the Biała Podlaska ghetto.²⁹

On September 26, the Gestapo liquidated the Biała Podlaska ghetto. On the eve of the Aktion, the ghetto was surrounded and the victims were herded to the New Market Square. Except for some Jews sent as a forced labor detail to the Małaszewicze Duże airfield, all the Jews who were rounded up were deported to Międzyrzec Podlaski and settled in the ghetto there.³⁰ The registration cards for 1,200 Jews transferred from Biała Podlaska to the Międzyrzec ghetto on September 26, 1942, can be found in the records of the International Tracing Service.³¹ Jews who did not obey orders and were caught in hiding were shot immediately. The Gestapo also shot all the patients and the two nurses in the Jewish hospital. In total, the Gestapo assisted by the Gendarmerie and local collaborators shot about 100 Jews in the town, burying them in the Jewish cemetery. The searches for those in hiding went on for several days. On September 28, the mayor of Biała Podlaska prohibited the local population from entering the “former Jewish quarter” and threatened that looting would be punished with the death penalty. On the following day, another announcement by the mayor instructed local inhabitants to intercept Jews and hand them over to the Gendarmerie.³²

The Jews deported from Biała Podlaska were held in the Międzyrzec ghetto for several days. On October 6, additional Jews from labor camps in the vicinity were assembled at the Biała Podlaska railway station and sent from there to the Treblinka extermination center. The train made a stop in Międzyrzec on the way to pick up those Jews from Kreis Biala Podlaska, who had been concentrated earlier in the Międzyrzec ghetto.

Some of the Jewish labor camps in and around Biała Podlaska continued to function for several more months. One group of Jewish workers that had remained in Biała Podlaska was employed by the Gestapo to clear out property from the former ghetto area. They also had to demolish the synagogue and other Jewish religious buildings. The Wehrmacht camp

was liquidated in mid-December 1942; the remaining Jews were either sent away or shot.³³

On July 26, 1944, Soviet troops entered the town of Biała Podlaska. Of the roughly 7,000 Jews living in the town in the fall of 1939, only about 300 people survived the German occupation.

SOURCES Relevant publications include Moses Joseph Feygenboym, ed., *Podlaskie in Natsi-klēm: Notitsn fun burbn* (Buenos Aires: Aroysgegebn durkh a haverim-komitē, 1953); Moses Joseph Feygenboym, ed., *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab* (Tel Aviv: Kupat gemilut hesed al sh. Kehilat Bialab Podlaskab, 1961); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 84–89; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 65–68; and “Biała Podlaska Ghetto,” on the Aktion Reinhard Camps (ARC) Web site (www.deathcamps.org).

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Biała Podlaska during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 301/466, 4516; 211/201–209); BA-L (B 162/14275–76 [verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, November 30, 1973]); USHMM (RG-15.019M; RG-15.102M; Acc.1997. A.0124 [AŻIH, JSS], reels 13–14; RG-50.120*0218 and 0244); VHF (e.g., # 6071, 13655, 18103, 18564, 26004, 40845); and YVA (e.g., collections M-1/E and O-3).

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NOTES

1. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 84–89; VHF, # 18103, testimony of Golda Stiel, 1996; # 40845, testimony of Sala Bonder, 1998; and # 18564, testimony of Nina Kliger, 1996; verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, against Leo Bernhard Busch (BA-L, B 162/14275–76 [II 208 AR-Z 26/62]), p. 1.

2. Joseph Pell and Fred Rosenbaum, *Taking Risks: A Jewish Youth in the Soviet Partisans and His Unlikely Life in California* (Berkeley, CA: RDR Books: Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2004), pp. 34–48.

3. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 400; APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin (GDL) 691, pp. 1–4; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 84–89.

4. Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement. Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), pp. 388, 391–392. Following Kühl’s assassination by partisans on December 20, 1942, Friedrich Sauermann succeeded him from April 18, 1943, until the end of the occupation.

5. BA-L, B 162/14275–76, verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, November 30, 1973, p. 13.

6. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 84–89; Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, pp. 402–403.

7. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 401.

8. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 84–89; Feygenboym, *Sefer*

Bialab Podlaskab, p. 402; Feygenboym, *Podlaskie in Natsi-klēm*, pp. 198–199. According to the German court in Duisberg, by the end of 1939, the German authorities ordered the Jews of Biała Podlaska to move into a “Jewish residential area” or “Jewish quarter” in the northeastern section of town; see BA-L, B 162/14275–76, verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, p. 14. However, on the basis of other sources, it seems unlikely that a ghetto was established this early.

9. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 402.

10. David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), p. 47; Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 402.

11. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, pp. 404–406.

12. Ibid., p. 406; “Biała Podlaska Ghetto,” pp. 1–2.

13. Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 108; Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 405.

14. AŻIH, 211/202, p. 6.

15. Ibid., p. 61.

16. Ibid., pp. 74–75; 211/203, p. 7.

17. Ibid., 301/72, testimony of Fajgenbaum, p. 1.

18. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 407; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 97.

19. Bekanntmachung signed by the mayor of Biała Podlaska, June 6, 1941, reproduced in Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 408.

20. Feygenboym, *Podlaskie in Natsi-klēm*, p. 199.

21. See, for example, AŻIH, 301/4516, p. 1. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 97, also date the establishment of the ghetto in 1941.

22. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 409.

23. AŻIH, 211/205, p. 18; 211/208, p. 57; and 211/209, p. 10.

24. VHF, # 18564; # 6071, testimony of Harry Wolfe; and # 13655, testimony of Louis Hofman, 1996.

25. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 412.

26. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 84–89; BA-L, B 162/14275–76, verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, pp. 15–16; Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 272; Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, pp. 415–417.

27. BA-L, B 162/14275–76, verdict of LG-Duis, 14 Ks 1/72, p. 14. A plan of the Jewish quarter of Biała Podlaska under the Nazi regime can be found in Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, p. 418. A photograph of Grabanowska Street with a banner reading *Judenquartier* spread across the street can be found at www.holocaust.myoptimus.com (3.1 Getta Biała Podlaska).

28. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialab Podlaskab*, pp. 418–419; Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, *District Lublin*, pp. 66–67.

29. Oscar Pinkus, *The House of Ashes* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, 1964), p. 100.

30. “Biała Podlaska Ghetto,” p. 3; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 84–89.

31. USHMM, ITS collection, 3050, Gruppe P.P. Ordner 830.

32. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo białkopodlaskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP, 1984),

p. 18. This source dates the shootings on September 26–30, 1942, stating that they were in conjunction with the resettlement of the Jews to Międzyrzec. Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialah Podlaskah*, pp. 423–424.

33. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego*, p. 18: Feygenboym, *Sefer Bialah Podlaskah*, pp. 435–436. The Wehrmacht camp mentioned here is probably identical to the “Vineta” camp, which, according to Pili-chowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 97, was liquidated on December 17, 1942.

BIŁGORAJ

Pre-1939: Biłgoraj (Yiddish: Bilgoray), town, Biłgoraj powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Bilgoraj, Kreis center, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Biłgoraj, Biłgoraj powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Biłgoraj lies 88 kilometers (55 miles) south of Lublin. In 1931, its 8,173 residents included 4,596 Jews.

Biłgoraj suffered serious damage in early fighting; then the Wehrmacht arrived on September 17. Murder, abuse, and plunder soon followed. On September 27, German forces ceded Biłgoraj to advancing Red Army forces. When the Soviets pulled out again, some 1,500 Biłgoraj Jews joined the October 5–6 evacuation behind the Bug River. Hundreds more homeless Jews moved to less devastated German-occupied localities, such as Szczepieszyn, Tarnogród, and Zamość. The Germans reoccupied Biłgoraj on October 7.

That month, Werner Ansel was appointed the head of the German civil administration, or Kreishauptmann of Kreis Bilgoraj. In April 1942, Hans Augustin succeeded Ansel. Karl Adam replaced Augustin in November 1942.

In late 1939, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. Chaim Mordecai Hirszenhorn became its chairman. By April 1940, Jews over age 14 had to wear white armbands with blue Jewish stars.

Forced labor, mandatory for all adult Jews, initially centered on clearing war devastation. From late spring until November

1940, many men were imprisoned at labor camps, including in Turkowice and Bełżec and at a quarry near Kraków. At home, conscripts built barracks at the hospital and on war-devastated Jewish communal and private property. The latter formally was confiscated in the Kreis only in March 1941.¹ From the fall of 1940, many Jews worked on constructing one of the seven Luftwaffe air bases built in Kreise Zamosc, Hrubieszow, and Bilgoraj and the Luftwaffe pilot training school, built right outside of Biłgoraj.

Most survivors remember that a ghetto existed in Biłgoraj by the late summer of 1940. However, the evidence suggests Ansel did not formally establish ghettos in towns in his Kreis; rather, he ordered Jews gradually evicted from certain streets. The documentation of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization indicates the evictions were ongoing in late October 1940. By then, the 2,600 to 2,700 Jews remaining in Biłgoraj were concentrated on four streets: Kościuszko, Piłsudski, Lublin, and May Third.²

In anticipation of the arrival of Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe forces in advance of the invasion of the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941), Ansel ordered the Biłgoraj Jewish population reduced in size. On April 6, 800 Biłgoraj Jews were forcibly expelled to Goraj. By July, some 1,900 Jews were residing in Biłgoraj.³

In January 1941, a *Treuhänder* (trustee), responsible for 125 confiscated Jewish sieve-making workshops, ordered Hersz Zylberberg to recruit artisans and to restart production. By November 1941, 120 Jewish craftsmen (half the pre-war total) worked at 60 workshops. About 75 percent weekly earned at least 50 złoty, the amount required to keep Jews in Biłgoraj from falling into abject poverty.⁴ Several dozen more craftsmen, mainly tailors and shoemakers, maintained small workshops to provide services to German personnel. In August 1941, the German-administered Społem food wholesaler mobilized women, the elderly, and children to pick berries and other edible plants in a nearby forest. The laborers earned 6–7 złoty daily. Another 30 Jews were interned at a water drainage camp located in the Biszcza gmina.⁵

Prior to the German invasion of the Soviet Union, German authorities forbade the Jews from leaving Biłgoraj. Yisrael Plotz, caught returning from a nearby village with potatoes, was shot dead. The orders, lifted in Distrikt Lublin by mid-July 1941, were reimposed permanently in November, when Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement were confined on pain of death to the borders of the places in which they resided. Because most Biłgoraj Jews initially ignored the restrictions, the Germans retaliated by executing Hirszenhorn and a second Jewish Council member. Szymon Bin succeeded Hirszenhorn as council chair.⁶

As three or four Jewish families lived in a single room, overcrowding bred unsanitary conditions and gave way to typhus epidemics in June 1941 and again from October 1941 until March 1942. During the first epidemic, German medical authorities ordered the JSS to establish an isolation facility. Dr. Jakob Meisels, a March 1941 Viennese deportee to Modliborzyce, became its head.⁷ The JSS organized a



Four men view the bodies of Jews shot in a Jewish cemetery in the vicinity of Biłgoraj, 1942.

USHMM WS #50382, COURTESY OF IPN

community kitchen to feed the sick. When the kitchen reopened in November, it provided a daily meal to 200 (of 400) impoverished.

In September 1941, Ansel had to submit a list of ghettos to authorities in Lublin. He noted that the Jews in Biłgoraj were restricted to certain streets but reported that no ghettos or other type of *Judensammelorte* (gathering or concentration places for Jews) existed in Kreis Bilgoraj. In April 1942, Zylberberg, from February 15 the head of the Biłgoraj JSS, also noted on the charity organization's ghetto questionnaire that no ghetto, either open or closed, yet existed in Biłgoraj.⁸

The JSS documentation suggests Ansel stopped short of officially establishing ghettos so that he could deny resources to Jews.⁹ (In this regard, Ansel distinguished himself from other Kreishauptmänner in Distrikt Lublin.) An official ghetto required a certain level of non-Jewish and Jewish capital investment that Ansel refused to make. He may also have wanted to resist pressure from the Reich Interior Department to take more Jews. And he also probably wanted to retain the flexibility to control the Jewish population in the Kreis. After all, he, like many Kreishauptmänner in Distrikt Lublin, had created what effectively were *Sammelorte* by dumping unwanted Jews in less strategically important places, such as Goraj, more removed from railway lines and Luftwaffe air bases.

On May 3, 1942, the Gestapo demanded that Bin and Jewish Council member Hillel Janower compile a list of candidates for deportation. When the men refused, they were shot.¹⁰ Zylberberg probably at this time became the Jewish Council chair.

In early August 1942, German authorities instructed the Jewish Council to prepare a list of 1,000 Jews, ostensibly for deportation to a labor camp in Ukraine. Jewish Council members, craftsmen, and those employed by the Germans were exempted from deportation. On August 9, the 1,000 Jews on the list assembled at the square, some with additional family members. Some 1,500 Jewish expellees soon arrived from Tarnogród. The SS and German Schutzpolizei oversaw the expulsion, mainly on foot, of the Jews to the railway station in Zwierzyniec, some 21 kilometers (13 miles) away. Polish wagon drivers transported some deportees there. At the railway station, the Biłgoraj and Tarnogród deportees were forced onto rail cars and sent to be gassed at the extermination facility in Bełżec.¹¹

After the first deportation, a more formal remnant ghetto was established on Lublin and May Third Streets for the approximately 600 to 800 Jews held back for labor. It was an unfenced open ghetto. The Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto during allotted hours to purchase food.

On November 1, 1942, Zylberberg announced that the Gestapo had ordered 70 ghetto residents relocated to a smaller, closed ghetto. Most inmates of the new, or "small," ghetto were craftsmen, including about 30 tailors and their families.

On November 2, 1942, SS stationed in Biłgoraj, members of Reserve Police Battalion 67, and Lithuanian and Ukrainian SS auxiliaries ordered the Jews not residing in the closed

ghetto to assemble on the square. Many Jews were beaten and shot.¹² The Jews were imprisoned overnight, under armed guard, in wooden barracks. Late that night, other Reserve Police Battalion 67 members and SS auxiliaries brought about 500 to 1,000 Jews from Tarnogród. The Tarnogród expellees also were imprisoned in barracks. Released from their prisons the next morning (on November 3) and ordered to march to Zwierzyniec, the Jewish captives were joined along the road to another 500 to 1,000 Jewish expellees from Goraj, Krzeszów, and Frampol. (The numbers are ranges, because some Jews, particularly in Frampol, had evaded deportation and the police had shot dead hundreds of others during the expulsions.) The remaining Jews in Józefów were not among the deportees because they had been executed on September 21, 1942. At the Zwierzyniec railway station, the Jews were forced onto cattle wagons and sent to their deaths at Bełżec. After the expulsion, the ghetto inmates collected the bodies of the approximately 200 Jews killed during the deportation Aktion.

On January 7, 1943, the ghetto was liquidated. Women, children, and the elderly were shot. A group of 15 youths was sent to a labor camp, possibly located in Janowice.¹³

Only a handful of Jews survived the Biłgoraj ghetto. Ten-year-old Rywka Wajnberg sneaked away from the march on the evening of November 3, 1942. She was among six Biłgoraj Jews sheltered by Jan Mikulski.¹⁴ A few Biłgoraj Jews participated in partisan activity in the area; such cases were comparatively rare.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the World War II history of the Biłgoraj Jewish community include the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 93–97, with an English translation available at jewishgen.org.

Survivor accounts in English include Sara Avinun, *Rising from the Abyss* (Hod Hasharon, Israel: Astrolog Publishing House, 2005), originally published in Hebrew as *El rafsdot ba-tehom* ([Israel]: ha-Kibuts ha-me'uhad, 1998); and Joseph Ben-Or Lumer, ed., *Yochvet: The Story of a Family's Survival* (Los Angeles: Living Legacies, 2000). The two Biłgoraj yizkor books, Mosheh Teytlboym, ed., *Bilgoray yizker bukh* (Jerusalem, 1955), and Avraham Kronenberg, ed., *Hurbn Bilguray* (Tel Aviv, 1956), also contain survivor testimonies. The second book is available in a Polish translation, Avraham Kronenberg and Andrzej Trzciński, eds., *Zagłada Biłgoraja: Księga pamięci*, trans. Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska and Marzena Zawadowska (Gdańsk: Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2009).

Contemporary press coverage includes the relevant articles in *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 22, 1941, no. 7, and January 8, 1942, no. 4. The verdicts of two relevant West German trials concerning the office of the Security Police in Biłgoraj can be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 42 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), respectively, Lfd. Nr. 846 and Lfd. Nr. 847.

Additional documentation may be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/26, 211/219-224; 301/1437, 5501); BA-L (208 AR 38/62, 208 AR 1269/64); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 254/67/1-2, 284/8); USHMM (e.g.,

Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]); VHF (e.g., # 13212, 31306, 32727, 35717, 43935); and YVA (e.g., M-1/Q-1423/222, O-3/3078, O-16/4617).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/5501, testimony of Jerzy Markiewicz, p. 3; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/221, pp. 25–28.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/219, pp. 2, 6–9, 11.
3. Ibid., 211/221, p. 47; 211/220, pp. 52–54, 58.
4. Ibid., 211/220, p. 8; 211/221, p. 55.
5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, August 22, 1941, no. 75, p. 6.
6. Ibid., January 8, 1942, no. 4, p. 6; AŻIH, 301/5501, p. 2.
7. *Gazeta Żydowska*, January 8, 1942, p. 6.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/224, p. 21.
9. Ibid., 211/220, p. 65; 211/221, pp. 14, 37, 38.
10. Kronenberg, *Hurbn*, p. 253 (Yisrael Geist testimony).
11. Ibid., p. 257 (Geist).
12. AŻIH, 301/1437, testimony of Rywka Wajnberg.
13. Kronenberg, *Hurbn*, pp. 274–275 (Geist).
14. AŻIH, 301/1437; Kronenberg, *Hurbn*, pp. 309–314 (Ben-Zion Rosenboim testimony).

BYCHAWA

Pre-1939: Bychawa, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lublin województwo, Poland

Bychawa is located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) south of Lublin. In 1921, the Jewish population was 2,848 (65.9 percent of the total). Before the war, most Jews in Bychawa lived together in one neighborhood around the market square and in the northwestern part of town. In September 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were about 1,900 Jews residing in Bychawa.

About three weeks after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, news spread that the Germans were approaching, and some local Poles robbed Jewish property. The Germans occupied the town for a few days, but then they withdrew and soldiers of the Red Army entered Bychawa from the east. A few days later the Soviets withdrew behind the Bug River, together with some Jewish youths who chose to follow them. German forces then reentered the town.¹

In the first days following the German seizure of Bychawa, the Germans forcibly shaved off the beards of some Jews, beating and humiliating them in the streets. An ethnic German, named in the yizkor book as Kelbinski, arrived and organized a local police force. Soon some of the Jews living in Bychawa were ordered to leave town.² Those remaining were required to perform forced labor and wear armbands bearing the Star of David.

From the start of the occupation, the German authorities imposed a series of “contributions” and onerous taxes on the Jews. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, which had to provide large amounts of food and coffee for the local Ger-

man Gendarmerie. When the Jewish Council failed to meet the required quota, the German authorities shot seven Jews as a punishment. The Jewish Council also distributed available food to Jews using ration coupons. In the summer of 1940, a number of Jewish men were selected and sent to forced labor camps near Bełżec to dig antitank ditches on the German-Soviet border. Concerned about their welfare, the Jewish Council was able to send some food assistance, and a number were able to return after several months.³

Several waves of Jewish expellees and refugees arrived in Bychawa from the end of 1939. By March 1940, around 145 deportees from Łódź had arrived. Then between February 26 and March 5, 1941, another 246 Jews were deported from Kraków to Bychawa. It is likely also that a number of those Jews who voluntarily departed from Lublin after March 1941 made their way to Bychawa. By July 1941, this influx of poor Jewish refugees had increased the town’s Jewish population to 2,750.⁴ This large influx of refugees placed considerable strain on the community. Most were housed with Jewish families, and a public kitchen was organized to provide hot meals for the needy.

In March 1941, another large contribution was imposed on the Jews by the Gestapo. Several hostages were taken and held for two weeks until the amount was paid. Around this time, the Gendarmerie post in Bychawa was moved to Niedrzwica Duża. However, an auxiliary police unit, composed of ethnic Germans and Ukrainians (apparently a Sonderdienst unit), remained in Bychawa. Józefa Seliga, a young Polish woman who lived in Bychawa during the German occupation, recalled many years later that the Ukrainian guards would sometimes raid the “ghetto” and demand ransom. During these wild Aktionen, many Jews were killed.⁵

In the late spring of 1941, as the Germans began to prepare for war against the Soviet Union, many Jews were again conscripted for the construction of antitank ditches along the Bug River. Most returned safely after a few weeks. The Germans strictly forbade Jewish doctors to treat non-Jews, and vice versa. On one occasion the Jewish *felczer* (physician’s assistant) was arrested and sent to Lublin for treating a non-Jewish patient. He was never heard from again. In Bychawa a Jewish medical clinic was established with 16 beds that were always fully occupied. After a severe typhus epidemic broke out in July 1941, the Kreis office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) wrote to the central office in Kraków urgently requesting money and medicine, criticizing the failure of the head of the Judenrat to respond effectively. Despite receipt of some of the requested medicine, the typhus epidemic resulted in a number of Jewish deaths before it was brought under control.⁶

During the first two years of the occupation the ethnic German mayor in Bychawa, August Schwergott (Swierkott), organized orgies, for which the Jewish Council chairman (at that time Boruch Herszman) was forced to supply Jewish girls. One Jew, who came from Lublin, named Kleinfeld, denounced him to the German authorities, and for this he was severely beaten and humiliated. Nevertheless, Schwergott subsequently was replaced as mayor in 1941.⁷

Most Jewish survivor testimonies do not refer specifically to a ghetto in Bychawa, although according to one source, from early in the occupation new arrivals were probably required to reside together with the local Jews around the synagogue.⁸ Bychawa nonetheless appeared on a list of ghettos Emil Ziegenmeyer, Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, submitted to German authorities on September 19, 1941. However, Ziegenmeyer described Bychawa as a “Jewish assembly site” (*Judensammelort*), rather than a ghetto. Ziegenmeyer likely named Bychawa, Bełżyce, and Chodel as *Sammelorte* when he permitted Jews expelled from Lublin to settle there during a second expulsion wave in April 1941. As the list was compiled in response to a Reich Interior Ministry inquiry about available space in Distrikt Lublin for incoming Jews, the three localities and Piaski Luterskie, which Ziegenmeyer claimed as the only ghetto in his Kreis, probably also were the places the Kreishauptmann envisioned resettling additional Jews. He cautioned that Poles would have to be expelled from the localities to accommodate any Jewish newcomers.

Jewish craftsmen continued to work secretly for Polish peasants living in the surrounding villages, exchanging goods with the aid of smugglers. As the Bet Midrash was being used as an overflow care center, people continued to pray privately in their houses. Jews also prepared hiding places in case of a German Aktion.

In December 1941, the Jews were required to turn over to the Germans all their fur items and other warm clothing. The Germans made Shmuel Nissenboim, a member of the Judenrat, responsible for ensuring that this directive was fully implemented. When the Germans discovered some Jews who had not turned over their furs, they shot them dead together with Nissenboim.⁹ By this time, as throughout Distrikt Lublin, Jews were forbidden to leave the town limits on pain of death. After Chaim Rozenberg was shot dead when he went out in search of food, others thought twice about disobeying this order. Nonetheless, some Jews persisted in foraging for food, and those caught were not always shot. In the winter the Jews had to perform forced labor clearing snow from the roads. A group of skilled laborers was sent to the Majdanek concentration camp, reportedly in 1942. Most did not return.¹⁰

In May 1942, in response to an inquiry from the Subdivision for Population Affairs and Welfare in the office of the Governor of Distrikt Lublin, concerning the number of Jews “whose resettlement appears necessary,” Kreishauptmann Emil Ziegenmeyer proposed that the 2,733 Jews from Bychawa were among those that should be given priority.¹¹ Available sources, however, indicate that the deportation of the Jews from Bychawa did not occur until the fall of 1942.

At dawn on October 10, 1942, SS men and Ukrainian auxiliaries broke into Jewish homes and ordered the Jews to assemble in the town square. After all of the Jews had been counted, the SS men opened fire into the crowd, killing many of them. Afterwards the Jews returned to their homes. The Bychawa ghetto was liquidated on October 11, 1942, and its occupants were transferred to the ghetto in Bełżyce. Józefa Seliga reported having witnessed the murder of several Jews

during the deportation Aktion, including one Jew who was limping and was then shot and killed by the Germans.¹² Most of the Jews from Bychawa were then deported from Bełżyce to the Bełżec extermination camp shortly thereafter.¹³

Several hundred Jews were sent from Bełżyce to Bychawa a few days after the final Aktion in Bychawa. These Jews were imprisoned in a closed and secure labor camp in the Bet Midrash. Some Jews in hiding made contact with the Jews in the camp, but most were advised to stay in hiding if they could. The Jews in the labor camp were made to dismantle all the Jewish houses in the town.¹⁴ The labor camp in Bychawa was dissolved on May 8, 1943. At this time there were about 500 Jews there who were transferred to the labor camp in Budzyń. The surviving Jews from Budzyń were moved to Majdanek, and a few of them survived until the camp was liberated by the Red Army. Only about 50 of the Jews living in Bychawa at the start of World War II survived the German occupation.

SOURCES Published sources on the history of the Jews of Bychawa include the following: Ya’akov Adini, ed., *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotze’e Bychawa be-Yisrael, 1969); “Bychawa,” in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 91–93; Robert Kuwałek, “Żydzi Bychawscy w czasie II wojny światowej,” *Głos Ziemi Bychawskiej*, no. 10 (29) (1997); and Ryszard Szczygieł, ed., *Dzieje Bychawy* (Bychawa-Lublin: Bychawskie Towarzystwo Regionalne, 1994).

Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 122, refers to a ghetto in Bychawa but does not cite strong evidence in support of this. Bychawa is included here primarily on account of its status as a *Judensammelort*. Some available testimonies refer to the concentration of the Jews in Bychawa or even use the term *ghetto*, but this evidence remains debatable.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Bychawa during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AZIH (210/287; 211/273, 652; 301/1449, 3278, 4398); USHMM (RG-15.019M; Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; RG-50.488*0055); VHF (e.g., # 26182); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Moshe Brun, “Yorn fun peyn un umkum,” in Adini, *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron*, pp. 542–543.

2. Ibid., p. 543.

3. Moshe Orlid, “In di shrekliche teg,” p. 569; and Shmuel Rubin, “In di teg fun leydn un peyn,” p. 577—both in Adini, *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron*.

4. AŽIH, 210/287, pp. 3, 52; 211/273, p. 4; 211/649, pp. 2–18; and Brun, “Yorn fun peyn un umkum,” p. 542.

5. USHMM, RG-50.488*0055, oral testimony with Józefa Seliga from Bychawa.

6. Brun, “Yorn fun peyn un umkum,” pp. 544–546; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, reel 33 (AŽIH, 211/652, p. 17), JSS Lublin-Land to JSS Praesidium in Kraków, Betr.: Die Lage in Bychawa, July 31, 1941.

7. AŻIH, 301/3278, testimony of Ryfka Akierman; see also Adini, *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron*, pp. 536–537, 543–544.

8. Waleria Jakubiak, oral history testimony on the Web site of the Lublin theater group Ośrodek Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN in Lublin, available at www.tnn.pl/himow_fragment.php?idhr=2005.

9. Rebekah Akerman, “Bekheve meyn heym,” in Adini, *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron*, p. 537; Orlid, “In di shrekleche teg,” p. 569; and Brun, “Yorn fun peyn un umkum,” p. 548.

10. Brun, “Yorn fun peyn un umkum,” pp. 549–550; Orlid, “In di shrekleche teg,” p. 569–570; Rubin, “In di teg fun leydn un peyn,” p. 579.

11. Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), p. 399.

12. USHMM, RG-50.488*0055, oral testimony with Józefa Seliga from Bychawa.

13. AŻIH, 301/4398, testimony of Berek Rycer, p. 1; Pili-chowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 122.

14. Adini, *Bychawa: Sefer Zikkaron*, pp. 561, 588; AŻIH, 301/1449, testimony of Sala Feigenman, p. 2.

CHEŁM (LUBELSKI)

Pre-1939: Chełm (Yiddish: Chelem), town, Chełm powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Cholm, Kreis Cholm, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Chełm, Lublin województwo, Poland

Chełm lies 69 kilometers (43 miles) east-southeast of Lublin and 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) west of the Bug River. Its August 1939 population of 33,622 included 15,000 Jews.

Luftwaffe bombardment from September 8, 1939, claimed about 200 lives, including at least 30 Jews. However, on September 25, in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Red Army occupied Chełm. After a subsequent border demarcation, on September 28, designated the Bug River the German-Soviet frontier, hundreds of Jews joined the Red Army's October 7 evacuation. On October 9, 1939, the Germans occupied Chełm.

On October 25, 1939, the SS newly stationed in Chełm took some 20 wealthy Jews hostage, demanding 100,000 złoty for their release. Once freed, the “hostages” served as the intermediaries between the authorities and the Jewish community. The SS chose from among the hostages almost all 18 members of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), including its chair, industrialist Majer Frenkiel. Survivors disagree over whether the council was constituted in November or December.¹ The council organized a 150-person unit of Jewish Police.

On November 30, 1939, SS-Obersturmbannführer Hager, the newly appointed Stadtkommissar of Chełm, demanded the Jewish Council the next day assemble 1,000 to 2,000 adult male Jews on Plac Łuczkowski for an inspection by a visiting delegation, including Hans Frank, head of the Generalgouvernement, and SS-Gruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the east.² At

the square, members of the 5th Squadron of the 1st SS-Reiterstandarte surrounded the assembled Jews and ordered them to march to Hrubieszów. The SS shot half the men dead during the march there. (German reports note 440 of 1,018 Jews were shot for escape attempts.) In Hrubieszów, the police the next day added more than 1,000 men to the survivors' ranks, divided the column in half, and then compelled the men to cross the Soviet frontier near Bełżec and Sokal. Hundreds perished near Sokal when Soviet border guards initially refused the men passage.³ Wartime Jewish sources noted 400 Chełm expellees returned home. Another 1,600 died on the Chełm death march.⁴

On October 30, 1940, Miller, the newly appointed Stadtkommissar, effectively established a ghetto in south-central Chełm by banning Jewish residence in northern and central neighborhoods. Miller's order prohibited Jews from residing on 17 streets, including Narutowicz, Browarna, Nadrzeczna, Jordańska, Piromowicz, Ogrodowa, Strażacka, Reformacka, and Kopernik. Jews living on the named streets had until November 10 to report to what Miller called the ghetto. On November 27, Miller ordered Jews to evacuate Lublin Street.⁵ A March 1941 article in *Gazeta Żydowska* noted the Jewish Council had averted the authorities' plan to fence the ghetto.

Miller's orders left for the ghetto a small sliver of the old Jewish neighborhood, from which Christians were never evicted.⁶ In April 1941, 11,000 Jews, including 400 refugees, resided there. That month, Frenkiel reported: “The Jewish population in Chełm is confined residentially to an extremely narrow area in which space is limited. Several dozen reside in a single room.”⁷ By December, its Jewish population was 12,500.

The Germans permitted Jewish craftsmen, businessmen, and health professionals to establish small private enterprises in the ghetto. In June 1941, 1,400 craftsmen (100 fewer than before the war) held artisanal licenses. They established 300 workshops, mainly tailoring, shoemaking, and carpentry enterprises. Another 540 Jewish-owned enterprises, mostly stores, employed 1,736 Jewish workers.⁸ Non-Jews entered the ghetto to order services from the craftsmen. They used specially marked front doors on the business establishments. Jews entered through back doors.

Meager rations required most to depart the ghetto to find food and heating fuel. Death was the penalty for leaving the ghetto's boundaries without permission and for transactions in food officially denied Jews. Though severe beatings were more common, several Jews found outside the ghetto were executed. The victims included three women discovered purchasing milk on a market day.⁹

Questions nonetheless remain about whether a ghetto existed in Chełm, mainly because, in September 1941, Hans Augustin, the newly appointed Kreishauptmann of Cholm, maintained that no ghettos existed anywhere in his Kreis. The fact that Augustin was responding to a Reich Interior Ministry inquiry about available space for incoming Jewish deportees undoubtedly shaped his response. Augustin explained he was contemplating a ghetto for Chełm but had

postponed its establishment, as no room existed there (or elsewhere in the Kreis) for additional Jews.

On May 31, 1941, 1,800 Chełm Jews worked for several large German concerns on road and railway construction projects, in forestry labor, at a quarry, at a sawmill in Zawadówka village, and for the military. Another 250 were interned at labor camps, most at a camp established by the Inspectorate of Water Regulation (Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion) in Kamień. In June, 100 additional ghetto residents became the first inmates of another Water Inspectorate camp, established in Chełm to reclaim swampland.¹⁰

Another 1,200 Chełm Jews performed forced labor each day. Women worked as domestic servants for German civilian and military authorities. Men labored on public works projects, unloading coal at the railway station, removing *matzevot* (gravestones) from the cemetery to use as sidewalk paving stones, and extending the municipal water system. In the spring of 1942, when the authorities moved Stalag 319 from Okzowska Street, conscripts dismantled the old prisoner-of-war camp and buried hundreds, if not thousands, of dead Soviet soldiers in the nearby forest.¹¹ The Jewish Council permitted wealthier Jews to purchase exemptions from forced labor obligations. The council, in turn, offered volunteers (poorer Jews) 3 złoty for a day of substitute labor.

To establish a welfare system for the impoverished, the Jewish Council and the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch, also led by Frenkiel, used profits from a jam factory, and when the authorities closed it in mid-1940, they imposed an income tax on ghetto residents. By late 1941, three community kitchens, a medical clinic, and a 25-bed hospital for infectious diseases, established in November during a typhus epidemic, cared for 6,828 (of 8,500) impoverished prisoners. The child welfare programs established by JSS activist Chaja-Róża Oks, the wife of a physician murdered in the December 1939 expulsion, to care for the neediest of the ghetto's 5,000 children were considered the most developed of their kind in Distrikt Lublin.¹² By May 1941, they included a public school for 700 impoverished pupils (aged 7 to 12), free medical care, free meals daily for another 600 children, and a summer camp to provide special nutritional care to 110 of the most impoverished. Served two meals daily, the campers gained 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) on average. A Drop-of-Milk (Kropla mleka) initiative provided pre- and postnatal care (usually a cod-liver oil milk substitute) to 450 infants and their mothers. Volunteers organized games at a playground to provide 500 impoverished children a daily opportunity for play.

German rationing policies undermined the welfare programs, threatened Jews' physical existence, and—when beneficent—increasingly accelerated authorities' direct interference in Jews' private lives. In March 1942, the Kreishauptmann's office, for example, extended to Jews (for 12 groszy) a bar of soap and enough detergent to launder one outfit. It was the first time Jews in Chełm had received these items. However, the authorities tied their distribution to a Kreis-wide "Cleanliness Week," advertised under the slogan, "We are destroying lice!" (*Tępiemy wszy*). From March 22 to 27, 1942,

Jewish authorities and German officials supervised Jews throughout the Kreis as they cleaned their persons, belongings, and homes and removed items from attics, basements, and storage facilities.¹³ Abram Cytron noted that this last order made it more difficult to hide during the expulsions.¹⁴

In April 1942, during the opening phase of Operation Reinhard in Kreis Cholm, the SS, according to survivor Gitla Libhaber, began marching through Chełm Jewish expellees from nearby communities as distant in the north as Sawin (home in January to 841 Jews) and in the south as Wojsławice. The April 20 Wojsławice deportation included 209 (of 1,450) Jews. The expellees were all over 60 years old.¹⁵ On April 10 or 11, a group of the expellees were sent to their deaths at the Bełżec extermination camp. Because later deportees, sent to Włodawa, never arrived there, they are presumed to have perished at the new Sobibór extermination facility. In late April, the SS ordered the Chełm Jewish Council to prepare a list of 3,000 elderly for immediate "resettlement."¹⁶

On May 11 and 12, 1942, 2,000 Slovak Jews from Humenné and Žilina arrived in Chełm. The SS confiscated the deportees' baggage, making them dependent on the Jewish Council. On May 18, the SS marched through Chełm nonworking Jews from Siedliszcze (nad Bugiem), a Jewish community, which in January had numbered 2,026. Because the 1,000 to 3,000 Slovak deportees sent to Siedliszcze in April for labor at the Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion (Water Regulation Authority) camp almost all were camp inmates, they formed an insignificant part of the expellees destined for Sobibór.¹⁷

The retention of labor camp inmates and working Jews motivated Frenkiel to attempt to blunt the forthcoming Chełm deportation's scope. He offered to recruit immediately for Holzheimer, the Wasserwirtschaftsinspekteur for Kreis Cholm, 7,000 conscripts (men and women) from the ghetto for the organization's eight labor camps.¹⁸ When the Cholm Landkommissar offered to shield from deportation volunteers for agricultural labor on his estate in Ruda-Opalin, it became a refuge for the native elderly.¹⁹ The Jewish Council protected others considered vulnerable, including 600 orphans it began placing in early May with foster families and probably also sending to Ruda.²⁰

Frenkiel's protection of native Jews and the fact many Slovak expellees were older sealed their fate. On May 22–23, 1942, the Shavuot holiday eve, they were sent by rail to Sobibór together with 1,000 elderly Chełm Jews during the first deportation. The deportation was much larger, as it included small-scale expulsions from nearby eastern communities. In Dubienka, for example, a part of the town's 2,700 Jews were expelled on May 22.²¹ Gitlabiner recalls Dubienka Jews among the expellees who passed through Chełm in the spring of 1942.

In Chełm, a raid of work sites in June or July enveloped about 1,000 underage and elderly public works conscripts and Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion camp inmates deemed unfit for labor. Holzheimer may have intervened to reduce to 300 the number sent to Sobibór.²² In a larger Aktion, in mid-August, remembered as the second or children's deportation, the SS sent to Sobibór 3,000 to 4,000 Jews, including most of the

ghetto's children, the unemployed with many children, and the remaining elderly.

The ghetto area was reduced in size to establish what German authorities had planned in June 1942 as a "compact quarter."²³ It was composed of Szkolna, Uściługska, Pocztowa, Siedlce, and Katowska Streets. Jews living outside its borders were required to report to the ghetto in late August. The ghetto was unfenced. The Jewish and Polish (Blue) Police patrolled its internal and external borders. Some 5,000 Jews resided there.

On October 25, 1942, SS from Lublin and Ukrainian auxiliaries ordered all ghetto residents assembled on the Siedlce Street square. In a two-day Aktion, 2,000 to 3,000 Jews, officially the unemployed, were marched, via Włodawa, to Sobibór. Thousands evaded deportation by hiding in ghetto bunkers or with local Christians.

On November 5–9, 1942, the ghetto was liquidated. Late on November 5, the SS began transferring 500 to 1,000 laborers, craftsmen, Jewish Council members, and the craftsmen's and councilmen's family members outside the ghetto to labor camps and to vacant public buildings and barracks. The next morning, after surrounding the ghetto, SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries ordered its inhabitants assembled on the square. The deportees were marched to the railway station. The first to arrive went immediately to Sobibór. Others, held in a fenced holding facility established at the Kolejowa Street construction camp, went to Sobibór over the next several days.²⁴ While searching for almost a thousand people hidden in bunkers, the SS set fire to many ghetto buildings. Some uncovered during the searches were marched to the transit camp and sent to Sobibór. Others were killed on the spot. By November 13, the SS announced all Jews could enter a camp established on Katowska Street (at the pre-war Staszic public school) for 370 laborers held back from expulsion. Several hundred fugitives who reported there were executed.²⁵

Jews retained for labor resided mainly at the Staszic School (laborers' camp) or the railway station barracks (craftsmen's camp). When typhus engulfed both camps a few weeks after the ghetto liquidation, the SS executed in the Borek woods hundreds of sick inmates. The Jewish Council members, initially held at the Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion camp, also were shot. In January 1943, the prisoners at the school, including the Jewish Police, were sent to their deaths at Sobibór. In the spring, after the SS transferred to Sobibór for labor the craftsmen in construction trades, 28 Jews, mainly tailors, shoemakers, and their families, were left in Chełm. On March 31, the Gestapo executed 20 of the Jews. In October 1943, the Chełm craftsmen at Sobibór joined the prisoners' revolt.²⁶ Officially, only 8 Jews, all craftsmen, remained alive, incarcerated at the Chełm prison.

A number of fugitives had escaped from Chełm or jumped from the deportation trains. Some with false identity papers made their way to other localities to attempt to survive as Poles.²⁷ A few were sheltered by local Christians. Many more entered the collection ghetto in Rejowiec.²⁸ In addition to the 8 craftsmen at the Chełm prison and at least 3 participants of

the Sobibór revolt, another approximately 50 ghetto residents survived the war.

SOURCES Secondary sources providing coverage of the life and death of the Chełm Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 221–228; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 82–87.

English-language memoirs include Felicia B. Hyatt, *Close Calls: Memoirs of a Survivor* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1991); Ana Sherman, with I. Lewis Schneider, *Ana's Story. A Holocaust Memoir* (Potomac, MD, 2000); and Kalmen Wewryk, with Howard Roiter, *To Sobibor and Back: An Eyewitness Account* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, 1999).

Two yizkor books, *Yizker-bukh Khelm* (Johannesburg: Khelmer Landsmanshaft, 1954) and *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Helm* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Helm be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1980 or 1981), contain survivor testimonies, with the first including originals and translations of many of the Polish-language testimonies from the AŻIH 301 collection. Gitla Libhaber's testimony is available in the English translation of the yizkor book available at jewishgen.org. The chapter devoted to Chełm in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 69–88, includes excerpts of memoirs from the AŻIH 302 collection, with the Yiddish-language testimony of Joel Ponczak (Ponczek) appearing there in Polish translation.

Letters sent from Chełm to Warsaw, found in the Ringelblum Archives, appear in their original language, and when appropriate in Polish translation, in *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, vol. 1, Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Listy o zagładzie* (Warsaw: ŻIH and PWN, 1997), pp. 87–89, 160–163 (both Ring I/568). Scanned images of some Jewish Council proclamations are available electronically at the Digital Library of Chełm. Contemporary press coverage includes "Chełm," *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 11, 1941, no. 20, p. 29. *Chełmer Narichten*, a bilingual German-Polish newspaper, also is an important source.

David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 176–180, summarizes the ghetto lists submitted in September 1941 by the Kreishauptmänner of Distrikt Lublin.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Chełm Jewish community during the war includes APL (e.g., 43/0 [830, 498 (273)]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/293, 211/284–294, 301 [666, 2072, 2192, 3039, 3058, 3067, 3322, 3385, 3622, 4384, 4392, 4979, 5368, 5373, 5408], 302 [104, 119, 306, 308], Ring [I/568, (707) I/817, (708) I/818, (709) I/1006, (1144) I/3]); BA-MA (RS 4/540, p. 51); FVT (HVT [416, 419, 570, 1301, 1304, 2234]); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 3/71/Ch/1-3, 98/67/1-5, 378/67/1-2, 396/67/1-2, SOL [22, 61, 65]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211], Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210], RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring], RG-50.042*0023, RG-50.030*0069, RG-50.030*0184); VHF (e.g., # 446, 8994, 11205, 15999, 16311, 18144, 21900,

27965, 28827, 34801, 43591, 46050, 47692); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E [494, 1463, 1527], O-3 [409, 1169, 4138]).

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NOTES

1. Compare AŻIH, 302/104, testimony of Joel Ponczak, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 73, and AŻIH, 301/4384, testimony of Abram Cytryn, pp. 1–3.
2. AŻIH, 301/3039, testimony of Brucha Sznajder, p. 1.
3. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), (709) I/1006, pp. 1–3; AŻIH, 301/2072, testimony of Szlojme Klajman, pp. 1–3, 301/5441, testimony of Hersz Furleiter, p. 2.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/286, p. 30.
5. Ibid., RG-15.079M, (707) I/817, pp. 1, 4.
6. AŻIH, 302/306, testimony of Lipman Sznajder, p. 7; 302/119, testimony of Aurelia Jaworska, pp. 24, 31, 33.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/287, p. 24.
8. Ibid., 211/288, pp. 57–58.
9. AŻIH, 302/306, p. 11, 302/119, p. 26.
10. Ibid., 301/3039, p. 1; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/288, pp. 65–66.
11. AŻIH, 302/119, pp. 2, 3, 6, 38–39; 302/306, pp. 10, 14–15.
12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/288, p. 50; 211/289, pp. 37–38.
13. Ibid., 211/293, pp. 30–31, 34; 211/294, p. 24.
14. AŻIH, 301/4384, p. 6.
15. Ibid., 301/2192, testimony of Gitla Libhaber, p. 5; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1124, pp. 8, 23.
16. AŻIH, 301/4384, p. 2.
17. Ibid., 301/458, testimony of Zeldia Metz, p. 1.
18. AŻIH, 302/104, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 74.
19. AŻIH, 302/119, pp. 14, 41.
20. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/294, p. 35.
21. Ibid., RG-15.079M, I/568, pp. 1–2.
22. Compare AŻIH, 302/306, pp. 14–20, 23, and 302/104, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 75, and AŻIH, 301/2192, p. 5.
23. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/294, p. 45.
24. AŻIH, 302/306, p. 40.
25. Ibid., 301/4384, p. 7; 301/5407, testimony of Stanisław Niedźwiński, p. 1.
26. Ibid., 301/666, testimony of Mosze Kornfeld, pp. 4–16; 301/5368, testimony of Mottel Samet, p. 1.
27. Ibid., 301/3067, testimony of Marek Stock, p. 1; 301/3385, testimony of Henryk Bergman, pp. 2–3; 302/306, pp. 33–122.
28. Ibid., 301/3622, testimony of Chana Falkiewicz, pp. 1–2.

CHODEL

Pre-1939: Chodel, village, Lublin powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Opole Lubelskie powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Chodel lies 39 kilometers (24 miles) by road southwest of Lublin. In August 1939, 776 Jews were residing there.

A Wehrmacht unit had occupied Chodel by September 16, 1939. By January 1940, a 13-person Jewish Council (Judenrat) had been established. Chil Grinberg, its first chair, was replaced in mid-August by Icek-Mendel Erlich.¹

In the spring of 1940, 102 Chodel Jews were interned at local labor camps established for agricultural and carpentry work. Another 100 were inmates of a camp in Józefów (nad Wisłą). In mid-August, the SS conscripted 50 Jews for fortification labor at Bełżec. In the fall, 13 Jews were ordered to a winter camp in Sawin.² By then, Chodel had filled with Jewish refugees, including deportees from Łódź, expellees from Puławy, and voluntary refugees from Warsaw.³ Judith Tenia Reuven (née Teresa Wasserman), the daughter of Puławy expellees, recalls that the forced labor drafts and increasing incidents of arbitrary violence by German officials required her parents to flee Chodel (for Gniewosów) in late 1940.

On December 3, 1940, Emil Ziegenmeyer, Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, recognized a Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) delegation for Chodel. Szmul Wolman, head of the JSS in Kreis Lublin-Land, speculated that the handwritten directive, issued while Ziegenmeyer was visiting Kraków, indicated he had agreed to accept additional deportees from that city.⁴ Physician Otto Bornstein initially headed the Chodel JSS. A refugee from Bielsko and a Jewish Council member, Bornstein also directed Chodel's Jewish medical clinic and 10-bed quarantine facility.⁵ He oversaw the resettlement of 203 Kraków expellees (deported on March 6 and 7, 1941).⁶

Ziegenmeyer also designated Chodel, along with Bełżyce (and probably Bychawa) as the localities in Kreis Lublin-Land to receive some of the 15,000 Jews expelled from Lublin to establish a small ghetto on March 27, 1941, in the city's old Jewish neighborhood. (Most Lublin expellees were deported to more distant localities in Kreis Cholm and Kreis Radzyn.) On May 1, 1941, 1,738 Jews, including 947 refugees, were residing in Chodel. Among the refugees were at least 300 Lublin deportees.⁷

On September 19, 1941, Ziegenmeyer included Chodel on a list of ghettos in his Kreis but designated it, Bychawa, and Bełżyce as *Judensammelorte* (Jewish assembly places). Ziegenmeyer may have established the *Sammelorte* in response to a January 17, 1941, recommendation by Ernst Zörner, governor of Distrikt Lublin, for Kreishauptmänner to designate a few communities in which to concentrate Jews (to curtail illicit Jewish trade and thereby better control smuggling). Because Ziegenmeyer did not use the term for other Jewish communities, including Biskupice, Piotrowice, and Trawniki, which had more than doubled in size from the resettlement of Kraków deportees, he may have used “Sammelorte” to identify the places in which Jews expelled from Lublin could reside. Ziegenmeyer also may have used the term to indicate localities where he was willing to resettle additional Jews. (The lists in part were a response to a Reich Interior Ministry inquiry about available space for incoming Jews.) Ziegenmeyer suggested Poles would need to be evacuated from Chodel, Bełżyce, Bychawa, and Piaski to make room for new Jewish arrivals.

Historians Bogdan Musiał and David Silberklang take Ziegenmeyer at his word and maintain no formal ghetto existed in Chodel, Bychawa, or Bełżyce. The author of the relevant entry in *Pinkas ha-kehillot* does not mention Ziegenmeyer's list but believes the arrival of hundreds of deportees resulted in the establishment of an open ghetto in Chodel's pre-war Jewish neighborhood. He reports the resulting "congestion" increased mortality rates, leaving just 1,398 Jews in Chodel by May 1942.

Unfortunately, the documentation available says little about restrictions on Jews residing in Chodel. In April 1941, some 550 new arrivals temporarily received free lodging in private homes and at the synagogue. According to Bornstein, the wójt, or head, of the Chodel administration had located housing for other deportees. In November, the JSS winterized the mass housing (presumably the synagogue) for homeless deportees.⁸

The most immediate crisis the Chodel Jews faced was food shortages. Because of local supply problems, deliveries of rye flour were nonexistent at times, as in February 1941, and almost 40 percent short from May. As a result, nonworking Jews received daily 40 to 50 grams (1.4 to 1.8 ounces) of bread, instead of the allotted 100 grams (3.5 ounces). A JSS community kitchen daily provided 300 breakfasts and lunches to 600 deportees. However, the arrival of Wehrmacht troops in Distrikt Lublin, in anticipation of Germany's invasion of the USSR in June, made kasha and potatoes exorbitantly expensive and often impossible to obtain. The price spikes and shortages forced the JSS to close the kitchen on June 20.⁹ "For the past two weeks," Bornstein explained, "the deportees have been sentenced to starvation and to begging from house-to-house, most often times unsuccessfully."¹⁰

In early July 1941, when the kitchen reopened, an absence of Jewish Council funding and a typhus outbreak required the JSS to stop providing meals to the expellees and to serve instead 80 typhus patients and children, as well as the elderly recovering from the disease. That month, one Jew perished from typhus. Another 288 expellees voluntarily departed Chodel, bringing its Jewish population to 1,450.¹¹

Claims that the JSS and Jewish Council members were responding inadequately to the deportees' plight led to several leadership changes. Shortly after June 25, 1941, Dawid Akerman replaced Bornstein as JSS head. Erlich, the Jewish Council chair, was named to the JSS delegation.¹² Josef Siegfried, the deputy director of the JSS in Distrikt Lublin and a Lublin Jewish Council member, reported that during an August 25 visit to Chodel, the wójt had met with him personally before reorganizing the Jewish Council to recommend candidates more amenable to the needs of the refugees and the locally impoverished.

In September 1941, when the rye flour shortages were overcome, the Jews received full bread rations for the first time.¹³ From November, Ziegenmeyer permitted the JSS to purchase and sell to Jews a limited supply of potatoes and kasha from cheaper government stores. The JSS could retain 80 groszy from each cubic meter of potatoes it sold. In the mean-

time, Hans Frank had permitted JSS organizations throughout the Generalgouvernement to keep 50 groszy from each locally sold bread-ration card. The Chodel JSS used the revenue to expand its kitchen to feed 200 to 250 impoverished Jews. On November 1, the Jewish population stood at 1,446.¹⁴ It is unknown whether the decline was due to the typhus epidemic or to individuals responding to rumors that Jews throughout Distrikt Lublin (and in the Generalgouvernement as a whole) soon would be forbidden to leave the borders of the places where they resided.

In late 1941, some 32 craftsmen worked as tailors, shoemakers, and masons. Another 148 Jews worked in forestry labor. On June 23, 1942, the JSS reported 450 (of 1,300) men and women had been employed from March as agricultural laborers at several nearby estates, including in Ratoszyn and in a number of villages.¹⁵

On May 19, 1942, Ziegenmeyer recommended the Chodel Jewish community, then numbering 1,398, and five other communities for immediate resettlement. Shortly thereafter, some 100 young men were transferred to the Opole ghetto and probably sent from there to the Poniatowa labor camp. On June 28, deportees from Saxony (mainly Leipzig) and Thuringia, expelled in May to Bełżyce, arrived in Chodel.¹⁶ In mid-July, German authorities renewed labor camp conscription.¹⁷

On either Yom Kippur or Hoshana Raba (September 21 or October 2, 1942), the Jews were expelled from Chodel. Like almost all the Jews in the southern part of Kreis Lublin-Land, save those living near Piaski, the deportees probably first were consolidated in Bełżyce. From there, they were transported to the railway station in Niedzwica Duża and forced onto trains destined for either the Sobibór or Bełżec extermination center. Gołda Teich recalls many Chodel Jews hid in Bełżyce but indicates almost all were swept up in an Aktion the next morning, during which a large group of Jews was sent to the Majdanek concentration camp.¹⁸ Some Jews likely were held back from the deportation for labor in Chodel. The Chodel gmina Web site reports Jews remained in Chodel until 1943, when they were deported to the Poniatowa forced labor camp.

A handful of Chodel Jews survived the German occupation.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the World War II history of the Chodel Jewish community include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 220–221; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 87–88. Survivor Judith Tenia Reuven touches briefly on Jewish life in Chodel during the occupation's first year in a testimony available in an English-language transcript on the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by the Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich. Contemporary press documentation appears in "Chodel pow[ia]t lubelski," *Gazeta Żydowska*, March 27, 1942, no. 37, p. 5.

A discussion of the ghetto lists compiled in September 1941 by Kreishauptmänner in Distrikt Lublin appears in

Dieter Pohl, *Von der "Judenpolitik" zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), pp. 92–94; Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), pp. 137, 222–223; and David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss. Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 176–180. A German-language transcription of Ziegenmeyer's May 19, 1942, recommendation to deport the Chodel community is available in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHWP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 52–53.

Two deportation dates appear in the entry because Bełżyce survivors Gołda Teich and Noach Becer, in AŻIH, 301/1812 and 222, respectively, recall different dates for the second Bełżyce Aktion, or the second Majdanek deportation, with Teich specifically remembering that the deportation occurred the day after the Chodel Jews were sent to their deaths. Ewa Kurek, *Poza granicą solidarności: Stosunki polsko-żydowskie 1939–1945* (Kielce: Wyższa Szkoła Umiejętności, 2006), pp. 222–223, 276n.387, offers some coverage of Jewish survivors from Chodel.

Archival documentation includes APL (e.g., 43/0/[830], 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/298–299; 211 [138, pp. 48, 76; 647, pp. 15–16, 22–23; 648, pp. 5, 16–18, 24, 30, 39; 649, pp. 34–39; 650, pp. 14, 17; 651, pp. 4, 7, 16, 18, 21–24, 28, 33, 36; 652, pp. 16, 18–19, 25; 653, pp. 6, 10, 16, 18; 654]; 302 [1514, 1812]); IPN; IPN-Lu (e.g., 174/67/1–4); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); VHF (e.g., # 37348); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/298, pp. 3, 21–22, 25ff.
2. Ibid., pp. 31, 36, 44; 210/299, p. 3.
3. Ibid., 210/299, pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/647, pp. 15–16.
5. Ibid., pp. 22–23.
6. Ibid., 211/649, pp. 34–39; 211/650, p. 14.
7. Ibid., 211/305, p. 9; 211/651, p. 18.
8. Ibid., 211/305, pp. 8, 11, 67.
9. Ibid., pp. 15, 40a, 41, 43.
10. Ibid., p. 43.
11. Ibid., pp. 25, 44–46.
12. Ibid., 211/651, p. 33; 211/652, p. 19.
13. Ibid., 211/305, p. 51.
14. Ibid., pp. 61, 65; 211/306, p. 23.
15. Ibid., 211/305, p. 61; 211/306, p. 18.
16. Ibid., 211/306, p. 27.
17. Ibid., p. 21.
18. AŻIH, 301/1812, testimony of Gołda Teich, p. 4.

CIESZANÓW

Pre-1939: Cieszanów, village, Lubaczów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Cieszanów, Kreis Zamosc, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Cieszanów, town, Lubaczów powiat, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Cieszanów lies 142 kilometers (88 miles) south-southeast of Lublin. Nearly 1,000 Jews resided there on the eve of World War II.

German forces occupied Cieszanów on September 12, 1939, but soon ceded it to Soviet occupation. After Soviet-German negotiations, concluded on September 28, returned Cieszanów to Germany, the local Red Army commander informed the Cieszanów Jews of the impending frontier shift and recommended they join the Soviet military evacuation.¹ The Jews almost all heeded his advice, with at least some relocating to Lwów.

Upon reoccupying Cieszanów in early October 1939, the Germans probably forced the remaining Jews across the border, located just outside of Cieszanów, expelling them south near Lubaczów into Soviet-occupied territory. In March 1942, Mieczysław (Mendel) Garfinkel, the head of the Jewish Council in Zamość and of the committee that oversaw the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in the Kreis, reported that because of "the complete absence of Jews," neither a Jewish Council nor a JSS office had ever been created for Cieszanów.²

When, in May 1940, as many as 3,800 Jews, most from Distrikt Radom, were interned at a forced labor camp established in Cieszanów in May 1940, they, too, discovered no native Jews resided there.³ Survivor Hymie Kirsch, from Wolbórz, recalls he and many other prisoners were ordered to live in the Jews' abandoned, vandalized homes.⁴ The inmates, officially beginning in August, were part of a subcamp of the Bełżec forced labor camp and built border fortifications and a fence along the frontier. They also may have expanded a 28.6-kilometer (17.8-mile) stretch of the main road, which at Żuków connected Cieszanów, via Narol, to Bełżec. (Conscripts on the last project, completed by early spring, ground up *matzevot* (gravestones) from the Cieszanów and Narol Jewish cemeteries to use as paving material.) In mid-October, the SS closed the camp. Some inmates were transferred to Bełżec and to a camp located in Dzików Stary. The majority of prisoners were escorted to the railway station in Tomaszów Lubelski and sent home.⁵

Local officials responsible for completing Polish postwar Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation nonetheless reported a ghetto was established in Cieszanów in December 1941.⁶ The first Jews known to have lived in the ghetto were some 700 to 817 deportees expelled from Tomaszów Lubelski on February 25, 1942.⁷ Another 465 to 500 expellees, among 2,000 Jews from Mielec to arrive in Zamość on March 16, were transferred by sled to Cieszanów. (The transport's remaining Jews were destined for localities in Kreis Hrubieszów.)⁸

The arrival of the expellees prompted Helmuth Weißenmaier, the Kreishauptmann of Zamosc, to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat) for Cieszanów. The council was chaired by Filip Floh. On March 29, 1942, Floh became the head of the Cieszanów branch of the JSS. Pejsach Franblau and Srul Fajfer also served on the JSS delegation.⁹

Though historians consider the Cieszanów ghetto a transit or collection ghetto, a place in which deportees temporarily were consolidated to facilitate mass killing operations at nearby extermination centers, contemporary observers offered conflicting interpretations for the repopulation of Cieszanów with Jews and by extension the ghetto's establishment. In fretting about the new arrivals' welfare, Garfinkel suggested the ghetto may have been created to protect Jews from local non-Jews: "The native population, both urban and rural, is Ukrainian, preeminently hostile to Jews generally, and to Jewish settlers in particular."¹⁰ An article in *Gazeta Żydowska*, published on April 22, 1942, indicated that German authorities had decided to resettle Jews in Cieszanów to provide non-Jews access to artisanal services and agricultural labor. The article noted the Tomaszów Lubelski expellees almost all were craftsmen; their Mielec counterparts, mainly from rural areas, were farmers.¹¹

The article's publication also coincided with the murder, at the Bełżec extermination facility, of the first large transports of Jews, including, in March 1942, from Lublin, Piaski Luterskie, Izbica, Opole, and Lwów and, in April, from Rejowiec, Zamość, Kraśnik, Lublin, and communities in eastern Galicia. Because of Cieszanów's proximity to Bełżec, the article unintentionally may have provided the false impression that deportees were being resettled in the pre-June 1941 German-Soviet borderlands.

The Cieszanów ghetto encompassed the former Jewish residences located along the part of Skorupka Street by the synagogue and leading to the main market square and most of the houses fronting the square. (German and ethnic German settlers occupied the residences located along half of one side of the square.) The only building on another side of the square was the police station, at which a Sonderdienst unit, composed of ethnic Ukrainians, was stationed. The *Gazeta Żydowska* article reported that 1,200 Jews resided in Cieszanów.

Though the ghetto was unfenced, its inmates were forbidden to move beyond the square and synagogue. The death penalty was imposed on Jews found outside the ghetto's borders. Many were shot for disobeying the orders.¹²

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. The ghetto residences, the vandalized homes of the pre-war Jewish community, lacked doors, window glass, stoves (furnaces), and furniture. Most inmates slept on blankets spread out on the floor. Several families were crowded into each room, with even larger numbers living together in former stores, bars, and restaurants.¹³

On March 16, 1942, Garfinkel reported to JSS leaders in Kraków that he twice had purchased 800 kilograms (almost 1,764 pounds) of flour and 10,000 kilograms (about 22,046 pounds) of potatoes for the Cieszanów expellees. Floh pleaded for additional assistance, reminding officials of the catastrophic material conditions in which the Cieszanów Jews lived. By April 28, Kraków officials had sent 4,000 złoty in aid.¹⁴

Survivor Ira Mechlowitz recalled that peasants were permitted to come to the market square once a week to sell food to ghetto inmates, the only time Jews were permitted to mingle with the local population. However, most Jews had few

possessions to barter. The half loaf of bread distributed daily to each ghetto resident was insufficient to stave off hunger. By early May, as the ghetto residents hovered on starvation's brink, many Jews illicitly left the ghetto to beg for food. Mechlowitz's mother appealed to the small number of Cieszanów Poles for potato peels and the water in which the potatoes had been boiled. Some ghetto residents died of diseases related to starvation. Others perished from typhus.

In April 1942, local authorities permitted children and younger adolescents to leave the ghetto to work as cow herders, shepherds, agricultural laborers, and domestic servants for peasants in nearby villages. The children were paid in food. Craftsmen, according to the *Gazeta Żydowska* article, were employed at several nearby estates. The SS sought volunteers for conscription at a labor camp located in Lubaczów. Because of the poor conditions in the ghetto, many inmates, perhaps half the population, fled to Tomaszów Lubelski.¹⁵

In May or perhaps in mid-June 1942, the Jews were expelled from the Cieszanów ghetto and sent to their deaths at Bełżec. (Though most scholars believe the deportation occurred contiguous with the May 22, 1942, deportation to Bełżec of almost all the remaining Jews in Tomaszów, Mechlowitz recalls the ghetto liquidation took place three months after the Mielec Jews arrived in Cieszanów.)

The Cieszanów ghetto probably was "restocked" with new expellees when the gas chambers were reconstructed at Bełżec from about June 20 to July 1942 or killing operations bogged down. The ASG documentation notes some 5,000 Polish Jews passed through the ghetto. Because Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Leader of the Generalgouvernement, excluded Cieszanów from his October 28 list of the places where Jews living outside of labor camps legally could reside, the Security Police by then may have considered the ghetto a subcamp of Bełżec.

According to an unverified source, in May 1943, the SS assembled the Jews still resident in the ghetto, marched them to Wierzbica, and executed them.

The survivors of the Cieszanów ghetto, a handful in number, almost all were Mielec deportees.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the Cieszanów Jewish community during the war include the relevant entry in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 450–451. Testimonies from Cieszanów survivors appear in the yizkor book David Ravid, ed., *Sefer zikaron de-kehillah kedoshah Tsieshinov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots'e Tsyeshinov be-Yisrael, [1969 or 1970]), available in English translation as *The Cieszanow Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Salomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: Jacob Salomon Berger, 2006). Contemporary press coverage includes "Cieszanów," *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 22, 1942, no. 47.

Documents pertaining to the fate of the Cieszanów Jews and the ghetto established in Cieszanów can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 211 [141, pp. 86–87; 142, pp. 1–3, 12–13, 26, 45; 143, pp. 2–4, 38, 54, 61–62; 277; 1152,

p. 20]; IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Rz; USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 17, 58/102]); VHF (e.g., #2418, 13077, 47545); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 38058, testimony of Leon Nebyl.
2. See USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/143, p. 3.
3. Compare with AŻIH, 301/60, testimony of Tejwie Frydman, p. 6.
4. VHF, # 27539, testimony of Hymie Kirsch.
5. AŻIH, 301/1691, testimony of Chaim Szaja Rywynowicz-Lisoprawski, p. 1.
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 17, 58/102.
7. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/141, pp. 86–87; 211/142, pp. 1–3, 12–13, 45; 211/1152, p. 20.
8. Ibid., 211/1152, p. 20; 211/142, p. 29; 211/143, p. 38.
9. Ibid., 211/143, p. 61.
10. Ibid., p. 3.
11. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 22, 1942, no. 47, pp. 3–4.
12. VHF, # 13077, testimony of Ira Mechlowitz.
13. Ibid.
14. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/143, pp. 3, 54; 211/277, p. 1.
15. VHF, # 13077.

DUBIENKA

Pre-1939: Dubienka, town, Hrubieszów powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Hrubieszow, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: village, Chełm powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Dubienka is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) east-southeast of Lublin. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 1,204, out of a total population of 2,964. On the eve of World War II, there were 2,160 Jews residing in the town.

Dubienka was initially occupied by the Soviet army, which invaded Poland on September 17, 1939. However, with the implementation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Bug River became the border between the German- and Soviet-occupied zones. At the end of September, Dubienka was transferred into German hands. A few, mostly young and impoverished Jews left the town with the Soviet forces, but most stayed put.¹

The abuse of the Jewish population began immediately, including the kidnapping of Jews for forced labor and many forms of harassment. German troops stormed the synagogues and forced the worshipers into the street, cutting off their beards and side locks.² Jewish survivor Sam Szor recalls that in the first weeks some Jewish families, including his own, were evicted on only three hours' notice from the better houses on the main streets to make way for German officials. The evicted Jews had to move in with other Jewish families. He was also no longer permitted to go to school. Szor remained in Dubienka until 1941 and notes that during that period at least the Germans did not establish a ghetto.³

The Germans ordered the formation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), but initially no one volunteered. A second order required people who had worked for the community to serve, and a council of 12 members was organized. The chairman was Moishe Helfman. The other members were Velvel Vinek, Yoni Pines, Itzik Sobel, Shepsil Bernstein, Itzi Danziger, Aaron Mastbaum, Bunish Krempel, Yitzhak Segal, Chaim Lemberger, Avrum Mandel, and Yonah Zuckerman (Jona Cukierman, who survived).⁴ Subsequently Mandel became the chairman.

The Judenrat was instructed to provide a daily quota of forced laborers and to turn over furs and other valuables. On December 1, 1939, German soldiers ordered all Jews into the market square, where they were surrounded. The younger and stronger men were sent off to Hrubieszów. Many were shot and killed along the way. Upon arrival they were forced into the town square, which was surrounded by barbed wire, along with several hundred local Jews. From there they were force-marched to the Soviet border on December 2. This became a death march, as half of the Jews were murdered en route. Those who reached the Bug River were forced into the water and told to swim to the Soviet side. A large number drowned, and only a few managed to get across.⁵

At the start of 1940, refugees from Wieliczka, near Kraków, were resettled in Dubienka. The Jews were forced to work on German-managed farms in the vicinity and at a brick factory in Białopole. In 1940, all Jews aged 10 and above were ordered to wear armbands with a blue Star of David. The Germans also prohibited Jewish prayer, destroyed the large synagogue and study center, and burned the Torah scrolls. In the spring of 1940, hundreds of Jews aged 17 and above were sent to labor camps around Bełżec. They stayed there until the spring of 1941, building fortifications.

In the spring of 1941, the Jews of Dubienka became aware of German preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union, as the town was only a couple of miles from the Soviet border. At this time the Jews suffered economic hardship, as most stores were closed, and many people were dependent on welfare support from the Judenrat. The Judenrat also had to collect any remaining valuables from the Jews, to meet onerous contributions demanded by the German authorities.⁶ In November 1941 about 100 Jews from Kraków were deported to Dubienka, as part of a larger group expelled into Kreis Hrubieszow.

In March 1942, another 843 Jews arrived from Mielec, composed almost completely of women and children. They were transported by Polish cart drivers from the nearby town of Hrubieszów.⁷ Among them was Eda Lichtman. She reports: "At Dubienka, we were lodged in synagogues where the Jewish community gave us food and straw. Some days later we were housed with families, and compelled to work on Aryan properties. A group of Jews wearing their prayer shawls were led towards a hill, and told to tread and dance on holy books. Nobody returned alive."⁸

Lichtman notes also that senior German officers, accompanied by Ukrainian volunteers, often visited the "ghetto" to

steal from the Jews, leaving behind a trail of wounded and dead. Some secondary sources also refer to the existence of a ghetto in Dubienka; most primary sources, however, do not refer to a formal ghetto existing in Dubienka at this time.⁹

In May 1942, the German authorities reported that there were 2,907 Jews in Dubienka, who “needed to be resettled.”¹⁰ Another Mielec survivor, Szaje Altman, in Dubienka recalls that in May a number of Jews were selected at the main square and sent to labor camps in the area. According to a letter from Dubienka, preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, there was a further Aktion on May 22 during which a number of Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery. As this correspondence reveals, several of the Mielec Jews remained in postal contact with relatives elsewhere within the Generalgouvernement. Several were able to escape from Dubienka, some even subsequently joining a sizable group of Mielec Jews in the Połaniec ghetto, in Distrikt Radom.¹¹

At the end of May, or on June 1, 1942, up to 40 Jews from the nearby village of Skryhiczyn were rounded up by German police and transferred to Dubienka.¹² By then, orders had been issued to the Judenrat that no Jews were permitted to leave Dubienka during the three days leading up to June 2, 1942. The Jews were informed of their impending resettlement and that they could take with them only up to 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of luggage and food for three days.¹³

On June 2, 1942, the Germans conducted a deportation Aktion. The Judenrat was informed that the Jews would be sent on a labor assignment near Pińsk. On that morning about 400 local farmers came to town with horses and wagons. SS men and auxiliary police dragged 2,670 Jews from their houses for transport on horse-drawn carts to Hrubieszów. On arrival, they were placed in an area surrounded with barbed wire and held for two days with almost no food or water. A number of elderly and exhausted Jews were shot. Then the remaining Jews were loaded onto freight trains and sent to the Sobibór extermination camp. A few managed to escape to the forests, but most of these people were turned in by local farmers.

The Germans retained in Dubienka just over 200 Jews, who had been issued with special cards because of their work skills.¹⁴ According to postwar German investigative sources, the retention of the laborers was partly on account of the intervention of the Ukrainian mayor, who was concerned about the economic impact of removing all the Jews.¹⁵ Only scant information is available about the living conditions for these Jews. It is likely that some form of remnant ghetto or artisans’ camp was established for them, as was the case in the nearby towns of Hrubieszów and Grabowiec, where ghettos were set up for the remaining workers after deportation Aktions in June 1942.¹⁶

According to records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), in August 1942, there were 247 Jews registered in Dubienka. Of these, 161 were craftsmen and 86 were laborers. Fifty of these Jews were employed at various German offices, and another 40 were in a labor camp.¹⁷ On August 15, 1942, the remaining craftsmen and specialists in Dubienka were trans-

ferred to the Hrubieszów ghetto, which was liquidated in turn on October 22, 1942. A group of about 17 Jews who had gone into hiding in Dubienka, but had been captured by local police forces, was executed at the Jewish cemetery in Dubienka in October.¹⁸ Of the group of craftsmen retained after June 2, only 15 people are known to have survived.

SOURCES Publications concerning the fate of the Jewish population of Dubienka during the Holocaust include the following: “Dubienka,” in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 129–130; its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 94–95; and the yizkor book, Gershon Shahar, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Dubyankah, Skaritsin, Dorobusk* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Dubienka, Skariczyn, and Dorohusk in Israel and the United States, 1994).

Published testimonies and memoirs by Jewish survivors with information concerning the fate of the Jews in Dubienka include Miriam Novitch, ed., *Sobibor: Martyrdom and Revolt: Documents and Testimonies* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1980); and Mark Verstandig, *I Rest My Case* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/372 [JSS]; 301/2973, 4471 [Relacje]; Ring I/568 and 812); BA-L (B 162/4329); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH, Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF (e.g., # 21057); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [707, 846], M-1/E/754).

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NOTES

1. Shahar, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Dubyankah*, p. iv (in English).
2. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 129–130.
3. VHF, # 21057, testimony of Sam Szor (born 1924), 1996.
4. Shahar, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Dubyankah*, p. v (in English).
5. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 130; see also M. Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah. Die Waffen-SS, der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS und die Judenvernichtung 1939–1945* (Darmstadt, 2005), p. 51.
6. VHF, # 21057.
7. Bericht von Türk, Leiter der Abteilung für Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge im Amt des Distrikts Lublin für März 1942, Lublin, April 7, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 271; Verstandig, *I Rest My Case*, pp. 139–140.
8. “From Mielec to Sobibor,” testimony of Eda Lichtman, in Novitch, *Sobibor: Martyrdom and Revolt*, p. 54.
9. Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 163. The only primary source given here is an unspecified reference to the ITS archives.

10. KH Busse an U-Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge in Lublin, May 22, 1942, published in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, eds., *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), p. 196.

11. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 130; AŽIH, 301/2973, testimony of Szaje Altman; Ring I/568, letter dated May 23, 1942; Verstandig, *I Rest My Case*, p. 147.

12. BA-L, B 162/4329 (208 AR-Z 91/61), closing report of Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 369/62, in the case against Max Stöbner (crime location: Hrubieszów), April 15, 1965, p. 122. See also Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S." ("Oneg Shabbath")* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 209–210, which dates the expulsion on November 22, 1941.

13. Shahaar, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Dubyankab*, p. vi (in English).

14. AŽIH, Ring I/568; see also 301/4471, testimony of Jona Cukierman, who puts the number of craftsmen at 150.

15. BA-L, B 162/4329, closing report of Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 369/62, April 15, 1965, pp. 122–123.

16. See Baruch Kaplinsky, ed., *Pinkas Hrubieszów: Memorial to a Jewish Community in Poland* (Organization of Former Jewish Inhabitants of Hrubieszów in Israel, 1962), p. xvi; and Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Grabovitz* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Grabovits be-Yisrael, 1975), p. 19.

17. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/372, p. 48.

18. BA-L, B 162/4329, closing report of Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 369/62, April 15, 1965, pp. 149–150, 298, 306–310.

GRABOWIEC

Pre-1939: Grabowiec (Yiddish: Grabovitz), town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Hrubieszów, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lublin województwo, Poland

Grabowiec is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) east-southeast of Lublin. In 1921, the Jewish population was 1,721 (in a total of 2,750). It is estimated that in 1939 the Jewish population was about 2,400.

As news of the German invasion reached Grabowiec on September 1, 1939, the local Jewish population feared the worst. Although the majority of Polish inhabitants did not turn hostile, the Jews were apprehensive of a possible outburst of Polish or Ukrainian antisemitism. Rumors of Nazi atrocities reached the town with the first Jewish refugees. Although four Polish policemen remained in the city, they were powerless to stop local hooligans from looting Jewish shops. Witnesses recall favorably the influence of the local Catholic priest, who urged his flock not to plunder the Jews or attack them.

The arrival of the Red Army brought order and a semblance of security on September 20, 1939. The Soviets organized a mixed Jewish-Polish militia, a move welcomed both by the Jewish inhabitants of Grabowiec and by Polish Communists. After two weeks, however, the Red Army withdrew, and several hundred Jews left with them as German forces occupied the town.¹

With the creation of the Generalgouvernement in October 1939, the German military handed authority over to a civil administration. Grabowiec became a town in Kreis Hrubieszów, in Distrikt Lublin. Dr. Behrend was the first Kreishauptmann in Hrubieszów, from October 1939 to June 1940. He was succeeded by Karl Heinrich Franke, from June 1940 to February 1941, and then by Otto Busse, from March 1941 to July 1944.

Once the Gestapo had established its headquarters (a Grenzpolizeiposten or office of the Border Police) in Hrubieszów on November 13, 1939, the harsh anti-Jewish measures were accompanied by Gestapo raids that sometimes entailed random shootings of Jews on the streets of the town.² Soon after the start of the occupation, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Grabowiec, headed by Jankiel Szlajer, which was obliged to supply a number of forced laborers every day. All those over 12 years old were deemed able to perform forced labor, although sometimes replacements were sent for those who were sick. The tasks were mostly arduous manual labor, such as cleaning streets, or cleaning toilets. The labor initially was unpaid, and the workers were often beaten by the German and non-German overseers. The Germans also set up a forced labor camp some 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the town. Young people from Grabowiec were sent to this and other camps, and the Judenrat attempted to supply them with food and even obtain their return, sometimes with the aid of bribes.³

During the first months of German occupation a number of anti-Jewish measures were implemented. Jews were forced to wear patches on their clothes 10 centimeters (about 4 inches) across bearing a Star of David 8 centimeters (3 inches) across, and some Jewish businesses were closed down. Initially Jews were ashamed to be seen wearing these patches on the street. Due to the economic hardship, Jews sold their last remaining possessions to feed their families. They were able to continue trading with the local peasants, as the restrictions on leaving the town were not strictly enforced. The German authorities also imposed heavy “contributions” on the Jewish community, which had to be collected by the Judenrat by a certain date. The Jews somehow managed to scrape together the large sums demanded by tapping their last reserves.⁴

The news from former inhabitants of Grabowiec who had left with the Soviets was not that encouraging, as people there described the many hardships that befell them. A number of refugees arrived in Grabowiec during 1940 and 1941, from Lublin, Warsaw, Kraków, and other places, including Germany, which intensified the overcrowded conditions and impoverishment among the Jewish community. The Jewish population of the town rose from 1,500 in April 1941 to 1,758 in October 1941. To assist the new arrivals, the Judenrat set up a soup kitchen that served up to 200 meals per day.⁵

Some time after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Germans conducted a first Aktion. Following the murder of a German officer by partisans nearby, the Germans ordered all the Jews of Grabowiec to assemble on the marketplace (Targowica Square). They then selected 20

Jews, escorted them out of the town, and shot them as a “reprisal” for the murder. This incident was known among the Jews as “black Wednesday.” The German authorities subsequently requested the Jewish Council to bury the bodies.⁶

In response to an inquiry by the Interior Department of the Generalgouvernement administration in Hrubieszów about the progress of ghettoization, Kreishauptmann Otto Busse responded on September 27, 1941, that he was planning ghettos or camps in Hrubieszów and Grabowiec.⁷ The end of 1941 saw a tightening of Gestapo control, and new economic restrictions were imposed on the Jews, causing further impoverishment and pushing them to the verge of starvation. At the same time, the Nazi terror intensified, as they arrested many Jews on the pretext of alleged Communist sympathies.

On May 1, 1942, the German authorities in Hrubieszów resettled several hundred Jews living in Miączyn, Werbkowice, and Mołodziatycze to Grabowiec. Shortly afterwards they began to issue special passes to those Jews urgently needed as workers.⁸ Then on May 22, 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Hrubieszów, Otto Busse, reported to the department for population and welfare of the Distrikt Gouverneur, Ernst Zörner, in Lublin that there were 2,026 Jews in Grabowiec, “whose resettlement appeared necessary.”⁹

At the beginning of June 1942, the remaining Jews from surrounding villages were concentrated in Grabowiec. Some of them were shot on the way, revealing the murderous intentions of the Germans. A letter from one of the Jews brought into Grabowiec, dated June 5, 1942, reflects the mood at this time: “Here we are confronted with death. An order has been issued that we must leave the town within seven days. We live in anxious fear of a major disaster! Either we will be sent further on a senseless march, to a labor camp, or to our deaths.”¹⁰ Then on June 8, 1942, the deputy Kreishauptmann in Hrubieszów, Josef Fieback, organized a deportation Aktion in Grabowiec. The Jews were gathered on the marketplace and kept there throughout the night. Money and valuables were taken from the Jews. Some of the old and sick Jews as well as children were killed on the spot during the roundup. Then the remaining old and sick persons were piled onto peasant’s carts, while the able-bodied Jews were marched on foot to the train station at Miączyn, 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Grabowiec. At the Miączyn station, the Jews were placed in an area surrounded with barbed wire, where a selection was conducted and about 800 Jews fit for work were sent back to Grabowiec. The others (about 1,200) were packed into overcrowded freight cars and transported to the Sobibór extermination camp under the guard of the auxiliary police (Trawniki men).¹¹

Those men who were escorted back to Grabowiec were forced to live in a “ghetto,” which was established between the bathhouse and the house of Neta, the tailor.¹² The emptied Jewish houses were soon robbed by the local Polish population. Every day the Jews were taken to perform forced labor. Food was scarce and difficult to obtain, but the Jews continued to sell their few remaining belongings to the peasants illegally in exchange for food. Reports of the local branch of

the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) from July 1942 indicate that there were 850 Jews in Grabowiec. After the resettlement, those who remained were all workers.¹³

After four months, the inhabitants of the ghetto were called to assemble at the market square again, and from there they were all escorted to Hrubieszów. On arrival there, they were subjected to another Aktion on October 21, 1942, that targeted the Jews of Hrubieszów and the surrounding area. Most of the Jews were loaded onto crowded cattle cars and sent to the Sobibór extermination camp. At least one of the men from Grabowiec, Ben Zion Fink, managed to escape from the train during the journey. However, on his way back to Grabowiec he was stopped by a local peasant and taken to the police. He was subsequently sent to the forced labor camp in Budzyń but survived the war in a number of different concentration camps.¹⁴

Some Jews from Grabowiec participated in the fight against the German occupiers as partisans. Most of the Jews who had fled to the Soviet Union in the fall of 1939 survived the war, but only a small number of those who came under German occupation managed to survive in hiding, in the forests, or in the camps.

SOURCES Much of the information collected for this article was taken from the yizkor book, Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Grabovitz* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Grabovits be-Yisrael, 1975), which also includes a short section in English. There is also a short article on the town in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 122–124. The Grabowiec ghetto is also mentioned in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 189; and in *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 65.

Documents on the persecution and extermination of the Jews of Grabowiec can be found in the following archives: APL (GDL, 270); AŻIH (e.g., 211/425–427; 301/1297); BA-L (B 162/4329 [208 AR-Z 91/1961]); IPN (ASG); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF; and YVA (e.g., TR.11/02138).

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NOTES

1. Ben Zion Fink, “Under Bloodthirsty Rule,” in Kanc, *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Grabovitz*, pp. 16–22, here pp. 16–18. The research of Adam Kopciowski indicates that probably considerably more than the 200 Jews mentioned by Fink left with the Soviets. See Adam Kopciowski, “Żydzi w Grabowcu” (MSS, March 2007).

2. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 674, p. 175; Fink, “Under Bloodthirsty Rule,” p. 18.

3. Fink, “Under Bloodthirsty Rule,” pp. 18–19; Yita Kaplan-Shisler, “Teg, Yorn fun Pein un Umkum,” in Kanc, *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Grabovitz*, pp. 316–324, here pp. 318–319.

4. Kaplan-Shisler, “Teg, Yorn fun Pein un Umkum,” pp. 318–319.

5. Fink, "Under Bloodthirsty Rule," pp. 18–19; Kopciowski, "Żydzi w Grabowcu."

6. Kaplan-Shisler, "Teg, Yorn fun Pein un Umkum," p. 321. Fink, "Under Bloodthirsty Rule," p. 19, gives a somewhat different account of this "first Aktion."

7. APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin, 270, Letter of Busse to U-Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge in Lublin, September 27, 1941.

8. *JuNS-V*, vol. 27, Lfd. Nr. 674, pp. 176–177.

9. KH Busse an U-Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge in Lublin, May 22, 1942, published in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, eds., *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), p. 196. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/427, p. 25, indicates that there were 1,808 Jews in the town of Grabowiec in May 1942.

10. Walter Zwi Bacharach, ed., *Dies sind meine letzten Worte . . . Briefe aus der Schoah* (Göttingen: Wallenstein, 2006), p. 310.

11. AŻIH, 301/1297, testimony of Sala Zylberman; BA-L, B 162/4329 (208 AR-Z 91/61), Closing report of Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 369/62, in the case against Max Stöbner (crime location: Hrubieszów), April 15, 1965, pp. 118–121; Kanc, *Sefer ha-zikaron li-kehillat Grabovitz*, pp. 321–323, 326, 349–350.

12. Fink, "Under Bloodthirsty Rule," pp. 19–20. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 124, mention the existence of a ghetto from early in 1941, which was enclosed during the fall of 1941, but this is not confirmed in eyewitness testimonies.

13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/427, pp. 30–33.

14. Fink, "Under Bloodthirsty Rule," pp. 20–22.

HRUBIESZÓW

Pre-1939: Hrubieszów, town, Lublin województwo, Poland;

1939–1944: Hrubieszów, Kreis center, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Hrubieszów, Lublin województwo, Poland

Hrubieszów is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) south-east of Lublin. In 1921, there were 5,679 Jews living in Hrubieszów (59.35 percent of the total population). In 1939, prior to the start of World War II, there were about 7,500 Jews living in the town.

German armed forces occupied the town on September 14, 1939. On September 17, 1939, the German forces withdrew, handing the town over to the Red Army as originally agreed under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. On October 3, 1939, however, the town again changed hands and was occupied by German forces as a result of a subsequent agreement. As the Red Army retreated, part of the Jewish population evacuated to the east, especially young Jewish men.

With the creation of the Generalgouvernement on October 26, 1939, Hrubieszów became a Kreis center within Distrikt Lublin. Dr. Behrend became the first Kreishauptmann in Hrubieszów, from October 1939 until June 1940. He was succeeded by Karl Heinrich Franke, from June 1940 to February 1941, and by Otto Busse, from March 1941 to July 1944.



A religious Jew in Hrubieszów suffers the humiliation of having his beard cut off, 1939–1941.

USHMM WS #06213, COURTESY OF RAPHAEL ARONSON

The Germans set up a Border Police post (Grenzpolizei-posten) and a Gendarmerie post. Serving under these offices in Hrubieszów were an auxiliary police unit (Sonderdienst) composed of a number of local German speakers and also units of Ukrainian and Polish police.

In 1939–1941, the German occupying authorities implemented a series of anti-Jewish policies in Hrubieszów. Much of Jewish property was confiscated; all Jews were registered and had to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David; Jews were prohibited from leaving the limits of the town; and they were obliged to pay large "contributions" to the German authorities. In November 1939, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of 12 men, with Szmuel Brand at its head and Joel Rabinowicz as his deputy. The Judenrat was tasked with organizing Jews for forced labor and was made personally responsible by the occupying authorities for ensuring the implementation of the anti-Jewish regulations. It was assisted in its task by a Jewish police force.

On December 2, 1939, the first Aktion took place. On the day before, December 1, the 5th Squadron of the 1st SS-Reiterstandarte had picked up 1,018 Jews in Chełm and force-marched them under brutal conditions to Hrubieszów. On

the road, the SS shot 440 Jews “for attempting to escape.” Then in Hrubieszów, over 1,000 Jewish men were added to the 578 survivors from Chełm, and the German police drove them up to the demarcation line at the Bug River, with the aim of forcing the Jews across into Soviet territory. However, the Soviet guards across the border did not permit the Jews to enter, and the German plan did not work. During the attempted border crossing, which lasted more than nine hours, a number of Jews were murdered, others drowned in the Bug River from exhaustion, and a small group successfully crossed into Soviet territory. The remaining Jews returned to Hrubieszów.¹

A number of refugees arrived in Hrubieszów during 1940 and 1941 from western Poland and other places, including Germany, which increased the pressure on limited resources within the Jewish community. The Judenrat took on the task of finding shelter for the new refugees and attempting to provide a minimum level of support.² On August 13, 1940, a second Aktion was carried out. German and Polish policemen arrested 800 Jews, and after three days, 600 of them were deported to forced labor camps near Bełżec for the construction of fortifications. Half of these Jews died in the camps from hunger and disease, and the remaining Jews in Hrubieszów lived in great fear of being sent to these camps.³ A registration conducted in October 1940 indicated there were 4,858 Jews in Hrubieszów.

According to some sources, a form of open ghetto was established in Hrubieszów close to the marketplace at some time between the summer of 1940 and June of 1942. This area had previously been inhabited mainly by Jews; the Poles and Ukrainians who lived there had to move out, while all the Jews residing outside the demarcated area had to move in.⁴ Contemporary documentation indicates that in October 1940 the Jews could only use certain streets if issued with special passes by the Judenrat.⁵ In response to an inquiry by the Interior Department of the Generalgouvernement administration in Kraków about the progress of ghettoization, Kreishauptmann Otto Busse responded on September 27, 1941, that he was planning ghettos or camps in Hrubieszów and Grabowiec.⁶ However, the report of the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), dated April 1, 1942, indicated that at that time there was no Jewish quarter (*dzielnica żydowska*) in Hrubieszów.⁷

In September 1941, after the return of many Jews from the labor camps, the total Jewish population had risen to around 5,500 Jews. In April 1942, the JSS reported that there were 5,849 Jews in the town, including 1,194 refugees and deportees.⁸

The JSS records indicate that a surprisingly large number of newcomers in Hrubieszów had arrived from Warsaw in 1940 and 1941. Among them were many Zionist activists, from groups such as Dror and Betar, who came to the Hrubieszów area to work on farms, which served also as Zionist training camps. Some of these Zionist activists remained in postal contact with other activists in the Warsaw ghetto. A few of the activists even returned to Warsaw to take part in the resistance there, following the deportations from Hrubieszów in the summer and fall of 1942.⁹

In Kreis Hrubieszów, the Jews from many surrounding villages were ordered in mid-April 1942 to relocate to Hrubieszów by April 30, 1942.¹⁰ Then in May 1942, the German authorities in Hrubieszów began to issue special passes to those Jews urgently needed as workers.¹¹ On May 22, 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Hrubieszów, Otto Busse, reported to the department for population and welfare of the Distrikt Gouverneur in Lublin that there were 5,690 Jews in Hrubieszów, “whose resettlement appeared necessary first.” For the whole Kreis he reported that 1,233 Jews were to be kept as skilled workers, and the remaining 14,188 Jews were to be deported.¹²

Between June 1 and June 10, 1942, the Kreishauptmann assisted by the German police organized the first deportations from Kreis Hrubieszów. The Jewish Council in Hrubieszów was ordered to assemble those Jews not registered as skilled workers in the marketplace on June 1, 1942. They would be permitted to take with them only 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of personal possessions. When it was clear that not all Jews had responded, the German head of the local section for police affairs in Hrubieszów, Meyer, ordered the Gendarmerie, the Sonderdienst, a squad of Trawniki men, and the Jewish Police to collect additional Jews from the ghetto. From the marketplace the Jews were then loaded onto trains. A second Aktion was carried out about a week later, and because many Jews hid on this occasion, the auxiliary police forces, especially the Sonderdienst, applied considerable brutality in pulling Jews from the houses and driving them to the railway station, murdering a number on the way. During the process, most Jews with work passes were selected out and retained in the town. More than 5,000 Jews were deported by train from Hrubieszów to the extermination camp at Sobibór by June 10, 1942. In the searches for Jews in hiding in the days that followed, several hundred Jews were uncovered, and the Germans and their collaborators shot them at the Jewish cemetery. The Jewish Council was instructed to organize a team of about 30 “specialist workers” to bury these Jews.¹³

On June 15, 1942, the remaining 2,600 or so Jews were moved into a reorganized smaller remnant ghetto comprising the streets of Metalowa, and Nowy Rynek and the alleys leading towards the Jewish cemetery. The ghetto served mainly to dupe the Jews into believing they would be kept alive as useful workers and thereby reduce their willingness to offer resistance.¹⁴ In October 1942, a number of Jews were brought to Hrubieszów from Grabowiec and Uchanie, signaling a further deportation Aktion. On October 22, 1942, the third deportation Aktion took place. This time, around 3,000 Jews were deported to the extermination camp at Sobibór. On November 16–18, 1942, a few hundred Jews, mostly those found in hiding, were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Hrubieszów.¹⁵ About 200 Jews remained in the town to sort through the belongings of those who had been deported and assist with burying those who had been shot. These Jews were housed in what became known as the Jatkowa camp.¹⁶ One Jew who emerged from hiding described the doors standing open and smashed windows he found in the empty ghetto area. He then

joined the Jatkowa camp laborers and worked 12 hours “muscling furniture down flights of stairs and into trucks, yanking down draperies, piling up pots and pans, dishes, utensils, linens, and lamps, dumping out drawers of shirts, socks, underwear, and baby clothes. He felt ashamed as he and the others handled, even evaluated, the personal belongings of their faceless owners.”¹⁷ In May 1943, most of the Jews that remained in Hrubieszów (about 450) were sent to the labor camp at Budzyń, although some were shot on the spot.

On May 3, 1968, a local court (Landgericht) in Hildesheim, Germany, sentenced Johann Demant, who had served as a Kriminalsekretär at the Grenzpolizeiposten in Hrubieszów, to life in prison. In 1942, he participated in the shooting of more than 100 Jews from Hrubieszów at the time of the deportations to Sobibór.¹⁸

SOURCES Publications dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Hrubieszów include the following: Baruch Kaplinsky, ed., *Pinkas Hrubieshov: Memorial to a Jewish Community in Poland* (Organization of Former Jewish Inhabitants of Hrubieszow in Israel, 1962); *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 28 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 674a and 674b; *Sborashim shelanu: Le-zekher kedoshei Hrubieszow, 1939–1945*, 5 vols. (Tel Aviv: Organization of Former Jewish Inhabitants of Hrubieszow in Israel, 1990–1995); and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 147–152.

Published memoirs relating to Hrubieszów include the following: Henry Orenstein, *I Shall Live: Surviving Against All Odds, 1939–1945* (New York: Beaufort Books, 1988); Meyer Megdal, *My Holocaust Testimony* (Van Nuys, CA: Meyer Megdal, 1994); and Michael Korenblit and Kathleen Janger, *Until We Meet Again* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1983).

Documents on the extermination of the Jews in Hrubieszów can be found in the following archives: APL (GDL, 270, 283); AŻIH (211/445 [JSS]; 301/649, 1129, 1134, 2182, and 4333 [Relacje]; 302/125; and Ring I/550, 810, 811, 814, 815, 1132); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 91/1961); FVA (# 9, 942, 943, 944); IPN; USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, JSS]; RG-15.019M; RG-15.079M [AŻIH, Ring]; RG-15.084 [AŻIH, Relacje]); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/2140, 3135, 4237, 4238, 4328, 7158, 10488, and M.10.AR1/814).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. BA-MA, RS 4/540, reports of 5th Squadron on December 1, 2, and 6, 1939; M. Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah. Die Waffen-SS, der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS und die Judenvernichtung 1939–1945* (Darmstadt, 2005), p. 51; AŻIH, 301/2182, testimony of Motel Kaufman.

2. Megdal, *My Holocaust Testimony*, p. 11.

3. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 151.

4. *JuNS-V*, vol. 28, Lfd. Nr. 674a, p. 176, dates the formation of the “ghetto” in the late summer of 1941; Megdal, *My Holocaust Testimony*, p. 11, dates it in the summer of 1940;

AŻIH, 301/2182, dates it shortly before the deportation Aktion in June 1942, which appears to be most likely.

5. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/1132 [767].

6. APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin, 270, letter of Busse to U-Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge in Lublin, September 27, 1941.

7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/445, p. 29.

8. T. Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957), table 5.

9. On Zionist activity in the region, see, for example, David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 170–172; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/550 [771.]; Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, trans. Emma Harris (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 762, referring to members of Betar.

10. YVA, M.10.AR1/814, “Hrubieszów—spichrz Polski,” June 30, 1942.

11. *JuNS-V*, vol. 28, Lfd. Nr. 674a, pp. 176–177. A copy of one of these work certificates dated May 12, 1942, is reproduced in Kaplinsky, *Pinkas Hrubieshov*, p. 17.

12. KH Busse an U-Abt. Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge in Lublin, May 22, 1942, published in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), p. 196; APL, GDL, 893.

13. AŻIH, 301/2182; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring I/810 [768], Ring I/811 [769], Ring I/814 [770], Ring I/815 [774].

14. Kaplinsky, *Pinkas Hrubieshov*, p. 107, 16.

15. Ibid., p. xvi; Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” pp. 281–282. Orenstein, *I Shall Live*, pp. 108–109, dates the Aktion on October 20, 1942.

16. AŻIH, 301/2182; Megdal, *My Holocaust Testimony*, pp. 17–19.

17. Korenblit and Janger, *Until We Meet Again*, p. 85.

18. *JuNS-V*, vol. 28, Lfd. Nr. 674a and 674b, pp. 211–212, 215–218.

IRENA (DĘBLIN-IRENA)

Pre-1939: Irena (Yiddish: Modzhitz), town, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: initially Kreis Garwolin, Disrikt Warschau, then Kreis Puławy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Dęblin, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Irena was located 68.7 kilometers (42.7 miles) northwest of Lublin. In 1953, it was incorporated into neighboring Dęblin. The two settlements popularly were long considered one, partly because Irena was established for civilians to provide services to the military stationed in Dęblin. In 1927, Dęblin-Irena’s civilian population of 4,860 included 3,060 Jews.

Luftwaffe bombardment, from September 2 to 7, 1939, forced civilians to flee before the Wehrmacht occupied Irena on September 12. Ordered by regional military authorities to return, the Jews discovered their residences and businesses plundered. Military authorities fined the Jews 20,000 złoty

and mandated forced labor, initially clearing devastation and reconstructing the air base's landing fields.

In late 1939, the Germans ordered the Jews to wear arm-bands and to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its first chair was Leizer Teichman (Tajchman). He and subsequent council chairs softened German demands, mainly by establishing relations with the local Polish administration. Its members sometimes forewarned of searches and permitted some activities, including kosher slaughter, to continue illicitly for a while. An internal border shift resulted in Irena's incorporation, on April 1, 1940, into Distrikt Lublin. That summer, the Jewish Council sent conscripts to labor camps in Janiszów, Bełżec, and Pawłowice.¹

Most survivors date the Irena ghetto's establishment to the winter of 1941. Kalman Fris (Fries) attributed ghettoization to the arrival in January 1941 of Kurt Lenk, the newly appointed Landkommissar of Dęblin and Ryki.² Maria Abramowicz-Rozencweig and Zvi Eichenbrenner remembered Lenk first ordering Jews evicted from certain streets before formally establishing the ghetto.³ Eichenbrenner recalled Lenk initially banned Jewish residence between Warszawa and Sochacki Streets and then from all but the northern edge of the market square. Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) and American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) correspondence also suggest the formal ghettoization decree was issued ex post facto, shortly after March 20, 1942.⁴ Because Jews initially were banned from the neighborhoods closest to roads leading to the two military bases and from the business district, the ghetto's establishment likely was related to the quartering of Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe soldiers in Dęblin prior to the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June. Placards, demarcating the ghetto's external borders, warned: "Typhus Danger! Strictly forbidden for Germans to enter!"⁵

Teichman oversaw the Jewish community for only part of the ghettoization process, as the JSS documentation notes the Jewish Council's membership was changed between January 20 and March 24, 1941.⁶ Survivors report he and Karyn fogel, the council secretary, were banished with their families to Wąwolnica for bribing several Gendarmes to expel from Irena an inebriated Kreis official searching a Jewish-owned house for textiles.⁷ In late spring, Lenk was transferred to Kraśnik. Osternak, the Landkommissar in Chełm, was moved to Dęblin. Kalman Fris, appointed Jewish Council chair by Lenk, served a few months before arranging under Osternak to resign. He was succeeded in August by Vevel Shulman. In September, Drayfish, a refugee from Konin, replaced Shulman.

The Irena ghetto consisted of about six streets in the so-called Starówka (in colloquial Polish, Old Town) neighborhood, near Staromiejska Street. Its internal boundaries were composed of the part of Okólna Street just above the square, the Irenka River, Bankowa, and Staromiejska Streets. In September 1942, Staromiejska Street was excluded from the ghetto. Its residents were resettled on Bankowa Street. The ghetto was not fenced. Signs warned that the penalty for Jews leaving the ghetto without authorization was death.⁸

A Jewish police force guarded the ghetto from the inside. Gendarmes from the Dęblin post, commanded by Franz Filippi, were responsible for its external borders. In practice, members of a Sonderdienst unit, subordinated to the Gendarmerie, physically guarded the ghetto. Composed initially of local ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), the unit was reinforced with Ukrainians. A Polish auxiliary police force, mostly local pre-war policemen, assisted. German Gendarmes Rudolf Knappeider (Knapheide, Knapajder) and Johann Peterson and local resident Edward Brok (Brokov), the Sonderdienst's *Volksdeutsche* commander, were noted for humiliating, beating, and killing a number of ghetto residents.⁹

In March 1941, the ghetto population stood at 3,750. It included 565 refugees, mostly expellees from Puławy and the Warthegau and family of Dęblin-Irena natives who had fled ghettoization in Warsaw. In October, 85 families from nearby villages were resettled in the ghetto.¹⁰ Overcrowding forced 7 to 15 people to share a room. Because Poles could enter the ghetto and Zaheva Amitz remembers some even residing there, the Jews survived by exchanging material goods with them for food. A secular school established by Aida Milgroijm-Citronbojm instructed (in Polish) 70 to 100 children.

Some ghetto conscripts worked for private German and Austrian firms, including the Schultz, Schwartz, and Hochtief construction companies, which oversaw various phases of the Warsaw-to-Lublin railway expansion. Most, though, labored either for the Wehrmacht or Luftwaffe. Women and children grew food for military canteens at the former agricultural school. Women and men unloaded coal from rail cars or cleaned the cars at the Wehrmacht's Dęblin railway inspectorate. About 200 to 300 male Jews conscripted by the Wehrmacht reported daily to the fortress. Another 200 to 400 worked at the air base repairing radios, altering airmen's uniforms, shoveling coal, and cutting wood. (Some conscripts were sent to work in similar capacities at smaller Luftwaffe bases, including in Ułęż and Zamość.) Until late in 1942, Jewish conscripts at the above work sites earned forced labor wages. Those conscripted for municipal tasks, such as street cleaning and snow clearing, received no remuneration.¹¹

In May 1941, about 1,000 Jews from the Warsaw, Częstochowa, and Opole ghettos arrived in Dęblin to work at various work sites, including at the Luftwaffe air base, where 500 to 600 Warsaw Jews and a smaller number of Viennese deportees to Opole leveled land. When the camp closed in October, the Warsaw Jews were ordered to the Irena ghetto, and the Jews from Opole returned to their ghetto. (The Viennese paid bribes to remain at the camp.) In late December, another camp, established on the same site, interned 300 nonnative Jews to expand the air base's fuel storage facilities. The Viennese deportees provided the camp's Jewish administrative cadre.¹²

Conditions deteriorated in the ghetto from the winter of 1941–1942. The Germans requisitioned winter clothing, curtailed fuel rations, and suspended the use of stoves. Orders banning Poles from the ghetto resulted in waste collectors suspending services there. Latrines overfilled and trash piled

up. Dysentery and typhus outbreaks followed. The sick received treatment at an isolation facility and a 30-bed hospital, headed by Konin refugee Dr. Isaar Kawa. As black market trade dwindled, many left the ghetto to find food and fuel. Some 20 women caught outside the ghetto foraging were executed. Another 20 unregistered ghetto residents, all Warsaw ghetto escapees, met the same fate.¹³ In April 1942, Drayfish, among a group of local Jews sent to a penal camp in Kazimierz Dolny reportedly for registering complaints with the Pulawy Kreishauptmann's office, was shot. Timber merchant Yisrael Weinberg replaced him. A fire left 50 families homeless.¹⁴

On May 6, 1942, German-led security forces arrived to order the Jews assembled by 9:00 A.M. at the market square. Jews still living in several nearby villages, including Bobrowniki, also were marched there. Surrounded by an armed guard of German and Ukrainian police, a small German SS contingent, and a force of SS Ukrainian auxiliaries, the Jews waited hours, likely because a Luftwaffe officer was obtaining permission to expand the construction camp's inmate population to 1,200.¹⁵ At 2:00 P.M., about 1,000 conscripts and labor camp inmates were marched from work sites to the square and ordered into a separate line. Local employers' representatives began designating about 200 to 500 others to remain in Irena. The "resettlement" lines became composed overwhelmingly of the sick, the elderly, mothers and their infants and dependent children, and those left homeless by the fire. About 42 to 50 people were killed, mainly trying to join the laborers' line. At about 6:00 P.M., the Ukrainian auxiliaries marched 2,300 to 2,500 Jews to the Dęblin train station. From there, the deportees were sent to the Sobibór extermination facility.¹⁶

On May 13–14, 1942, 2,042 deportees from Prešov, Slovakia, were resettled into the ghetto. In August, the JSS noted 5,800 Jews were residing in Irena: 1,800 native and 4,000 nonnative Jews. Many of the additional 2,000 residents had been designated for labor in Dęblin-Irena during their communities' expulsions. This group included about 200 people from Ryki, 300 from Gniewosów and Zwoleń (100 of which were sent to a labor camp in Staw and the remainder assigned to work for the Schultz firm in Dęblin), and a similarly sized group from Stężycza. Others were fugitives from deportations in Baranów nad Wieprzem, Ryki, Gniewosów, and from October, Adamów.¹⁷

Because local Jews were convinced only the employed would survive another deportation, they filled the best available jobs, leaving 200 Prešov deportees positions as unpaid municipal conscripts. About 180 to 200 Slovaks were included in a quota expansion at the Schultz firm. Some skilled Slovaks found work at the Luftwaffe construction site camp, where, in late May, 400 locals and 300 Prešov, Viennese, and Warsaw deportees worked.¹⁸ Unaccustomed to the ghetto's poor sanitation, many Slovak deportees contracted typhus and perished.

By May 31, 1942, about 900 ghetto residents, including 250 from Prešov, 350 from Ryki, and 300 from Dęblin-Irena, were ordered to reside permanently at their work sites and officially forbidden to leave them. JSS officials reported all ghetto inhabitants soon would be required to live similarly,

but in July it noted only 1,000 presently did so, because barracks had not been constructed at most work locations.¹⁹

On October 15, 1942, members of the German Gendarmerie, police auxiliaries, airfield Luftwaffe troops, and SS-Obersturmführer Grossman, commander of the Puławy SD, arrived to clear the ghetto. Some 215 to 500 people, mostly Prešov deportees still packing their belongings, were shot dead during house-to-house searches. About 2,000 to 2,500 Jews, mainly Slovak expellees, were sent to the Treblinka extermination facility. Ordered the previous evening confined to workplaces, approximately 2,500 to 2,700 laborers, including the 1,000 labor camp inmates, were retained. Another 100 people, mostly Judenrat members, Jewish Police, and their families, were designated to clear the deportees' belongings from the ghetto.²⁰ Many evaded deportation including by attempting to enter the Luftwaffe camp. Some were shot dead at the camp's gates. About 500 people, including 60 to 90 children (under age 12) and laborers from other work sites without barracks, entered the camp, usually in exchange for bribes.

The ghetto ceased to exist on October 28, 1942, when the Jewish Police, Judenrat members, and their families were marched to the Schultz camp and the approximately 2,800 remaining Jews were ordered to reside permanently at their work sites (now all labor camps). A third deportation, either that same day or about two weeks later, encompassed about 1,000 people, including the Wehrmacht conscripts from the fortress and 200 to 500 of the 1,500 Luftwaffe camp inmates. The deportees were murdered, most likely at Treblinka. In May or perhaps July 1943, most surviving inmates at the railway inspectorate, or Ostbahn camp, were sent via Końskowola to the Poniatowa labor camp.²¹ The deportees likely were mostly railway construction laborers as Stamphian Fidelis remembers the camp's remaining inmates, those assigned to the railway inspectorate, being deported in the fall of 1943.

The last deportation left 1,000 to 1,200 Jews in Dęblin-Irena, all inmates at the Luftwaffe construction camp, one of the longest-lived Jewish labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.²² On July 22, 1944, the day the Red Army liberated Lublin, the camp's 800 to 900 surviving inmates, including 400 to 600 Dęblin-Irena Jews, were evacuated to Częstochowa. Incarcerated initially at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) camps, about half the deportees, including all but about 20 children, survived the war.

SOURCES Published testimonies from survivors are in the yizkor book, David Sztokfisz, ed., *Sefer Demblin-Modz'its* (Tel Aviv: Irgune Demblin-Modz'its ba-Arets uve-hul, 1969), which has appeared in English translation as *Demblin-Modzjitz [Memorial] Book* (Tel Aviv, 1994). The second is available electronically at the Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library, and at jewishgen.org.

Published autobiographies or memoirs by survivors include Ignatz (Yisrael) Bubis, *Ich bin ein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens: Ein autobiographisches Gespräch mit Edith Kohn* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1993), pp. 51–64, 67; Stanley Hochmann, *Mr. Fate, or, My Personal World War II Memoirs* (Toronto, 1998); Charles Schulman, *Ne dis jamais que*

tu vas ton dernier chemin, 2nd ed. (Paris: Publieur, 2003); and for a juvenile audience, Samuel R. Harris, *Sammy: Child Survivor of the Holocaust*, ed. Cheryl Gorder (Mesa, AZ: Bluebird, 1999). Hermann Wenkart, *Befehlsnotstand Anders Gesehen: Tatsachenbericht eines jüdischen Lagerfunktionärs* (Vienna, 1969), by the Austrian deportee to Opole who served as the Jewish “commander” of the Dęblin-Irena Luftwaffe construction camp, is controversial.

Secondary works include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007); and Josef Edmund Lucinski, *Homoe-Homini: Czyli martyrologia [sic] Żydów w Dęblinie* (Association of Friends of Deblin, 1987), a work available at some libraries but an archival holding at USHMM, listed at RG-03.003*01, which draws on survivors’ recollections to map the location of the ghetto, the labor camps, the two Soviet POW camps in Dęblin, and the mass graves of World War II victims.

Important tables, contextualizing the first two Dęblin-Irena deportations, appear in Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 76; and David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), pp. 261, 271, 280, 344–347.

Documentation on the fate of the Dęblin-Irena Jewish community during World War II can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/318, 211 [141, pp. 47, 49, 71, 73; 450–451; 646, pp. 23, 26], 301 [112, 639, 789, 1168, 1443, 1444, 1447, 3682, 4389, 4488, 4498, 4886, 5099]); BA-L (B 162/5939); FVA (e.g., HVT [# 648, 717, 1065, 1366, 1888, 3164, 3870]); IPN (Ankiety, ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., S-57/09/Zn); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1995.A.0249; Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-02.163; RG-03.003*01; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 6, 61/43, 46, 47]); VHF (e.g., # 3071, 3600, 3910, 14342, 18951, 23790, 43083); YVA (e.g., M-1/E [874, 1327, 1328, 1372, 1627]; O-3 [2951, 9077, 9295]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH, JSS), 211/450, pp. 11–12.
2. BA-L, B 162/5939, p. 854 (deposition, Kalman Fris).
3. AŻIH, 301/1443, p. 1.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/450, pp. 13, 40; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/318, p. 44.
5. Quoted by Z. Eichenbrenner in *Demblin-Modzjitz*, p. 342.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/450, p. 13.
7. Compare *Demblin-Modzjitz*, pp. 402–403, 517–521 (testimonies, respectively, of Binyamin Stamler and Kalman Paris).
8. AŻIH, 301/1444, testimony of Josek Rosenblum, p. 2.
9. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 856, 860–861, 864–865 (respectively, depositions of Fris, Awraham Abenstein, and Jakow Malchi); AŻIH, 301/1168, testimony of Majer Salzman, pp. 1–2.
10. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/318, pp. 1, 2, 11, 14, 44; and Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/450, pp. 2, 11, 44, 46.

11. AŻIH, 301/112, testimony of Izak Fischfeld, p. 10; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/451, p. 38.

12. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/450, pp. 22, 26; AŻIH, 301/112, pp. 4–6.

13. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 854–855, 1024 (depositions, Pesia Konner and Fris, respectively).

14. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/451, pp. 25–26, 29, 30.

15. AŻIH, 301/112, pp. 6–7.

16. Deportation figures from USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/451, pp. 32, 30, 38.

17. AŻIH, 301/4137, testimony of Mojżesz Zilberszpan; 301/18, testimony of Perec Szapiro, pp. 6–7; 301/1447, testimony of Zygmunt Motek, pp. 1–2; and 301/639, testimony of Rubin Rosenberg, pp. 1–2.

18. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/451, pp. 30, 32.

19. Ibid., pp. 32–33, 38, 53–54.

20. AŻIH, 301/1444, pp. 2–3.

21. Ibid., 301/4488, Sztanbuch testimony, pp. 2–3; 301/3682, testimony of Ber Zalcman, p. 3.

22. Ibid., 301/112, pp. 9–10.

IZBICA (NAD WIEPRZEM)

Pre-1939: Izbica (nad Wieprzem), town, Krasnystaw powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Krasnystaw, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Krasnystaw powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Izbica (nad Wieprzem) is located 58 kilometers (36 miles) southeast of Lublin. The last census taken before World War II recorded around 4,500 Jews living in Izbica (92 percent of the total population).

The Germans first occupied Izbica on September 15, 1939. Immediately on entering the town, they seized goods from Jewish shops as a tribute. After a few days, the German army withdrew, permitting the Soviet army to occupy part of the Lublin region for several days. The Jewish residents of Izbica welcomed the Soviets as liberators. On September 28, 1939, the Soviet army retreated from Izbica under the revised terms



Jewish men are forced to load a munitions train under German supervision near Izbica (nad Wieprzem), July 3, 1941. USHMM WS #07713, COURTESY OF NARA

of the Nazi-Soviet agreement. Some Jewish residents, mainly young men, left with the Soviet army. In the brief period after the Soviets left and before the Germans reentered, a group of local Poles threw stones at some Jews who had allegedly collaborated with the Soviets, killing one person and wounding several others.¹

By early October 1939, German forces again had occupied Izbica. Another wave of looting ensued, in which the Jews were especially badly affected. At the end of 1939, the German authorities prohibited the Jews from engaging in trade and also from leaving the town to barter with the surrounding population. Nevertheless, an illicit trade continued between Jews and Christians. Since Jewish children under the age of 14 were not required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David, they sneaked out to exchange goods and personal possessions for food.²

From the end of 1939, the Germans began resettling Jews into Izbica from Polish towns further to the west that had been incorporated into the Third Reich, including Koło, Kalisz, and Łódź. In March 1941, more than 1,000 Jews from Kreis Konin were deported via Łódź to Izbica.³ By August 1941, around 7,000 Jews were living in Izbica, including nearly 2,000 refugees and expellees.⁴ As one survivor recounts, “[D]ozens of people lived in every Jewish residence. Fifteen people, including small children, were compressed into one room with my family. It was impossible to get anything to sleep on. Everyone lay on the bare floor. There was no fuel for heating; there was only hunger and filth. An epidemic of typhus fever broke out.”⁵

At the start of 1940, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed in Izbica. Abraham Blatt was appointed as its head, and his deputy was a merchant named Schneidermesser. Other members of the Judenrat were Mosser Sznajd, Milsztajn, Zylberberg, Bron, and Klajner.⁶ In the view of some Jews who survived, chairman Blatt and his deputy Schneidermesser collaborated with the occupying authorities rather too eagerly.⁷ At first, the main task of the Judenrat in Izbica was to select people for labor, so its members put together a list of able-bodied men and women. Assisted by the Judenrat, the Germans established a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which at its inception had 40 members.⁸

In November 1939, the Nazis installed a civil administration in Izbica. Its local representative was the ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*) Johann (Jan) Schulz, who had been an assistant to a Jewish watchmaker before the war. From the start, he issued a series of regulations severely restricting the rights of Jews and Poles. At the end of 1940, an SD detachment was established in Izbica, headed by Kurt Engels; his deputy was Ludwik Klemm. The detachment served the entire Kreis Krasnystaw, arresting and carrying out other punitive measures against Jews and Poles.⁹

Besides the Judenrat, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization also functioned in Izbica. It managed a communal kitchen and a makeshift Jewish hospital, which was located in the synagogue. The hospital had to serve the entire Kreis Krasnystaw but was only capable of treating around 40 patients at a time.¹⁰

From the start of the German occupation, Jews were forced to perform heavy labor in the town. The work tasks included street cleaning. In the spring of 1940, a few hundred Jews were sent off to labor camps located within Distrikt Lublin. Some went to Szczepanów, others to Ruda-Opalin (close to Chełm). The largest group was deported to Bełżec, the largest camp in the Distrikt. There Jews had to work digging trenches close to the German-Soviet border.¹¹

The last wave of Polish Jews who were resettled into Izbica came in March and April 1941 when the Germans resettled around 1,000 people from the city of Lublin. A closed ghetto did not exist in Izbica at the time. However, Jews were not allowed to leave the designated borders of the town, and this regulation has led some observers to conclude that the entire town resembled a large “open ghetto.” It was bordered on three sides by hills and, on the fourth (Tarnogór) side, by the Wieprz River. Jews could not even move freely within the town. However, Izbica was not listed as a ghetto in the report of Kreishauptmann Schmidt to Distrikt-level authorities in September 1941, although it was clearly viewed as a *Judenstadt* (or place of Jewish concentration) by German authorities.

Despite the restrictions, a few Jewish groups carried on clandestine exchanges of goods with the help of Poles, for example, at a local tannery, where the Jews prepared hides for sale.¹² At the end of 1941 and in early 1942, the Germans confiscated furs and woolen goods from the Jews in Izbica for the Wehrmacht.

After the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, Izbica became the initial destination for Jews deported from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (the Theresienstadt ghetto), Germany, Austria, and Slovakia. The choice of Izbica reflected its location on the main line between Lublin and Bełżec, where the Nazis established an extermination camp in November 1941.

The first transport to Izbica arrived on March 13, 1942. It carried 1,001 Czech Jews who had been deported from Theresienstadt. In total, there were 16 transports scheduled to reach Izbica, although some of these Jews were soon sent on to other locations. The last transport arrived in early June 1942.¹³ The following table (see next page) indicates the scheduled deportations to Izbica from German documentation.¹⁴

Since the foreign Jews arrived in Izbica while there were still Polish Jews in the town, overcrowding was severe, and there was no space for the deportees. The German authorities simply crammed them into the houses occupied by Polish Jews. As one survivor recalled: “First they ordered us to stand up. Then they pushed us into one house. Thirty people were crammed together into one place. Sheets of paper were glued over the broken windows. It was impossible to breathe. We could not sit. We were packed so tightly that we had to stand up all day and all night.”¹⁵

After a few days, the first mass deportation Aktion was carried out. The Germans took some of the Polish Jews “abroad” to an unknown location. As further transports arrived in Izbica, the new arrivals had to wait for an available place to stay, and all the buildings were overcrowded. Living and especially hygiene conditions were appalling. The deport-

Date of Transport's Arrival in Izbica (Where Known)	Number of Persons	Place of Origin for Those Deported
March 13, 1942	1,001 (500 Jews from this transport were sent on to Kraśniczyn)	Theresienstadt
March 19, 1942	1,003 (500 Jews from this transport were sent on to Krasnystaw and 500 to Gorzków)	Theresienstadt
March 25, 1942	955	Germany (probably Aachen, Koblenz, Kassel)
March 27, 1942	1,008 (part may have been sent to Kraśniczyn)	Germany (Franconia: Nürnberg, Würzburg, Bamberg, Fürth)
Departed Vienna April 9, 1942	998	Austria (Vienna)
Departed Breslau (Wrocław) April 13, 1942	1,000	Breslau
April 24, 1942	942	Germany (Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Krefeld, Oberhausen, Wuppertal, Mönchengladbach)
April 29, 1942	628	Germany (Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart)
April 30, 1942	600 (transport underwent a selection process in Lublin)	Theresienstadt
May 9, 1942	784 (transport underwent a selection process in Lublin)	Germany (Frankfurt am Main)
May 15, 1942	1,001	Austria (Vienna)
May 18, 1942	1,006	Austria (Vienna)
May 26, 1942	835 (transport underwent a selection process in Lublin)	Germany (Frankfurt am Main)
May 29, 1942	1,052 (transport underwent a selection process in Lublin)	Slovakia (Spišská Nová Ves)
May 30, 1942	1,000 (transport underwent a selection process in Lublin)	Slovakia (Poprad)
June 5, 1942	1,001	Austria (Vienna)

ees also suffered severely from hunger. Not until the summer of 1942, when Jews were being sent to the extermination camps, did the occupation officials provide rations for the Jews. The situation was scarcely ameliorated by the actions of the JSS. The majority of the deportees were women, children, and the elderly. Many of them had left all their possessions in Lublin and had nothing to live on in Izbica. Deaths from starvation and exhaustion occurred daily. Only a few people were more fortunate, managing to obtain food and survive by working on estates in Tarnogór or in one of the two labor camps close to Izbica at Augustówka and Bzite.¹⁶

Cultural conflicts were common between the Polish Jews and the Jews who arrived in Izbica from other countries. A majority of the non-Polish Jews was assimilated, had liberal attitudes towards religion and tradition, and did not speak Yiddish. The conflict was exploited and deepened by the Germans, who deliberately set the groups against each other. In 1942, they set up one Judenrat for the Polish Jews and one for the Jews transported to Izbica. Only the members of the non-Polish Judenrat are known: Dr. A. Lob Pauner, Ludwig Wienheber, Dr. Nathan Rosenthal, and Hugo Kolb.¹⁷ Separate branches of the JSS for each group were established.

During the course of the various Aktionen the non-Polish Jewish policemen arrested Polish Jews, and vice versa.¹⁸

The first deportation Aktion in Izbica took place on March 24, 1942. Around 2,200 Polish Jews were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec. Several dozen Jews were also shot on the spot, mainly by the local SS officers Kurt Engels and Ludwik Klemm. The bodies of those who were shot were taken to the Jewish cemetery and buried there.¹⁹ The deportations were supervised by officers from the SS training camp (*SS-Ausbildungslager*) in Trawniki and by the Gendarmerie from Krasnystaw, with the assistance of the Polish (Blue) Police.

The next Aktion took place on May 12–15, 1942. The Germans organized a mass deportation Aktion for Kreis Krasnystaw. First, several hundred Jewish men—both Polish and non-Polish—were taken from Izbica to the concentration camp in Majdanek. A second group consisting of around 400 people was deported to the extermination camp in Sobibór.²⁰

After a short time, the Polish Jews began to comprehend the fate of the deportees to Bełżec. During subsequent Aktionen, many people tried to escape and hide in Izbica or in the nearby forests. Most of the non-Polish Jews at this time obediently assembled on the Izbica marketplace, then were led

away in columns to the Izbica railway station. These Jews only recognized more slowly the fate of those deported.²¹

On June 8, 1942, another deportation Aktion took place, this time directed against those deemed unfit for work. There were many Jews in Izbica who fell into this category. Around 2,000 Polish and non-Polish Jews were deported, probably to Bełżec.²²

On July 6–7, 1942, the Germans rounded up Jews found hiding in Izbica. Many Jews had been hiding with families. On July 8, an unknown number were discovered and deported to Sobibór.²³

From mid-July until the fall of 1942, the situation in Izbica was relatively calm. No further deportations were carried out. But within the town, mainly in the meadows and in the area where the Jewish cemetery was located, Jews were arrested by the SD. There were several executions of Jews ordered personally by Kurt Engels and Ludwik Klemm. The executions were carried out on the grounds that Jews were trading illegally, having contacts with Poles, storing weapons, or corresponding with co-religionists. This last accusation was commonly made against the non-Polish Jews after May 1942.²⁴

An example of such clandestine correspondence is the letter sent by Ernst Krombach in Izbica to his fiancée back in Germany, dated August 22–23, 1942. Uncensored, Krombach provides a uniquely frank and detailed description of conditions in Izbica. He notes: “Everything is forbidden; the penalty as above [death]. Leaving the ordained district [*Verlassen des vorgeschriebenen Quartiers*] before 7:00 A.M. or after 7 P.M. Bartering, buying or selling or speaking to Polish Aryans. . . . Sending letters or other messages. Leaving the city limits.” This seems to imply that a separate Jewish quarter (open ghetto) with its own curfew rules existed by this time, in addition to the law confining Jews to the town.

Krombach notes also the previous deportations: “Many transports have left here. Of the approximately 14,000 Jews who arrived, only 2,000 to 3,000 are still here. They go off in cattle trucks, subject to the most brutal treatment.” Even though these deportations had by then ceased for a while, things were not all rosy or calm: “We have become used to shootings. No week goes by without something happening: evacuation, roundups of people on the street for work in the vicinity, visits from outside SS, house searches, confiscation of particular items, etc.” Regarding living conditions: “‘Hygiene’ is a joke. Everything is filthy, lice (particularly clothes lice that spread typhus), fleas, bugs. There are few latrines. Sewage flows through unpaved streets (stench, illness).”²⁵

The last wave of forced resettlement into Izbica and deportations from there to the concentration and extermination camps took place in the fall of 1942. Starting in October 1942, Izbica became the central (or collection) ghetto for Polish Jews in Kreis Krasnystaw. Several thousand Jews were brought to Izbica from Krasnystaw, Żółkiewka, and Turobin and also from places within the Zamość district. The last Jews from Zamość and Krasnobród were driven to Izbica on foot. It is not known exactly how many Jews were in Izbica at that time, but one may estimate that around 6,000 Jews came to Izbica from the surrounding towns.²⁶ The Judenrat was also reorga-

nized. Chairmen and representatives from other Judenräte now became part of the Judenrat in Izbica.²⁷

On October 19, 1942, more than 5,000 Jews were deported from Izbica in the largest of the “resettlement” Aktions. The operation was directed by the Security Police from Izbica, Zamość, and Lublin. The German civil administration from Krasnystaw also took part. The Germans used the Polish (Blue) Police to round up the Jews. The policemen received monetary rewards for finding Jews in hiding. This Aktion was particularly bloody. At least 500 Jews were shot on the platform of the railway station in Izbica. The Germans liquidated the orphanage in Izbica and shot all the children there. The Jews who remained alive were transported to Bełżec and Sobibór.²⁸

During the Aktion, many Jews escaped from Izbica, hiding in the nearby fields. Afterwards they returned and fell into the German trap. On November 2, 1942, more than 4,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec and Sobibór. The trains for the resettlement shuttled back and forth nonstop. Those for whom there was no space in the wagons, or who were captured while in hiding, were taken into a barn by the guards. After a few days they were taken to the Jewish cemetery, where under the supervision of Kurt Engels they were shot. More than 1,000 Jews were killed in this fashion.²⁹ At the end, Engels personally shot the chairman of the Judenrat, Abraham Blatt, and his deputy, Schneidermesser.

On October 28, 1942, the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, ordered the creation of a remnant ghetto (*Restghetto*) in Izbica. All those Jews who had managed to survive the last deportation were collected in this ghetto, namely, those found hiding in Izbica or the nearby wooded areas and also the Jews who had escaped from other ghettos. The ghetto consisted of several buildings near the Altmanów Tannery on Stokowa and Cicha Streets, near the former brick factory at Kulik Street. The remnant ghetto was also an open ghetto. Jews worked there in the tannery and the brick factory. A new Judenrat was formed, and it was headed by Leon-Lejb Blatt and Tadeusz Cwekin. Its purpose was to attract Jews who were hiding elsewhere in the region.³⁰

In January 1943, 700 Jews were deported from this ghetto to Sobibór. The final liquidation of the ghetto took place on April 28, 1943. The last 200 Jews were packed onto trucks and sent to Sobibór.³¹

Between 1940 and early 1943, more than 20,000 Polish and non-Polish Jews passed through the Izbica ghettos. From Izbica itself, a mere 14 Jews managed to survive the war in hiding.³²

Although Kurt Engels and Ludwik Klemm were arrested, they were never tried. Following their arrests, in Hamburg and Limburg, respectively, they both committed suicide. The main German trial record concerning Izbica was the case before the regional court in Kassel (LG-Kass, 3a Ks 1/51), which resulted in an acquittal in 1952.

SOURCES Until recently there were no publications about the ghetto in Izbica. Robert Kuwałek has published two articles: “Getta tranzytowe w dystrykcie lubelskim,” in D. Libi-

onka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 138–160; and “Das Durchgangsghetto in Izbica,” in J. Milotova, U. Rathgeber, and M. Wörgebauer, eds., *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente* (Sefer: Prague, 2003), pp. 321–352. Information on the Izbica ghetto can also be found in the memoirs of a survivor of Sobibór who originally came from Izbica, Thomas-Toivi Blatt, *From the Ashes of Sobibor: A Story of Survival* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997); and in David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003). The book by Mark Roseman, *A Past in Hiding: Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New York: Metropolitan, 2001), also contains valuable information on the Izbica ghetto from the perspective of the German-Jewish deportee, Ernst Krombach, who wrote two detailed letters to his fiancée, Marianne Ellenbogen (née Strauss).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., GDL, 897-898; and RZ, 169); AŻIH (301/10, 29, 1518, 5953 [Relacje]; 211/138 and 607 [JSS]); IPN-Lu (OKL, 252/46; and OKL/Ds. 3/67); USHMM (Acc. 1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF; YVA (e.g., JM/10454); and ŻmP.

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NOTES

1. R. Adamski, “Izbica nad Wieprzem” (memoir), MSS in the collection of the Bełżec Memorial Museum, p. 44.
2. AŻIH, 301/1518, testimony of Henocho Nobel, p. 4.
3. APL, RZ, 169; and GDL, 897-898, as cited by Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 140.
4. AŻIH, 211/138, report about the situation in Izbica, August 16, 1941, pp. 24–25.
5. Ibid., 301/1518, p. 4.
6. Ibid., p. 3.
7. Ibid., 301/10, testimony of Salomon Podchlebnik, p. 3.
8. Ibid., 301/1518, p. 3.
9. J. Janeczka, “Zbrodnicza działalność Kurta Engelsa i Ludwika Klemma na terenie powiatu krasnostawskiego w okresie okupacji niemieckiej w latach 1941–1943,” in *Byliśmy sercem wsi. Materiały z sesji popularnonaukowej w Krasnymstawie 19 września 2003* (Warsaw: Ludowe Towarzystwo Naukowe-Kulturalne Oddział LTN-K w Krasnymstawie, Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego w Warszawie, 2004), pp. 67–68.
10. AŻIH, 211/138, p. 24.
11. Ibid., 301/1518, pp. 3–5.
12. Ibid., 301/5953, testimony of Stefan Sendłak: “Ostatni etap przed śmiercią,” pp. 3–4; PARK, testimonies of Janina Kić and Halina Błaszczuk.
13. Kuwałek, “Getta tranzytowe w dystrykcie lubelskim,” pp. 143–144.
14. The table is based on Kuwałek, “Das Durchgangsghetto,” pp. 326–327; and *Gedenkbuch: Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933–1945*, 2nd ed. (Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 2006), vol. 4, pp. 18–19.
15. ŻmP, Collection of Memoirs, Tape no. 162, interview with Hela Danielova (née Troller).
16. For further details about conditions in Izbica, see Kuwałek, “Das Durchgangsghetto,” pp. 328–332; about labor

camps for the Jews in Augustówka and Bzite, see AŻIH, 211/607, letter of the members of the Camp Council in Augustówka, June 24, 1942.

17. AŻIH, 301/29, testimony of Chaskiel Menche; A. Müller, *Geschichte der Juden in Nürnberg 1146–1945* (Nürnberg: Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, 1968), p. 288.

18. PARK, interview given by Thomas-Toivi Blatt to the author, 2000.

19. T. Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 70; IPN-Lu, OKL/Ds. 3/67, statement of Irena Pańko.

20. Z. Leszczyńska, *Kronika obozu koncentracyjnego na Majdanku* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1983), p. 76; Y. Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 390.

21. PARK, interviews with Thomas-Toivi Blatt, 2000, and Janina Kić and Halina Błaszczuk, 2003.

22. Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” p. 70; PARK, interview with Thomas-Toivi Blatt, 2000.

23. AŻIH, 301/29, p. 2.

24. Kuwałek, “Das Durchgangsghetto,” p. 334.

25. For the full translated text (in English), see Roseman, *A Past in Hiding*, pp. 186–197. For other examples of correspondence from Izbica, see Karl H. Misteel, *The End of a Community: The Destruction of the Jews of Bamberg, Germany, 1938–1942*, trans. Jacob Feuchtwanger (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1995), pp. 164–168.

26. AŻIH, 301/72, testimony of Leon Feldhendler. According to Feldhendler, the Kreishauptmann wanted the (collection) ghetto in Krasnystaw. The Gestapo wanted to create the Judenstadt in Izbica. In the end the compromise was that a ghetto was established in the Judenstadt of Izbica. From Zamość alone, some 3,000 to 4,000 Jews were forcibly transferred to Izbica.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 9 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1972), Lfd. Nr. 316a, LG-Kass, 3a Ks 1/51 (trial of R., former official of the German Kreishauptmannschaft in Krasnystaw, other mass destruction crimes at Izbica near Lublin), pp. 607–618.

29. AŻIH, 301/72 (Feldhendler was deported at that time to Sobibór); PARK, interviews with Janina Kić and Halina Błaszczuk, 2003.

30. Adamski, “Izbica nad Wieprzem” p. 64; PARK, interview with Thomas-Toivi Blatt, 2000.

31. T. T. Blatt, *Sobibor: The Forgotten Revolt—A Survivor’s Report* (H.E.P. Issaquah, 1998), p. 31.

32. PARK, interview with Thomas-Toivi Blatt, 2000.

JANÓW PODLASKI

Pre-1939: Janów Podlaski (Yiddish: Yanov), town, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Janów Podlaski, Kreis Biala Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Janów Podlaski, village, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Janów Podlaski, now located on the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus, lies by road some 143 kilometers (89 miles) northeast of Lublin. In 1938, the larger Janów Podlaski gmina

counted 4,010 inhabitants, including 1,947 Jews. In August 1939, 1,713 Jews resided in the town of Janów Podlaski.¹

In September 1939, the first month of World War II, Red Army forces occupied Janów. Because of the territorial provisions in the September 28 German-Soviet treaty, the soldiers abandoned the town to German forces on October 9 and joined the larger Soviet withdrawal behind the Bug River, located 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) east of Janów. Some 200 to 400 Janów Jews followed the soldiers.

Polish-Christian eyewitness Franciszka Olesiejuk (née Iwaniuk) recalled that the Germans, upon occupying Janów, ordered Jews and Christians separated from one another. She suggested that Jews from nearby villages were ordered to reside in Janów at this time. Survivor Mosheh Pakman described the Germans as imposing numerous housing restrictions on the Jews.² In late 1939, the Germans ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) established. Its chair was Maks Kaminer.³

The arrival of German Border Police (Grenzpolizei), concerns about border security, and the Wehrmacht's decision to send veterinarians and equine specialists to reestablish the renowned Arabian horse breeding program on the nearby farm in Wygoda (pre-war Biała Podlaska powiat) all likely contributed to the early establishment of a ghetto in Janów. In April 1942, Josel Pinkus, the head of the Janów Podlaski Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), reported the ghetto had existed since 1940. He described it as a Jewish quarter (*dzielnica żydowska*) or an unfenced open ghetto. The ghetto included 121 residential buildings, comprising 420 rooms. Its population of 2,011 included 300 refugees.⁴

Overcrowding posed less of a health risk than in some ghettos. On average, five people resided in each room in the ghetto. Contamination of the ghetto's only water source required residents to boil water before drinking.

From the spring of 1940, local inhabitants could contract Jewish labor. Young children working as shepherds or cow herders were permitted to live outside the ghetto with their non-Jewish employers.⁵ Few opportunities other than unpaid forced labor, including at the Wygoda horse farm, likely existed for adult wage earners. In September 1940, the JSS's organizational predecessor reported: "Jewish residents are denied any possibility of earning."⁶ With the German invasion of the USSR in June 1941, a large number of male craftsmen, mostly shoemakers and tailors, were ordered to a labor camp established in Biała Podlaska to provide services to Wehrmacht troops stationed there.⁷

In August 1941, Kreis-level JSS officials sought permission from the Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann for the Janów dentist Hendla Poswonska and dental laboratory worker Mordko Listgarten to travel beyond the ghetto to care for Jews in communities such as Konstantynów (nad Bugiem), located along the road to Biała Podlaska.⁸ After several dozen Jews contracted typhus in the winter of 1940–1941, the Jewish Council arranged for a physician, an expellee from Vienna, to settle in Janów. He likely arrived in late 1941.⁹

Because it could not afford to purchase food on the free market, the JSS established a community kitchen, but only

after Herbert Kühl, appointed Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann in December 1941, allotted the charity winter rations from cheaper government stores. In January 1942, the first month of kitchen operations in Janów, the charity used its 2,700-kilogram (5,953-pound) potato ration to provide subsidized daily meals to 300 of the most impoverished ghetto residents, including 90 children (about 22.5 percent of all Jews were under 18 years of age). Twice as many people qualified for the meals.¹⁰

In May 1942, the SS ordered a large group of Jewish men to the Wehrmacht camp in Biała Podlaska and to camps the Luftwaffe had established in and around Małaszewicze Duże for airfield expansion projects. The labor drafts were part of a coordinated regional effort by German civilian, military, and SS authorities to retain a small number of "useful Jews" for labor before the liquidation of the Jewish communities of Kreis Biała Podlaska.

The June 8–11, 1942, deportation of some 3,000 Jews in the Biała Podlaska ghetto to the Sobibór extermination center likely prompted a Janów ghetto resident, probably surnamed Hirsberg, to bid written farewell on June 11 to his son and brothers in the Warsaw ghetto. He and his sister's family, he explained, would soon move from Janów to a still unknown address.¹¹

On September 19, 1942, an SS commander, perhaps Gett (Glatt), the head of the Gestapo in Kreis Biała Podlaska, ordered all Jews working outside of Janów Podlaski to report to the ghetto on September 23–24. Over the course of those two days, the Jews were marched and driven in peasant carts to the ghetto in Biała Podlaska. Beginning on September 25, the deportees were transferred to the ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski. Some Jews, perhaps those on carts, were transported directly to the Międzyrzec ghetto.¹² On October 6 and 9, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 cleared the Międzyrzec ghetto, sending its inmates, including almost all the Janów Podlaski Jews, to be gassed at the Treblinka extermination facility.

David Guterman, Mosheh Pakman, and Dwora Zielona are some of the Janów Jews known to have evaded the Treblinka deportation by hiding in the Międzyrzec ghetto. Upon the ghetto's final liquidation in the spring of 1943, the three were among a group of Międzyrzec inmates sent first to the Majdanek and then to the Auschwitz concentration camps. From early December, Gendarmes also sent to Majdanek almost all the prisoners at the Biała Podlaska labor camp. On November 3, 1943, the SS shot the Jewish inmates at Majdanek, as part of Aktion Erntefest (Operation Harvest Festival).

A relatively large number of Janów Jews fled from the liquidation of the region's ghettos or from nearby labor camps and sought shelter with local Christians. Perec Rydlewicz, Szaja Ruzal (born 1925), and Chaim Blusztajn, all Janów escapees from the Biała Podlaska labor camp, were aided first by Józef Janulewicz, then likely by Paulina Brzeska, both in Janów Podlaski, before finding permanent shelter with the Misiejuk family in Bubel Granna village.¹³ Mikołaj Iwaniuk and his daughters Franciszka and Paulina, residents of

Romanów (pre-war Biała Podlaska powiat) village, are attributed with contributing to the survival of 60 Jews, mainly from Janów and Biała Podlaska.¹⁴ Iwaniuk and the family of his sister Juliana Mironiuk, including her son Józef and daughters Marianna and Weronika, sheltered 11 Jews from both towns in Jakówki village. Those aided included Wolf Englander, Herszko Goldberg, Noach Rodzynek (from Biała), Mendel Rybkowski, Gedali Rydlewicz (Perec's uncle, from Biała), Perła Goldszept, and her brothers Motel and Szloma. The Goldszept brothers had escaped from one of the Małaszewicze labor camps as the SS began executing many of its inmates in the fall of 1943. Because of the efforts of the Iwaniuk and Mironiuk families to locate hiding places for Jewish fugitives, residents from villages near Janów Podlaski sheltered about two thirds of the 116 survivors, including 61 locally born Jews, officially registered as residents of the postwar Biała Podlaska powiat in August 1945.

However, Oscar Pinkus, a fugitive from the ghetto liquidation in Łosice and also hidden by a family near Janów Podlaski, reports many Jews perished in local villages and forests, particularly as parts of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK) openly hunted for Jews from early 1944. Unfortunately, the postwar Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation, which details the wartime deaths of just 16 Janów Jews, lists as perpetrators only local German collaborators (almost all of whom perished during the war). It, for instance, attributes to Hetmański, a local ethnic German, the December 1942 shooting deaths in a Janów field of brothers Szaja (born 1906), Szloma, and Aron Ruzel. It notes that in April 1943 Zenon and Benedykt Kalichowicz, members of the Janów Schutzpolizei (Schupo), shot Szyja, Jankiel, and Dawid Grubman and 3 other Jews in the woods on the Cieleśnica estate near Kajetanka village.¹⁵

The exact number of Janów Podlaski survivors is unknown.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the history of the Janów Podlaski Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in M.J. Fajgenbaum, *Podlaskie in umkum: Noṭitsn fun ḥurban* (Munich: Aroysgegebn fun der Tsentraler Historisher Komisy baym Ts. K. fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948), pp. 21–27; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 265–266. English translations of the latter appear on jewishgen.org; and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 121–122.

“Dwojra Zielona,” a chapter in the important work by Zofia Nałkowska, *Medalliony* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1946), available in English as *Medallions*, trans. Diana Kuprel (Northwestern, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000), pp. 29–34, provides an account of the Janów Podlaski ghetto liquidation.

A transcript of a joint interview conducted with Iwaniuk and Mironiuk family members appears in both Polish and English translation, under the persons tab, on Światło w ciemności. Sprawiedliwi wśród narodów świata, a Web site spon-

sored by Ośrodek Brama Grodzka, Teatr NN in Lublin, <http://sprawiedliwi.tnn.pl/index.php>. Interviews with Józef Mironiuk are located on the Web site of the Organization of Polish Righteous; in the bilingual (Polish-English) work *Polscy bohaterowie. Ci, którzy ratowali Żydów* (Kraków: Muzeum Galicja, Centrum Żydowskie Oświęcimiu, Polish American Jewish Alliance for Youth Action, 2006); and in Bill Tammus and Jacques Cukierkorn, *They Were Just People: Stories of Rescue in Poland during the Holocaust* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), pp. 183–187.

Archival documentation about the Janów Podlaski Jewish community during World War II includes: AŻIH (e.g., 210/373, 211 [201, pp. 57, 87; 202, p. 12; 203, pp. 10, 30, 34–35; 204, p. 50; 205, p. 19; 206, p. 44; 208, p. 71; 463, pp. 1–43], 301 [1827, 1871, 4477, 5423], Ring I/578); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 94/69/BP/1-2; 055/11/14); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 4, 12/20, 43–44, reel 15, 49/1, 3–5]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring]); VHF (# 16819, 19251, 50786); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/463, p. 40.
2. VHF, # 19251, testimony of Mosheh Pakman.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/373, p. 3.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/463, p. 40.
5. AŻIH, 301/1827, testimony of Basia Ogórek, p. 1.
6. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/373, p. 9.
7. VHF, # 16819, testimony of David Guterman.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/204, p. 50.
9. Ibid., 211/463, pp. 30–31, 33–34, 36.
10. Ibid., pp. 42, 37–38.
11. Ibid., RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/578, pp. 1–2.
12. AŻIH, 301/5423, testimony of Dwora Zielona, p. 3.
13. Ibid., 301/466, testimony of Gedali Rydlewicz, p. 5; 301/1871, testimony of Grzegorz Misiejuk, p. 1.
14. Ibid., 301/466, pp. 5–7.
15. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 4, 12/20, 43.

KAZIMIERZ DOLNY

Pre-1939: Kazimierz Dolny (Yiddish: Kuzmir), town, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kazimierz, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kazimierz Dolny, Lublin województwo, Poland

Kazimierz Dolny lies 45 kilometers (28 miles) west-northwest of Lublin. Its pre-war 1939 population of 4,641 included about 1,800 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit, which occupied Kazimierz before September 13, 1939, commandeered all its Jewish-owned hotels and boarding houses. In late 1939, the Germans ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force established. Chaim Fajersztajn led the council from 1940.¹

In December 1939, 80 SS men on rest-and-recreation leave assembled the Jews and then beat several dozen men severely. The beatings may have been inflicted to expose fugitives fleeing the expulsion of the Jewish community of Puławy to

Opole.² From 1940, Jewish forced laborers removed *matzevot* (gravestones) at the two cemeteries for use as a walkway around the German civil administration and the SS headquarters, located at the pre-war Franciscan monastery.

Kazimierz's use for military leave and its strategic location on the Vistula River border with Distrikt Radom likely contributed to orders in early 1940 banning Jews from the main square and establishing a ghetto in March. The December 17, 1940, issue of *Gazeta Żydowska* mentioned the ghetto in explaining the Kazimierz Jewish Council's decision to use the synagogue to house a school, which it had just received permission to establish.³

The ghetto's initial internal boundaries stretched from one side of Nadrzeczna Street to Lubelska Street (including Nadwiślańska Street). The ghetto was not fenced. However, Jews were forbidden to leave its borders without permission. Poles and Germans initially could enter the ghetto to order finished goods from Jewish craftsmen.⁴

About 50 to 60 ghetto residents had to report to labor camps in Puławy. An equal number were imprisoned at a Kazimierz labor camp established in 1940 at the former Elbaum works on Puławy Street. The inmates dug rock from the hill-sides, cut them at a quarry in Bochońca village, transported them to Kazimierz, and loaded them onto barges. Gravel was reserved for local road improvement projects, which depended on the forced labor of Kazimierz Jews, conscripts from nearby Jewish communities, including Józefów (nad Wisłą), and about 100 Warsaw Jews.⁵ Another 100 to 200 ghetto residents daily swept and cleared streets of snow or worked for the Wehrmacht or the SS, cleaning stables, cutting wood, and performing other tasks. Though uncouned in the labor quota, women conscripts prepared meals at the military canteen and cleaned the offices and residences of the Germans. Because craftsmen maintained workshops in the ghetto, the council established a substitution system to enable another person, typically a family member, to fill the place of someone designated for forced labor.⁶

In March 1941, the ghetto's existence was threatened by plans of Puławy Kreishauptmann Alfred Brandt to transform Kazimierz into a spa town for German soldiers. (Jews in Kreis Pulawy were banned from such resorts.) Brandt ordered a newly appointed mayor to expel the Jews. To forestall complete eviction, the Jews offered Horst Göde, Puławy's deputy Kreishauptmann and subsequently Landkommissar of Opole and Kazimierz, a half kilogram (1.1 pounds) in gold.⁷ On March 10, 200 to 500 newcomers were expelled to Józefów. In April, Kurów refugees were returned home. In March 1942, Fajersztajn mentioned that the same mayor a year before had established a "separate district" for the Jews.⁸ Because the ghetto already existed, the comment likely indicates the timing of orders prohibiting Poles and Germans from entering the ghetto.

In July 1941, a new mayor, an ethnic German from Silesia, perhaps surnamed Sieradzki or Szaniowski, again threatened to dissolve the ghetto. J.F. Listig, head of the Kazimierz Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), held the new mayor responsible for

previously expelling the Jews from Puławy and Nałęczów. On Brandt's orders, Sieradzki gave the Jews 24 hours to leave Kazimierz. A kilogram (2.2 pounds) in gold, paid again to Göde, enabled 1,000 Jewish craftsmen, labor camp inmates, who had been conscripted by the Wehrmacht and the SS, to remain in Kazimierz with their families. After Sieradzki's departure several months later, many expellees returned, bringing the ghetto population to 1,400 by early March 1942.⁹

With each eviction, the ghetto area likely was reduced. In December 1941, Listig described the Jews as several times experiencing "re-housing" or "transplantation" (*przesiedlenie*).¹⁰ The smallest ghetto area coincided with the boundaries of the historic Jewish quarter (*rewir*), known in Polish as the *na tyłach* (at-the-rear) neighborhood, for its location behind the main square.

Conditions deteriorated in the ghetto in the winter of 1941–1942. The Germans cut heating rations. The collaborationist Polish town council refused to sell the JSS food at government prices or to include Jews in soap rations. As a result, the community kitchen served only 50 to 60 dinners, three times weekly, in October 1941. Monetary aid from the JSS and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) enabled it to prepare 100 meals, six times weekly, by February 1942. By then, 680 to 800 Jews required nutritional assistance.¹¹ Overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, and the poor diet contributed in December 1941 to a typhus epidemic, which claimed many lives.¹² Several local residents were among 36 Jews shot by the Kazimierz-based SS in mass graves at the new cemetery on Czerniawy Street or in the monastery gardens.¹³

Because Sieradzki returned to Kazimierz in the late winter of 1941–1942, supposedly determined to secure spa town status, the Jews were forewarned that all but 100 local labor camp inmates in early spring would be resettled to the ghetto in Opole. (Paradowski, a local artist, secretly told the Jewish Council about the plans.)¹⁴ On March 6 and 11, Fajersztajn asked regional JSS leaders for help to stop the expulsion. On March 11, Marek Alten, head of the JSS in Distrikt Lublin, appealed to Richard Türk, chief of Distrikt Lublin's Abteilung für Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge (Population and Welfare Department, BuF). Involved in planning the deportation of Distrikt Lublin's Jews, Türk informed Alten on March 14 that he could do little, because "unofficially" he had learned that Ernst Zörner, Governor of Distrikt Lublin, had recognized Kazimierz as a spa town. Since Brandt would make the announcement, Türk advised the Kazimierz Jewish Council to appeal to him to soften the expulsion order.¹⁵

On March 24, 1942, Fajersztajn convened a secret meeting of representatives from all families in Kazimierz to discuss the impending expulsion. Following the meeting, many Jews escaped from the ghetto. Some found refuge in other ghettos in Distrikt Lublin. Others paid guides to navigate (on foot and by boat) the melting Vistula River and made their way to Janowiec, Zwoleń, Gniazdków, and Chotcza.¹⁶

Two days later, members of the local SS detachment marched about 300 to 400 Kazimierz Jews to the Opole ghetto. A similar-sized group departed for Opole on March 29. Those who

could afford the 200-złoty fare traveled in peasant carts.¹⁷ On March 30, the Kazimierz deportees and other expellees consolidated in Opole, including some from Wąwolnica, were sent mainly by narrow gauge railway to Nałęczów. That same day, the SS marched another approximately 500 Kazimierz Jews directly to Nałęczów. Transferred there onto larger trains, the 2,400 Jews, including the Kazimierz expellees, left at 5:00 A.M., on March 31, destined for the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁸ The deportees were gassed on arrival.

On April 9, 1942, Listig, retained for labor in Kazimierz, appealed to regional JSS leaders for help locating the families of the 100 or so Kazimierz camp inmates: "We are all broken hearted because despite the passage of 11 days, we do not know where our families were sent."¹⁹ Listig made similar appeals on April 24, May 5, and May 6. JSS leaders initially requested more information but on May 9 admitted they, too, had been unable to discover the expellees' whereabouts.²⁰ These were among the last communications in the JSS files from Listig. A Warsaw survivor who had contact with the Kazimierz inmates recalled that they were sent to the Majdanek forced labor camp where they all perished. Postwar Polish documentation mentions only that the camp's inmates (including about 50 Slovak deportees brought from Opole in late April) were marched in October to an unknown destination.²¹

Fewer than 20 Kazimierz Jews survived the war. In Distrikt Radom, Paul Schneiderman was deported from Zwoleń to the Skarżysko-Kamienna forced labor camp. Moshe Kershbaum fled the Janowiec expulsion and was sheltered there by the Andzelm family. In Distrikt Lublin, Max Buchbinder and five family members, fugitives from the Bełżyce ghetto liquidation, were hidden near Kazimierz by Wiktor Górecki. Bolesław Cytryn (Zieliński), an escapee from the October 1942 liquidation of the collection ghetto in Końskowola, found shelter in Warsaw.

SOURCES Secondary sources include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 485–488; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 130–139; and Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 57–58. Also important are Sebastian Piątkowski, "Żydzi Janowca, Kazimierza i Puław w latach wojny i okupacji (1939–1945)," in Filip Jaroszyński, ed., *Historia i kultura Żydów Janowca nad Wisłą, Kazimierza Dolnego i Puław: Fenomen kulturowy miasteczka—sztetl. Materiały z sesji naukowej 'V Janowieckie Spotkania Historyczne' Janowiec nad Wisłą 28 czerwca 2003 roku* (Janowiec nad Wisłą: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Janowca nad Wisłą, 2003), pp. 189–214.

A March 29, 1942, letter from Pesach Goldbaum, a Kazimierz expellee to the Opole ghetto, cited below at AŻIH, [943.] Ring I/587, appears in its original Yiddish and Polish translation in *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, vol. 1, Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Listy o Zagładzie* (Warsaw: ŻIH and PWN, 1997), pp.

136–141. Contemporary press coverage includes "Kazimierz Dolny" and "Opole Lubelskie," in *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 17, 1940, no. 48, and April 10, 1942, no. 42, respectively; and "Kazimierz," *Warschauer Zeitung*, April 8, 1942. Memoirs from survivors appear in the yizkor book, David Sztokfisz, ed., *Pinkas Kozamyer* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kozamyer bi-Medinat Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1970).

Archival materials documenting the fate of the Kazimierz Dolny community during the Holocaust includes: APL (e.g., 498/0/270); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 211 [137, pp. 70, 74–75; 142, pp. 22–24, 30; 528], 301 [1513, 1812, 2275, 2915, 4420], [943.] Ring I/587); IPN (e.g., Ankiety, ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 2/67/1-6, 585/67/1-2, 3284/471); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6, 16/775-776, 780-781; reel 15, 49/98-100]); VHF (e.g., # 991, 2277, 3909, 12221, 18805, 21805, 44230); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/396, p. 3.
2. Compare AŻIH, 301/4420 and 1912, respectively, testimonies of Bolesław Cytryn (Zieliński), p. 1, and Gołda Teich, p. 2.
3. *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 17, 1940, p. 4.
4. VHF, # 3909 and 991, respectively, testimonies of Max Buchbinder and Paul Sznajdermann.
5. AŻIH, 301/4420, p. 1; VHF, # 2277, testimony of Fred Gilbert.
6. VHF, # 3909, 991, 12221, testimony of Esther Engelhardt.
7. AŻIH, 301/4420, pp. 1–2.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/142, p. 24.
9. Ibid., 211/528, pp. 41–42, 44–45.
10. Ibid., p. 14.
11. Ibid., pp. 13–24, 36, 39.
12. Ibid., pp. 25, 29; VHF, # 991.
13. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/100, reel 6, 16/776.
14. AŻIH, 301/4420, p. 2.
15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/142, pp. 22–24; 211/528, pp. 44–45.
16. AŻIH, 301/2275, testimony of Lucjan Majraniec (Kowalski), pp. 4–5; 301/4420, pp. 2–3; 301/1513, testimony of Gerszon Edelman, p. 4.
17. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 10, 1942, p. 5; USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), [943.] Ring I/587, pp. 1–4.
18. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/528, p. 47.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., pp. 49, 50, 51, 53, 57.
21. AŻIH, 301/2275, p. 5; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 6, 16/775, reel 15, 49/98.

KOCK

Pre-1939: Kock (Yiddish: Kotsk), town, Łuków powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Radzyn, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lubartów powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Kock is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) north of Lublin. In 1937, its population of 4,463 included 2,213 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied the town on October 9, 1939. In November, the Germans burned the synagogue. In December, the Jews were ordered to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat).

In November 1939, Landrat Hennig von Winterfeld, the Radzyn Kreishauptmann, effectively transformed Kock and Ostrów Lubelski into ghettos by announcing that almost all of the Kreis's 32,430 Jewish inhabitants would be expelled there. (Only a few craftsmen were to reside outside the two towns.) Winterfeld designated Kock for Jews from the northern part of the pre-war Lubartów powiat, an area incorporated into Kreis Radzyn. The first deportees, from Firlej, could bring with them only 150 złoty and limited quantities of clothing and bedding. The expulsions ebbed in December, when the SS unit involved, presumably the 1st SS-Reiterstandarte, was called away to expel Jews from Chełm and Hrubieszów.

By then, 2,000 local expellees may have resided in Kock. Among them was a large part of the community of Lubartów, ordered to Kock in December 1939. Though an expulsion order, issued for the town of Radzyń, specifically banned Jews from moving to Kock, many nonetheless reported there. In December 1939, transports carried to Kock some 1,200 to 3,000 Jews expelled from Nasielsk, Serock, Suwałki, and other localities attached to the Reich. By early December, the Kock Jewish population stood at 8,000.

As war devastation and overcrowding forced several dozen Jews to reside in a single room, the resulting poor sanitation led to a typhus epidemic. Local villagers, fearing they would contract the disease, banned Jews from seeking food or finding work in their localities. The bans effectively confined the Jews to Kock. Mojżesz Apelbaum reports many Jews, particularly children, perished from typhus or starvation.

In early 1940, Winterfeld offered to permit some Jews in Kock to return home in exchange for a 2-kilogram (4.4-pound) gold payment.¹ In early 1940, German authorities appointed a new Jewish Council. Its chair, Saperstein, was a refugee from Poznań. The new council organized a Jewish police force. By April 1941, the Jewish population had declined to 3,191 (775 families), including 814 refugees. Newcomers included 100 deportees from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki.²

Many Jews were resettled in the old Jewish neighborhood, mostly in residences on Żydowska Street. Some 60 people became ill during a March 1941 typhus outbreak. Another 55 contracted tuberculosis that year.³ By December 1941, decrees imposed the death penalty on Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement whom the Germans found outside their places of registration without permission. In April 1942, Szlomo Topel, Lejb Rubinstein, and Moszek Oberklajd, the leaders of the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization, reported on the charity's ghetto questionnaire that neither an open nor a closed ghetto existed in Kock.⁴

In the winter of 1941–1942, SS from Radzyń arrived to order the Jews to surrender fur coats. Cobbler Abram Wodyński was killed in a subsequent search for hidden coats. The

Jews were conscripted for forced labor, including draining local swamps, hewing trees, and cutting timber at a sawmill in Poizdów village. By May 1942, 158 Kock Jews were among the 407 inmates of a labor camp established in Ossowa for water irrigation work.⁵

The JSS established a community kitchen to feed the impoverished. Dr. Fritz Schmiede, the Radzyn Kreishauptmann from August 1940 until December 1941, permitted the Kock organization to purchase weekly from cheaper government stores just a dozen eggs and 20 liters (21.1 quarts) of skim milk. In August 1941, the kitchen closed because its organizers could no longer afford to buy food at free market prices for the 689 people, mostly refugees, under its care.⁶ After a new Kreishauptmann, Ludwig Stitzinger, released potato and heating fuel rations to the Kock organization in January 1942, a reopened kitchen served daily meals to 1,200 people. In July, Saperstein reduced working Jews' 120-gram (4.2-ounce) daily bread ration to establish a supplemental bread allotment for 425 impoverished children.⁷

With the May and June 1942 expulsion to extermination camps of almost all the Jewish communities in neighboring Kreis Pulawy, Security Police from Radzyń regularly searched Jewish residences in Kock for fugitives from Baranów nad Wieprzem, Markuszów, and Michów. During a May search, 27 Jews were shot dead. Between August 16 and 19, 1942, the Jewish Council designated 100 families (400 to 500 people), mostly refugees, for immediate transfer to Parczew. The deportees were sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp during the Parczew expulsions on August 19–20 and October 8.⁸

Members of the 2nd Platoon of Reserve Police Battalion 101, stationed in Kock to provide manpower during the deportations, likely oversaw the expulsion of another 1,700 Jews. One such deportation probably occurred on September 10, 1942, the date on which Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) (Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos, ASG) documentation notes members of a Schupo unit assigned to Kock shot 10 Jews dead.⁹ Survivor Harry Jacobs recalls German soldiers, probably the reserve policemen, almost daily designated hundreds of men for internment in various labor camps.¹⁰ Hundreds more Jews were transferred to the ghetto in Łuków after October 8.

A remnant ghetto of several streets for Jews designated for labor in Kock was established during the expulsions. The ghetto was located in the area now bounded by 1 Maja Street and parts of Warszawa Street and Wojska Polskiego Alley. It included Żydowska and Polna Streets. The ghetto was not fenced. Its inhabitants mainly cleared and sorted Jewish property or worked at the Poizdów sawmill. Deprived of rations, the inmates left the ghetto nightly to search deportees' houses for food.

Susan Weiss remembered that the reserve policemen stormed the ghetto one day, rounded up hundreds of non-working Jews, and shot them dead.¹¹ Weiss likely was recalling the mass killing of 161 to 189 Jews on September 26, 1942. Major Wilhelm Trapp, the commander of Reserve Police Battalion 101, ordered the execution in retaliation for the

murder of one of his men in Talczyn village. After his men shot dead 78 to 81 Poles in Talczyn, including six large refugee families, he decided not to alienate the Polish-Christian population further, accused the Kock Jews of complicity in the crime, and ordered the rest of the 200-victim retaliation quota be filled with Jews from the ghetto.¹² After the execution and the October transfers to Łuków, the ghetto population likely stood at 400 to 500.

On November 6, 1942, members of the 2nd Platoon of Reserve Police Battalion 101 began liquidating the Kock ghetto. The policemen likely transferred some 200 Jews to a labor camp established at the Poizdów sawmill. They then marched 120 to 500 inmates to the Łuków ghetto. Reportedly because so many Jews fled along the road to Łuków, Sergeant Jurich shot Saperstein dead. Several days later, the last ghetto residents—the clearing crew—were sent by train to Parczew to sort Jewish property.¹³

The Kock deportees in the Łuków ghetto were sent to their deaths at Treblinka in the Łuków deportations of October 26–27 and November 7–10, 1942. In early January 1943, the clearing crew in Parczew was shot dead. On November 30, 1943 (or more likely, 1942), 200 laborers at the Poizdów sawmill were executed. Among the victims were Dr. Frihofer (Friehofer) and Moszek Kleinbaum.¹⁴ Others escaped execution by fleeing to the forest a day earlier.

Fewer than 30 Kock Jews survived the German occupation. Before her death, Apolonia Świątek-Machczyńska gave false identity papers to 11 Kock Jews, including survivor Ryfka Goldfinger, and arranged their transfer to her in-laws' house in Warsaw. In Wola Skromowska village, Kaznecka and her husband Czesław sheltered Grzebień, Arye Goldman, and Izrael Rozenblat. Gedalia Grosman mentions local villagers sheltered at least another 6 Kock Jews.¹⁵ Chai Rybarczuk Liss, among the survivors, was killed shortly after Kock's liberation in July 1944 while retrieving possessions she had hidden with another villager.¹⁶

In 1948, a Polish court convicted 4 former members of Reserve Police Battalion 101. Wilhelm Trapp was sentenced to death and executed for ordering mass killings of Polish civilians, including the Talczyn executions, and of Soviet prisoners of war. Gotthelf Heinz Bumann (aka Buchmann) received an eight-year sentence for commanding the platoon and participating in the mass executions in Talczyn. Helmut Kadler (aka Kammer) received a three-year sentence for arresting Polish civilians and participating in mass executions. A fourth man was tried for crimes in Łódź.¹⁷ In 1967, a West German court tried 11 former members of the same unit for crimes committed during the liquidation of Jewish communities in Kreise Cholm, Biała Podlaska, and Radzyn. None of the 5 men found guilty were convicted of committing crimes in Kock.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the Kock Jewish community during the German occupation include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem,

1999), pp. 477–480; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 134–139; Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, p. 768; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo lubelskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), pp. 96–97, 197–198.

For another perspective on the killings in Kock, see Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996); Hannah Krall, "Pola," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, April 11, 1997.

The yizkor book *Sefer Kotsk* ([Tel-Aviv]: Vaad Irgun yots'e Kotsk be-Yisrael, [1961]) includes testimonies from survivors. An interview with Leonarda Kazanecka is available in Polish and English translation at <http://sprawiedliwi.tnn.pl/persons.php>.

Archival documentation about the Kock Jewish community during the war includes APL; AŻIH (211 [134, p. 56; 542; 646, pp. 25–26; 885, p. 14; 887, p. 91; 888, pp. 17, 30, 37; 889, pp. 3, 11; 890, pp. 5, 13, 17, 22, 46, 54, 71; 891, pp. 39, 48], 301 [2013, 3363]); BA-L; FVA (HVT [e.g., # 2270]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOS BP 41-45); IPN-Lu (e.g., 129/67/1-2, 131/61/1-57); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 5 (16/660, 672, 697-698, 700, 814)]); VHF (e.g., # 15478, 16686, 48207); and YVA.

Of the communities mentioned in the entry but not covered elsewhere in this volume, no entry appears for Firlej because Mojżesz Apelbaum explicitly states in his testimony, at AŻIH, 301/2013, p. 10 (typescript), that no ghetto was established there. There is, however, an entry for the other Firlej in Distrikt Radom.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2013, testimony of Mojżesz Apelbaum, pp. 1–2.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/542, pp. 2, 51; 211/888, p. 37; 211/887, p. 91.
3. Ibid., 211/542, pp. 2, 52.
4. Ibid., p. 51.
5. Ibid., 211/890, p. 54.
6. Ibid., 211/646, pp. 24–25; 211/884, p. 15; 211/885, p. 14; 211/888, pp. 17, 30; 211/890, p. 5.
7. Ibid., 211/542, pp. 40, 53; 211/888, p. 34; 211/890, p. 46.
8. AŻIH, 301/2013, p. 11.
9. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 5, 16/697.
10. VHF, # 16686, testimony of Harry Jacobs.
11. Ibid., # 48027, testimony of Susan Weiss.
12. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 16/672, 698.
13. VHF, # 48027.
14. Ibid., USHMM, RG-15.019M, 16/814.
15. *Sefer Kotsk*, p. 176 (Gedalia Grosman testimony).
16. AŻIH, 301/3363, testimony of Marysia Liss, p. 2.
17. IPN, SOS BP, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45.

VOLUME II: PART A

KOMARÓW

Pre-1939: Komarów, village, Tomaszów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Komarow, Kreis Zamosc, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Komarów-Osada, Tomaszów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Komarów is located 100 kilometers (62 miles) southeast of Lublin. In 1921, its 2,895 residents included 1,752 Jews.

Germans troops occupied Komarów on September 13, 1939. About two weeks later, they ceded it to advancing Soviet forces. After the September 28 German-Soviet border renegotiation returned Komarów to Germany, 500 to 800 Jews joined the October 8 Soviet evacuation behind the Bug River.

Upon reoccupying Komarów several days later, the Germans appointed a *wójt* (head) to lead a local Polish collaborationist administration. Members of a German Gendarmerie post in Tyszowce, some 15 kilometers (9 miles) away, and Polish auxiliary police, stationed in Komarów, exercised local police authority. Ernst Schulz, assigned to the Tyszowce post before Christmas 1940, was named post commander in June 1941.

In late 1939, German civilian authorities ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established. Abram Elbaum was its chair. From April 1941, Elbaum also headed the Komarów branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization. In July, Keilman Fogiel assumed the JSS chairmanship. A Jewish police force was recruited.

The *shochet*, arrested for violating prohibitions on kosher slaughter, perished from beatings in a Zamość prison. Twenty children attended an illegal *cheder*, probably organized by Rabbi Szyja Alterman.¹ From the spring until late October 1940, 350 men were interned in labor camps, including at Narol, a subcamp of the Bełżec extermination camp, and a water drainage camp in Bortatycze.

From 1940, about 200 Jewish expellees from in or around Włocławek, Koło, Sierpc, and Częstochowa (mainly deportees from Płock) were ordered to Komarów. Local Jews, rendered homeless during September war operations, mostly from Krasnobród, Tyszowce, Łaszczów, and Tomaszów Lubelski, also resettled in Komarów.² As part of the German plan to reduce the Jewish population of Lublin to create a small ghetto there, about 200 Jews arrived from that city in March 1941. On April 5, the SS forcibly expelled to Komarów some 400 Jews considered too impoverished to pay rents in the soon-to-be-established Zamość ghetto. The expellees almost all were December 1939 deportees from Łódź, Włocławek, and Koło.³ On May 1, the SS transferred to Komarów 250 Jews who had refused to report to the Zamość ghetto. In September, Fogiel noted 3,000 Jews resided in Komarów: 1,200 expellees and 1,800 permanent residents. The latter included displaced locals and about 1,000 native Jews. Several hundred Warsaw ghetto fugitives, unable to legalize their residency, went uncounted.⁴

On October 1, 1941, Kreis Zamosc Kreishauptmann Helmuth Weißenmaier reported that 1,800 Jews resided in Komarów.⁵ Because the Kreishauptmann in May had extended

to nonworking and impoverished expellees in Komarów (and Krasnobród) rations from the city of Zamość, he probably included them in the Zamość Jewish population. Weißenmaier likely provided the rations to keep Warthegau deportees from returning to Zamość. In November 1940, the Zamość Landwirt had refused similar rations to Jews living outside the city.⁶

Feldman, an ethnic German settler and beneficiary of the 1940 expropriation of Jewish businesses, employed Jewish craftsmen at his Komarów tannery. Others worked on the Komarów-to-Zamość road construction project, completed before Germany's June 22, 1941, invasion of the Soviet Union. Some 1,000 Jews daily traveled to work sites near and in Zamość; some worked at a sawmill. Most worked for two Czech construction firms, the recipients of Air Force Construction Office (Bauleitung der Luftwaffe) contracts to build airports in Łabunie and Mokre. Many Komarów (and Zamość) Jews subsequently worked at the Luftwaffe base in Łabunie or were interned there or in Zamość at Bauleitung der Luftwaffe labor camps. In the spring of 1941, children departed Komarów to work for Polish and Ukrainian villagers as domestic and farm servants. They returned home on Saturdays, usually with food their employers provided to supplement wages they paid to the Arbeitsamt (labor office).

In the spring of 1941, Schulz shot dead 19-year-old Mordechai "Motel" Temper, remembered by Zvi Sohar (Tsevi Zohar) as the first Jewish fatality of German violence in Komarów.

Because of tight housing, ethnic German newcomers to Komarów were assigned rooms in the homes of the wealthiest Jewish families.⁷ Required in September 1941 to inform Distrikt-level authorities about the locations of ghettos in his Kreis, Weißenmaier excluded Komarów from his list. In November 1941, Hans Frank imposed the death penalty on Jews in the Generalgouvernement found without permission outside their places of registration.

As the Jewish Council assigned two to three families to live in the homes of native Jews, overcrowded conditions contributed to a May 1941 typhus outbreak. A September-to-November epidemic claimed many lives. In October, the JSS established a 30-bed hospital and isolation ward. JSS officials transferred a physician to Komarów to oversee the facilities. In November, the Jewish Council mandated regular bathing; the JSS paid to heat the *mikveh*. The measures ended the epidemic but failed to prevent another outbreak in January 1942.

Two transports carrying some 2,000 Jews from the Theresienstadt ghetto arrived in Zamość on April 30 and May 2, 1942. On May 2, 729 deportees from the first (Theresienstadt-As) transport were transferred to Komarów. The newcomers, mainly Czechs from Prague and Vienna, established a welfare committee and a Jewish police force.⁸

On May 20 or 23, 1942, Gendarmes and SS surrounded Komarów and ordered the Jews all to report to the marketplace. The Germans probably relied on the Jewish-Czech police to search for fugitives. (A unit of Czech deportees, believed from Komarów or Izbica, provided similar assistance in Tyszowce.)⁹

Those employed by the Germans and most Czech newcomers were excluded from the expulsion. The elderly, children, women with dependent children, and the unemployed were ordered onto wagons and escorted by German police to Zamość. Imprisoned in barracks at a railway cargo loading dock (the so-called beet platform), located between Peowiak and Orlicz-Dreszer Streets, the expellees on May 27 were sent together with Zamość deportees to be gassed at the Sobibór extermination camp. In Komarów, Gendarmes, led by Schulz, in June rounded up and executed all Jews without a work permit (*Ausweis*) and the Jewish Council members.¹⁰

The postwar Polish Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation reports a remnant ghetto was established in June 1942 for those retained for labor. The 1,500 square-meter (1,794 square yards) unfenced, open ghetto was located along one side of the Zamość-to-Tyszowce road.¹¹ On July 5, Fogiel informed JSS officials about “the new ghetto” (*dzielnica żydowska*). Its 1,723 inmates included 650 Czech deportees. Fogiel reported 7 ghetto inmates already were sick with typhus. Two Czech physicians anticipated an epidemic, as the Jews were forbidden to bathe because the mikveh was located beyond the ghetto’s borders.¹² Peasants were forbidden to enter the ghetto to sell Jews food. Some inmates died from diseases related to starvation.¹³

The Jews sustained beatings, especially from Schulz. One day, he ordered about 50 young men and women to the square for municipal cleaning duties. Surrounded there by a Gestapo unit, the Jews were executed.¹⁴ Zygmunt Klukowski may have related the same incident in his diary, noting on October 5, 1942, that the Germans had retaliated for an ethnic German’s murder by executing 50 Jews (and 50 Poles) in Komarów.

On October 15, 1942, Gendarmes from Tyszowce and German police units from Zamość surrounded the ghetto. The ASG documentation reports that between October 15 and 31, 1942, Gendarmes, Gestapo, and SS shot the ghetto inmates as part of a larger group of 2,500 Jews executed in mass graves located just outside of Komarów. (The victims included Jews rounded up from nearby villages and some brought from Tyszowce.)¹⁵ However, a Polish-Christian eyewitness recalls the old, young, and sick were shot; the remaining Jews from Komarów (and Tyszowce) were expelled, probably on October 15, to the ghetto in Izbica.¹⁶ The Komarów deportees were sent to their deaths at Bełżec and Sobibór, most likely on October 19, during what survivors remember as the great deportation, so named because 5,000 Jews, mainly from the Zamość region, were cleared that day from the ghetto.

In Komarów, several days after the October 15, 1942, expulsion, Jews in nearby villages were ordered to report to the Tyszowce Gendarmerie post. At least 12 young Komarów Jews, working for peasants at the time of the deportation, fled. Their survival was made difficult by the expulsion from late December 1942 of some 110,000 Poles from 197 localities in the Zamość region, including from villages near Komarów. Rounded up during the expulsions, Abram Szttybel passed as

one of the 30,000 Polish children orphaned during the expulsions and was among those transported to Siedlce.

Counted among the handful of Komarów survivors are several young natives; Moshe Bahir, originally from Płock, a May 1942 deportee to Sobibór and participant in the October 1943 uprising, and five deportees from the Theresienstadt-As transport.

Tried in 1964 in Ellwangen (Jagst), West Germany, for the shooting deaths of 12 Komarów Jews, including Temper, Schulz received a life sentence.

SOURCES Secondary works touching on the history of the Komarów Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 467–468. For the arrival of the Theresienstadt deportees, see Adam Kopciowski, *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005), pp. 58–64. Details about survivors from the April 30, 1942, transport appear in Jan Osers, “Flucht aus Zamosc,” *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente*, no. 5 (1998): 288–321.

Moshe Bahir’s testimony at the 1961 Eichmann trial, a transcript of which is widely available online, provides the destination of the first Komarów (and second Zamość) deportation. The testimony of Abram Szttybel, cited in the entry as AŽIH, 301/3683, hitherto used by all scholars to date the Komarów ghetto’s establishment, has been beautifully translated into English, Adam Shtibel, *Testimony of a Survivor* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies [MIGS], 2002) and also is available online at the MIGS Web site. Other published accounts by survivors include Tsevi Zohar, *Me-ofel le-or: Toldot hayim* ([Israel], 2003), available in English as Zvi Sohar, *From Darkness to Light: My Life Story*, trans. Judy Grossman ([Israel]: Zvi Sohar, 2009); the testimonies in the yizkor book, Frida Kaplan-Shulman, ed., *‘Edut me’uberet* (Haifa: Kovets zikaron shel yots’e Komarov Lubelski, Polin, 1995); Moshe Bahir with David Avidan, *ha-Mered be-ya’ar-ha-yanshubim* (Tel Aviv: Sifre ha-me’ah ha-sheloshim, 1983); and Bahir’s testimony in Miriam Novitch, ed., *Sobibór, Martyrdom, and Revolt: Documents and Testimonies* (New York: Holocaust Library and Schocken Books, 1980).

Important for its chronology for the deportations of Jews from the Zamość region and its reporting of some events in Komarów is Zygmunt Klukowski, *Dziennik z lat okupacji Zamojszczyzy (1939–1944)* (Lublin: Lubelska Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1958), available in English as *Diary from the Years of Occupation, 1939–1944*, trans. George Klukowski (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 575, provides coverage of the postwar investigation and trial of Ernst Schulz.

Additional documentation can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŽIH (e.g., 210/417, 211 [553–554; 1147, pp. 8, 11; 1148, pp. 6–7, 38–39, 50; 1149, pp. 17, 27–28; 1150, pp. 11, 14; 1152, p. 34], 301/3683); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 44/67/1-3); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124

[AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 6 (18/1089), reel 15 (49/177-178)]; VHF (e.g., #4997, 15595, 27270, 27659, 43782); and YVA (e.g., M-1/Q/531, O-3/3109).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3683, testimony of Abram Szybel, pp. 1–4.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/417, pp. 8–9, 17, 19.
3. Ibid., pp. 32, 35; Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/553, pp. 1–4, 30.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/553, pp. 8, 23; 211/554, p. 26.
5. APL, GDL, 260, pp. 23–24.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1149, pp. 11–12.
7. VHF, #43782, testimony of Szymon Frydliński.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1152, p. 34; 211/554, pp. 38, 41–43, 45.
9. AŻIH, 301/5836, testimony of Augustyn Dudziński, p. 2.
10. Ibid., 301/3683, pp. 8–10.
11. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), 49/177-178.
12. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/554, pp. 45–48.
13. VHF, #15595, testimony of Adam Shtibel.
14. Sohar, *From Darkness to Light*, p. 49.
15. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 18/1089.
16. AŻIH, 301/5836, p. 2. See also AŻIH, 302/81, Mojżesz Frank, p. 8.

KOMARÓWKA PODLASKA

Pre-1939: Komarówka Podlaska, village, Radzyń powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Komarowka Podlaska, Kreis Radzyn, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Komarówka, village, Radzyń powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Komarówka Podlaska lies some 80 kilometers (50 miles) by road north-northeast of Lublin. Its 1921 population of 1,038 included 412 Jews.

Luftwaffe bombardment in the first weeks of World War II sparked fires, which left 120 Jews homeless. After a brief occupation by Soviet forces, a Wehrmacht unit arrived in Komarówka in October 1939. By January 1940, German civilian authorities in Kreis Radzyn had ordered Jews to wear white armbands, with Blue Stars of David, and to establish Jewish Councils. Szama Lonszajn (Lonschein) served as the Komarówka Jewish Council chair.¹

Because the Komarówka Jews were permitted to remain in their homes and to work in their pre-war occupations, 476 newcomers, mostly expellees from Radzyń Podlaski, settled there. Most returned to Radzyń when the expulsion orders were rescinded in April 1940. In May 1941, another “mass” of new arrivals brought the refugee population to 175. A group of widows and orphans appeared in January 1942. By July 1942, some 623 Jews were residing in Komarówka.²

In March 1940, a Warsaw refugee and eight witnesses complained to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Warsaw about the 12 members of the Jewish Council, the wealthiest men in Komarówka, dividing charity food allotments between themselves and overrepresenting monetary aid distributed to refugees. Mojżesz Apelbaum, the former head of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Firlej, subsequently attributed such shortfalls to the Gestapo regularly ordering the Kreis Radzyn JSS to surrender a part of each charity allotment.³

In the spring of 1941, Komarówka authorities ordered Jewish-owned businesses transferred to non-Jews. Almost 80 percent of the approximately 200 Jews conscripted for forced labor worked at a Wehrmacht base near Komarówka. Others performed agricultural labor on a nearby estate.⁴ By September, 20 Jews were interned at a labor camp established in Ossowa for canal work on the Białka River. The Komarówka Jews provided food and clothing to the approximately 407 camp inmates.⁵ In July 1941, a small SS contingent arrived to terrorize the Jews. The SS shot dead some 25 people, including Szama Zunszajn.⁶

Dr. Fritz Schmiede, Radzyn Kreishauptmann from August 1940 to October 1941, and his successor Ludwig Stitzinger provided monthly (until May 1942) 5,000 to 12,000 złoty in relief for impoverished Jews and permitted all Jews access to limited rations from cheaper government stores. In October 1941, working Jews could purchase monthly 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of potatoes, 4.35 kilograms (9.6 pounds) of bread, 400 grams (14.1 ounces) of sugar, and 400 grams of meat. Nonworking Jews were limited to 50 kilograms of potatoes and 1.6 kilograms (3.5 pounds) of bread. From January 1942, the Komarówka JSS received permission to purchase daily 10 to 20 liters (10.6 to 21.1 quarts) of skim milk (depending on the season). The cheaper rations and absence of a ghetto likely contributed to the relative health of the Komarówka community. In March 1942, JSS leaders reported there had been no outbreaks of any infectious diseases since the beginning of the war.⁷

From the winter of 1941–1942, increasing numbers went hungry because the Komarówka agronomist cut potato rations to 30 and 25 kilograms (66.1 and 55.1 pounds) for working and nonworking Jews, respectively.⁸ Continuing shortages brought a suspension in the ration. By August 1942, local authorities also had reduced bread rations to 2.6 and 1.3 kilograms (5.7 and 2.9 pounds), respectively, for working and nonworking Jews. From June 1941 to June 1942, the number of people needing JSS food assistance grew from 140 to 200.⁹

Some survivors recalled that the Germans expelled almost all the Komarówka Jews in June or July 1942. However, postwar officials in Komarówka remembered the expulsion occurred either in August or September. An August JSS report, submitted by local officials on September 6, supports the second version of events, as it notes 615 Jews resided in Komarówka.¹⁰

The postwar officials in Komarówka also described how the Germans expelled about 600 local Jews south to the

ghetto in Parczew and then several weeks later marched the same expellees north (via Komarówka) to the transit ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski. However, several members of the 2nd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 101 remembered escorting the Komarówka Jews in late September directly to Międzyrzec. There, they joined expellees from the Biała Podlaska and Parczew ghettos. The Biała deportees included about 3,000 Jews from Janów Podlaski and Konstantynów. The Parczew expellees mainly were Jews consolidated there from Wołyń and Czemierniki. The Międzyrzec ghetto was cleared on October 6 and 9. Its residents were sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp.

A small number of Komarówka Jews, mostly Wehrmacht laborers, were retained for a remnant ghetto in Komarówka. Icek Lerner remembered the detainees were ordered to a ghetto: a single house, surrounded by barbed wire.¹¹ Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) researchers, led by Czesław Pilichowski, describe the ghetto as located in an *olejarnia*, or mill, for cooking oil production. Józef Juszczyński, a non-Jewish Pole, remembered the ghetto occupying a formerly Jewish-owned mill located some 4.8 kilometers (3 miles) south of Komarówka, near where the Parczew road turned east to Wisznice. He recalled the SS (likely members of Reserve Police Battalion 101) initially guarded the ghetto. Its inmates were assigned small 2-meter-by-2-meter (6.6-foot-by-6.6-foot) cells, in which entire families resided.

Lerner estimated that fewer than 25 people lived in the ghetto.¹² The IPN researchers maintain its population stood at 600. The discrepancy may stem from the researchers imposing their timing of the first expulsion on Lerner's memory of the ghetto being established in mid-1942.

On November 30, 1942, Gendarmes surrounded the Komarówka ghetto and ordered its inhabitants onto waiting peasant carts. The expellees were taken to the Międzyrzec ghetto.

A large number of Jews escaped from the first and second Komarówka expulsions. Juszczyński recalled many joined partisan groups in the nearby forests. However, Lerner described escaped Soviet prisoners of war hiding there as anti-semites, who robbed Jews of their possessions and attempted to drive many to an execution site deeper in the forest. Many Jewish fugitives as a result sought refuge in the Międzyrzec ghetto, where some, including Lerner's brother-in-law Josef Zylberstein, decided to tie their families' fates to future German "resettlement" orders.¹³ Other escapees, including Lerner and Estera Rybak, secured false identity papers. Assisted by Piotr Kapczuk, the two found shelter in Warsaw after the second deportation. Rybak also paid Kapczuk 10,000 złoty for his father and brother, residents of Rudno village, to shelter her almost three-year-old daughter.¹⁴

Still other Komarówka Jews escaped the final liquidation of the Międzyrzec ghetto in April 1943 by hiding in bunkers or by jumping from trains carrying the deportees to the Majdanek concentration camp. Among the fugitives were six members of Lerner's family (and two Międzyrzec natives), who were offered shelter in exchange for money by Jan Sadowski.¹⁵

Kapczuk and Sadowski enlisted family and friends to murder the Jews they had promised to protect. Before the 1943 New Year, Kapczuk, his father, and brother reportedly had murdered Rybak's daughter. In July, Kapczuk paid Rybak's aid provider to murder her and Lerner. Rybak perished. Left for dead, Lerner fled to the apartment of Natalja Konarzewska, a distant cousin of Kapczuk, with whom he initially had lived in Warsaw.¹⁶ In October, Sadowski and four other Poles, including Franciszek Uzdowski, the owner of the farm in Przegaliny colony where the Lerner family bunker was located, ordered the Jews to reveal the hiding places of their remaining valuables. When they refused, Sadowski and his thugs attempted to solicit the information by torturing one Jew after another to death. Sadowski next offered Konarzewska 100,000 złoty to surrender Lerner, but she refused.

As a result of the attacks, Lerner and Szloma Zysman were two of the only known Komarówka survivors. Around November 1944, about five months after Komarówka was liberated by Soviet forces, Sadowski allegedly murdered Zysman to prevent him from helping Lerner obtain justice for the wartime loss of his family members.¹⁷

Lerner thrice filed police reports in Poland before immigrating to Sweden. In Stockholm, he submitted two additional affidavits to the Polish consulate in Stockholm before departing for Palestine. Lerner's allegations were investigated, but Polish prosecutors believed the evidence insufficient to charge the suspects. After Lerner died in 2004, his son Rony visited Poland and discovered the copies of his father's two affidavits at the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH) archives. He hired researchers and a film crew to locate and interview a 92-year-old man, alleged to be the last surviving perpetrator of the Przegaliny murders. In 2006, the Israel office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center requested that IPN investigate the murders. Prosecutors at IPN—Lublin branch (IPN-Lu) discontinued the investigation in December 2007 upon the death of the last known suspect.

SOURCES Secondary sources about the Komarówka Podlaska Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 468; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 141–142; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 239.

Tatiana Berenstein, "Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," *BŻIH* no. 21 (1957): 80, depends on the questionnaire submitted by postwar Polish officials in Komarówka, cited below as AŻIH Ankiety, to conclude some 600 Komarówka Jews were expelled via the Parczew ghetto to Międzyrzec. Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men. Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 91, 105, 108, 154,

157, relies on postwar depositions from former members of the 101st Police Battalion, including some stationed in Komarówka from July to late September 1942, to describe a direct expulsion to the Międzyrzec ghetto. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), case no. 670, provides an overview of the postwar West German investigation and trials used by Browning.

Józef Juszczynski's testimony is available under the Komarówka Podlaska section of the virtual oral history archive at the Lublin: Pamięć Miejsca Web site, created by the Ośrodek "Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN" (Grodzka Gate—NN Theatre Centre). The electronic English translation of a part of the Juszczynski testimony available on several different Web sites is inaccurate.

Rony Lerner's investigation into his relatives' murder is the subject of numerous journal and newspaper articles, including Laurie Copans, "Seeking Jewish Family's Fate in Rural Poland," *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 2006; Aharon Granot, "Quest of a Lifetime," *Mispacha*, no. 108, May 17, 2006, pp. 22–27; and Paweł P. Reszka, "Kto zabił rodzinę Lernerów?" *Gazeta Lublin*, January 21, 2008, which summarizes the IPN investigation. The film footage was used in a 2007 documentary, *Lerner's Revenge*, directed and produced by Gilad Tocaty and distributed in the United States by Digibeta.

Primary documentation pertaining to the Komarówka Jewish community in World War II includes APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 210/416, 211 [555], pp. 1–59; 885, pp. 22, 35–36, 47; 887, pp. 49, 77, 83, 85, 91; 888, pp. 23–25; 890, pp. 12, 26, 28, 42, 54, 56; 891, pp. 14–15, 30, 48, 39, 58], 301/2802-2803); BA-L (e.g., 8 AR-Z 236/60, AR-Z 26/62); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 284/466/1-3); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/416, pp. 4, 15.
2. Ibid., p. 12; Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/555, pp. 8, 12; 211/888, p. 24; 211/891, p. 48.
3. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/416, pp. 13–14; AŻIH, 301/2013, testimony of Mojżesz Apfelbaum, p. 6.
4. AŻIH, 301/2803, testimony of Icek Lerner, pp. 5–6; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/555, pp. 12, 55.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/885, p. 35; 211/555, p. 21; 211/890, pp. 54–55; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/416, p. 28.
6. AŻIH, 301/2802, testimony of Icek Lerner, p. 2.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/887, p. 77; 211/890, p. 5; 211/891, p. 71; 211/555, p. 38.
8. Ibid., 211/555, p. 28; 211/888, p. 24; 211/886, p. 36.
9. Ibid., 211/555, pp. 12, 55; 211/891, p. 30.
10. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.01, 211/555, pp. 55–56.
11. AŻIH, 302/2803, p. 7.
12. Ibid., 301/2802, p. 3.
13. Ibid., pp. 4–5; 301/2803, pp. 9–10.
14. Ibid., 301/2802, pp. 2–3.
15. Ibid., 301/2803, pp. 1–2, 7–10.
16. Ibid., 301/2802, pp. 5–14.
17. Ibid., 301/2803, pp. 1–3, 11–18.

KOŃSKOWOLA

Pre-1939: Końskowola, village, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kónskowola, Kreis Puławy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Końskowola, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Końskowola lies about 42 kilometers (26 miles) northwest of Lublin and 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) east of Puławy. Its pre-war 1939 population, of around 2,500, included approximately 1,100 Jews.

On September 15, 1939, German troops occupied Końskowola. The German military command immediately imposed forced labor obligations on the Jews. By January 1940, German authorities had ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) established. In the fall of 1941, its chair was Abraham Pomeranz. The Germans also established a 12-man Gendarmerie post and a Polish auxiliary militia. Both units were commanded by Gendarmerie Oberleutnant Jammer. A collaborationist municipal council, administered by local Poles, also was formed. It was subordinate to Kreishauptmann Oskar Ulrich (replaced in 1940 by Alfred Brandt).

During the first months of the occupation, the Jews moved relatively freely beyond Końskowola's borders to barter with Poles for food. In late December 1939, many Jews expelled from Puławy, the Kreis administrative center, arrived in Końskowola, fleeing forced resettlement in Opole.¹

Because ghettoization occurred in stages, through a series of decrees issued by Brandt over many months, scholars offer a variety of dates, ranging from late 1940 to late 1941, for the establishment of an open ghetto in Końskowola. By the fall of 1940, owners of houses inhabited by Jews were required to paint large Stars of David on their exteriors. Końskowola resident Joanna Dylewicz recalled her parents pleading with their Jewish tenants to move, because they feared visiting German authorities would confuse them for Jews if they marked their house. The tenants moved to the Jewish neighborhood located



Jewish men are forced to carry sections of barbed-wire fencing along a road in Końskowola, n.d.

USHMM WS #18599, COURTESY OF IPN

roughly between the market square and Starowiejska Street, including Kurowska Street.² In late 1940, more Jews were concentrated in a smaller section of the neighborhood after German authorities ordered Jews expelled from residences on Ogrodowa Street, in order for the German firm Baumer and Loesch to use their houses for a labor camp to hold Jews brought from outside of Końskowola to work on road construction projects. In early 1941, the camp's prisoners included a Jewish labor brigade from Warsaw.

In 1941, Brandt several times forbade Jews in Kreis Puławy from leaving their places of registration without permission. Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) officials in Baranów nad Wieprzem mention Brandt forbade Jews throughout the Kreis from leaving their places of registration for three months in late July. The orders were made permanent in October, when Hans Frank issued similar orders to all Jews in the Generalgouvernement. In January 1942, 1,400 Jews resided in Końskowola.³

From the spring of 1940, the Jewish Council filled forced labor quotas for local road construction projects and agricultural labor on a number of nearby estates confiscated by the Germans and also sent hundreds of conscripts daily to Puławy to complete tasks that remained unfinished because of the expulsion of that city's Jews. Pomeranz noted that the high quotas required all adult Końskowola Jews, both men and women, from 12 to beyond 60 years old, to work daily at forced labor. (Jewish Council members also worked.) Because craftsmen were unable to engage in the types of private enterprise tolerated by the authorities elsewhere in Distrikt Lublin, Pomeranz believed the Końskowola Jews stood apart from other Jewish communities in Distrikt Lublin as they early on had been forced to survive exclusively on the meager wages paid for forced labor. The highest hourly wage was 52 groszy.⁴ To fill quotas for nonremunerated municipal labor, including street cleaning and snow clearing in Puławy, the council recruited young children and elderly women by offering them free meals.

The provisioning office in Puławy refused to sell the Jewish Council food and heating materials, which were difficult for most Jews to obtain because of proscriptions on movement beyond Końskowola.⁵ From January 1941, the council was required to surrender 3,000 złoty monthly on 179 local pre-war Jewish society loans.⁶ The arrival, in March, of 267 Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) from Stalag II-B in Hammerstein placed additional pressures on the council. Many deportees were sick with typhoid. None had adequate shoes or clothing. The council transported 14 men to the infectious disease hospital in Puławy. However, it refused to feed the deportees because they were interned at the labor camp, which was operated under a separate Jewish administration.⁷ By July, the provisioning office provided rations to the prisoners but still refused to offer them to the council.⁸

Because of the absence of provisions, the Jewish Council initially could not establish a community kitchen to feed the impoverished. Instead, it divided all the JSS charity monies it received among the needy.⁹ In October and November 1941, 1,000 Jews required assistance, but the council lacked re-

sources even to feed or to provide clothing to the 150 to 200 laborers sent daily to clean Puławy's streets.¹⁰ By January 1942, the first German food allotments enabled the Jewish Council to establish a community kitchen to feed daily 850 of the most impoverished. The kitchen initially provided double portions to heads of households with more than 5 people, because large families with young children were starving.¹¹

On May 1, 1942, German Gendarmes arrested the members of the Jewish Council. They are presumed to have been executed. On May 8, the Gendarmes, assisted by Ukrainian militia, evacuated almost the entire Końskowola Jewish community, together with the Jews from several nearby villages, including Starowiejska, to Puławy. About 300 to 600 Jews were retained for labor in Końskowola. Another 10 Jews were shot dead during the evacuation. In Puławy, the Jews, about 800 to 1,100 people, were ordered onto trains, destined for the extermination camp in Sobibór. On May 20, a new Jewish Council chair, Israel Goldberg, a pre-war expellee from Munich, informed the regional JSS leadership about the deportation.¹²

Shortly after May 20, 1942, 1,025 Jewish expellees from Slovakia, including 700 elderly and children, were resettled in the vacated Jewish houses in Końskowola. The arrival, by June 2, of another 1,630 Slovak Jews expanded the ghetto population to more than 2,500. The Slovaks mostly were from Medzilaborce, Borov, and Bardejov.¹³

From the late summer of 1942, the Germans used Końskowola as a regional collection ghetto, though Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Höherer SS und Polizeiführer (Higher SS and Police Leader, HSSPF) for the Generalgouvernement, designated it one of eight remaining Jewish residential areas (*Judenwohnbezirke*) in Distrikt Lublin only on October 28. A number of fugitives from the May 8–9, 1942, deportations of the Baranów, Kurów, and Markuszów Jewish communities recalled German authorities in the places to which they had fled, mostly in Kreis Radzyn, ordering their expulsions and suggesting they report to Końskowola.

Bolesław Cytryn (later Zieliński), a Kazimierz Dolny fugitive, remembered the desperate conditions in Końskowola from the late summer of 1942. The Slovak Jews, employed mostly in agriculture, were swollen and dying from hunger. Several times, the SS arrived from Puławy for ghetto inspections and punished Jews for the poor sanitation by rounding up ghetto inmates and shooting them dead.¹⁴ Hela Arbeiter, a Baranów fugitive ordered from Adamów to Końskowola in early fall, mentions five people shared a single bed. The only food available was ersatz coffee. A typhus epidemic claimed tens of lives daily.¹⁵ Cytryn, Arbeiter, and Pinchas Zajac (Ziontz), another Baranów fugitive, all recall fleeing Końskowola after rumors circulated in the first days of October of German plans to liquidate the ghetto.¹⁶

In early October 1942, the three platoons of the 3rd Company, 101st Reserve Police Battalion, led by Hauptmann Wolfgang Hoffmann, arrived to clear the ghetto. The police received assistance from Jammer's Gendarmerie; a roving motorized Gendarmerie unit, commanded by First Lieutenant Messmann; 3 members of the Lublin Gestapo; and about

100 Ukrainian auxiliaries from the SS Trawniki training camp. The Jews were ordered assembled at the square. Members of the 3rd Company and Messmann's unit shot dead 100 to 500 people, including all 40 to 50 patients at the ghetto hospital, because they were too weak to proceed to the assembly point. Between 500 and 1,000 craftsmen and skilled workers, almost all men, were marched to Puławy. Some 100 people were shot on the way there. The survivors were sent by train to labor camps in Distrikt Lublin. The 800 to 1,100 remaining Jews, mostly women, children, and elderly men, including Goldberg, were marched off the square in small groups to a small birch forest, located just off the road to Rudy village. Messmann's Gendarmerie and the 3rd Company's 1st Platoon, led by Lieutenant Oscar Peters, executed the Jews in several ravines.

Survivor Avigdor Mandelbaum's Yad Vashem testimony on behalf of his Polish aid givers indicates a small number of Jews, likely all labor camp inmates, were excluded from the deportations and executions. Evidence also indicates the Germans in the early spring of 1943 transformed the Końskowola labor camp into a transit ghetto, to hold Jews deported from Warsaw, and a collection ghetto, to assemble local Jewish survivors of forest manhunts in the winter of 1942–1943. The Końskowola entry in *Pinkas ha-kehillot* notes that during the Warsaw ghetto uprising in April, the Germans deported about 1,100 Warsaw Jews to Końskowola before sending them to their deaths. Helen Kotlar (Kotlarz), a Kurów survivor, remembers local German authorities some time around Passover 1943 announcing to Poles that Jewish fugitives could report safely to the labor camp in Końskowola.¹⁷ The postwar Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation also suggests the labor camp was used subsequently as a ghetto, in noting some 6,000 Jews passed through the Końskowola collection ghetto before its final liquidation in the summer of 1943.¹⁸ Mandelbaum's testimony and the depositions of Polish Christians, collected by Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) after the war, date the ghetto's (and the labor camp's) final liquidation to May, when Gendarmes executed its 18 remaining inmates.

A handful of native Końskowola Jews survived the war. Avigdor and Faiga Mandelbaum were sheltered by Aleksander and Helena Wijek. Aleksander was executed in May 1944 on suspicions he was hiding Jews. A relatively larger group of Jews from several nearby communities and labor camps also are counted as survivors because they lived for a short time in one of the two collection ghettos established in Końskowola.

SOURCES Some German documentation for Końskowola, including Krüger's October 26, 1942, orders establishing the Judenwohnbezirke in the Generalgouvernement, can be found in German transcription and Polish translation in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), pp. 311–314; and the German-language edition, by the same authors, *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Frankfurt: Röderberg-Verlag,

1960), pp. 342–344, containing the same documentation but unfortunately erring editorially in explaining the order was issued in 1939, though the second work also includes (on p. 438) Brandt's May 13, 1942, assessment of the number of Jews remaining in Kreis Pulawy, with 500 to 600 noted for Końskowola.

There is no yizkor book or other published testimonies from native Końskowola survivors. Two testimonies from Polish Christians describing the wartime fate of the Jewish community can be found under the Końskowola section of the Lublin: Pamięć Miejsca Web site, an oral history archive created by the Ośrodek 'Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN' (Grodzka Gate—NN Theatre Centre), at www.tnn.pl/pamie.php. Helen Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave* (New York: Shengold, 1980), provides information about local German authorities using the Końskowola ghetto as a collection ghetto.

Secondary sources touching on the Końskowola Jewish community during the Holocaust include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 471–474; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 143–146; and Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, pp. 864–865, for the Mandelbaum and Wijek families.

Some coverage of the German and to a lesser extent the Polish administration in Końskowola is provided by Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999). Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), includes in chapter 13 coverage of the October 1942 liquidation of the collection ghetto; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press), vols. 27 (2003, case no. 670) and 37 (2007, case no. 772), provides an overview of the postwar investigation and trials on which most of Browning's research is based. Early postwar IPN witness depositions describing German executions of pre-war Polish citizens in Distrikt Lublin are listed in Leszek Semion, "Egzekucje na Lubelszczyźnie," *Zeszyty Majdanka* 3 (1969): 154–212.

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Końskowola can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., 498 [68, 88, 273, 749]; AŻIH (e.g., APL 498 [891–93, 895], 210/421, 211/566–67, 301 [272, 996, 4420]); BGH (700407, 730313); FVA (1513, 3084); IPN; IPN-Lu (2/67/1–6, 85/67/1–3); LG-Hamb (680408, 720424); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH] 211/566–67; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH] 210/421; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 15, 49/102]; RG-50.120*0181); VHF (e.g., # 722, 18373, 31126, 31584, 33048, 35421); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), ŻSS, 211/567, p. 2.
2. Lublin: Pamięć Miejsca, testimony of Joanna Dylewicz.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/567, p. 2.
4. Ibid., 211/566, pp. 42–44.

5. Ibid., pp. 27, 44.
6. Ibid., pp. 1–8, 211/567, p. 7.
7. Ibid., 211/566, pp. 12–14.
8. Ibid., p. 27.
9. Ibid., pp. 18–24, 27–28.
10. Ibid., pp. 39–40, 42–45.
11. Ibid., 211/567, pp. 1–2.
12. Ibid., p. 14.
13. Ibid., pp. 14, 17–18, 21.
14. AŻIH, 301/4420, testimony of Bolesław Cytryn (Zieliński), pp. 3–4.
15. Ibid., 301/272, testimony of Hela Arbeiter, pp. 5–6.
16. USHMM, RG-50.120*0181, testimony of Pinchas Ziontz.
17. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 78–80.
18. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 15, 49/102.

KONSTANTYNÓW (NAD BUGIEM)

Pre-1939: Konstantynów (Yiddish: Kostentin), village, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Konstantynow, Kreis Biała Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, General-gouvernement; post-1998: Konstantynów, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Konstantynów lies about 145 kilometers (90 miles) by road north-northeast of Lublin and 9.2 kilometers (5.7 miles) west of Janów Podlaski. Approximately 1,150 Jews resided there in August 1939.

In World War II, Soviet forces initially occupied Konstantynów but abandoned it on October 9, 1939, to German occupation. Worried about the Germans' impending arrival, many Jews crossed the Bug River, located just east of Janów Podlaski, into Soviet-occupied territory.

In late 1939, the Germans ordered a four-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) established. Its chair was Monko (Mozes) Rojzman.¹ A March 1940 list of 96 families (432 people) ruined as a result of the war indicates German civilian authorities circumscribed the public practice of Judaism and confiscated Jewish-owned businesses. Those deprived of livelihoods included the families of Jankiel Szejnkind (Jacob Scheinkind), the rabbi of Konstantynów, two *shochtim*, and a community religious teacher. Among the dispossessed were Jankiel Goldryng (Goldring), holder of the local vodka concession, and three nearby mill owners ordered to reside in Konstantynów.²

In December 1939, the Germans deported to Konstantynów 245 Jews from Błaszki, near Łódź. By January 1940, another 105 Jewish newcomers included voluntary refugees from Warsaw and expellees from Łódź, Włocławek, and Suwałki.³ By May 1941, the Konstantynów Jewish population stood at 1,102, including 190 refugees.⁴

Concerns about border security caused German authorities to assume more direct responsibility for administering Konstantynów. In January 1940, the SS arrested and sent Prince Plater-Zyberk, Konstantynów's noble landowner, to a concentration camp. His estate (and palace) likely were as-

signed to the local Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) commander. The SS (or perhaps the border guards) ordered the local auxiliary Polish (Blue) Police to arrest several Jewish families for recrossing the Bug River and returning to Konstantynów. Sent to the Neuengamme concentration camp, the Jews perished. The Luftwaffe built an observation tower and stationed a small contingent in Konstantynów to spot Soviet aircraft. A Gendarmerie post also was established.

Ongoing border security concerns probably played a role in the establishment of the ghetto. Jakób Dobrysz, the head of the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), indicated the ghetto was created in January 1941. He listed its establishment as the reason for the Jewish Council providing the JSS just 48 złoty in subsidies that month.⁵ It would seem likely the ghetto occupied only a small part of Konstantynów because Dobrysz, on May 20, held overcrowding in the ghetto responsible for a precipitous decline in hygiene standards.⁶ The ghetto was an unfenced, open ghetto or what Dobrysz called a Jewish quarter (*dzielnica żydowska*).

German authorities may have hesitated to officially designate the Jewish quarter a ghetto. After May 20, 1941, Dobrysz never again mentioned the ghetto. Instead, he referred to the increasing impoverishment of the Konstantynów Jews and from January 1942 to decrees, issued in November and December 1941, forbidding Jews on penalty of death from leaving their places of registration without permission.⁷ Hubert Kühl, the Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann, also excluded Konstantynów from a list of ghettos he submitted in October 1941 to Richard Türk, the head of the Population and Welfare Department (BuF) for Distrikt Lublin.

Upon the ghetto's establishment, German authorities imposed much higher forced labor quotas, which required the daily conscription of almost all adult male Jews.⁸ Most conscripts hewed trees in the Konstantynów forest and transported them to nearby sawmills, at which Jewish laborers also worked. About 200 agricultural laborers worked in local villages, including Serpelice. Hundreds more agricultural laborers toiled on the grounds of the Konstantynów (Plater-Zyberk) Palace.⁹ SS (or perhaps border guards) and Gendarmes overseeing Jewish labor gangs in the forest and on the estate routinely beat their charges. In the summer of 1941, ghetto inmates also worked on road construction projects.¹⁰

The Jewish Council devoted its financial resources to provisioning Jews it sent to labor camps and to supporting their families in the ghetto. Most Konstantynów Jews were interned at a local labor camp established in Leśna Podlaska for flood control projects on the Klukowa River and for forestry and agricultural labor on the estate in Worgule village. In 1941, almost all the Leśna inmates were transferred to a camp established in Rogoźnica. Some Konstantynów Jews were interned in labor camps in Lublin.¹¹

From August 1941, the JSS reported that "nearly all the refugees here and the greater part of the local Jewish inhabitants walk around almost barefoot and naked as a result of forced labor."¹² In May 1941, a community kitchen could

provide subsidized or free daily meals to just 300 people, mostly to refugees.¹³ When Kühl in October permitted the JSS in Kreis Biała Podlaska to purchase from cheaper government stores a limited number of potatoes for its community kitchens, the Konstantynów JSS reported a 1,000-złoty debt made it impossible to buy its 2,700-kilogram (5,952-pound) allotment. The JSS in Kraków sent 1,600 złoty for the purchase.¹⁴

Overcrowding and the resulting poor sanitation in the ghetto sparked a typhus outbreak in the winter of 1941–1942. By December, 80 Jews had contracted the disease. Another 56 were ill by February. In mid-January, Dobrysz reported that a local Christian doctor's refusal to treat sick Jews had contributed to the death of 10 young people. JSS officials in Kraków sent medicine and money to help establish a pharmacy and an isolation facility and may have arranged for a physician to treat the sick.¹⁵

In May 1942, an SS unit ordered all male Jews between 15 and 65 years of age to assemble at the main market square. Assisted by the local Polish (Blue) Police, the SS chose about 100 men for immediate deportation to the Rogoźnica labor camp. A second draft, also in May, sent an additional 20 men to what JSS officials described only as a nearby labor camp. The Jewish Council was required to send weekly 70 kilograms (154 pounds) of bread and other food items to help provision the second camp. To meet the requirements, or perhaps because, as JSS leaders reported on May 29, German authorities had informed them that all the Jews soon would be transferred to the same camps, the JSS and Jewish Council sent almost all their food stores along with the deportees.¹⁶

In June, local authorities in Konstantynów withdrew an offer to sell supplementary potato rations to the JSS, announced that only working Jews would receive ration cards, and threatened to deport nonworking Jews. Women and children joined the forced labor pool but discovered a day of labor entitled them to just 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread (previously the ration for nonworking Jews).¹⁷ Though nearly 75 percent of the Jews were starving, an insolvent JSS closed its community kitchen on August 11, 1942.¹⁸

On September 22, the day after Yom Kippur, a German official from Biała Podlaska gave the Konstantynów Jews until September 25 to report to the ghetto in Biała Podlaska. Oskar Pinkus, a fugitive from the August 1942 ghetto liquidation in Łosice, described the Konstantynów Jews voluntarily reporting to the railway station to be transferred to the ghetto.¹⁹ On September 25, the Jews still in Konstantynów probably were marched together with the remaining Jews in Janów Podlaski to the Biała Podlaska ghetto.

Between September 26 and October 1, a combined German security force composed of local Gendarmes, SS from Kreis Biała Podlaska and Kreis Radzyn, and members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 liquidated the Biała Podlaska ghetto. Small groups of “useful Jews” were sent to labor camps, mostly to the camps in Kobyłany and Małaszewicze Duże. At least 1,000 others deemed unfit for labor (mostly the sick, elderly, and young children) were executed at the Jewish

cemetery. In the last week of September (mainly on September 26), members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 marched the remaining Jews to the nearly empty ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski.

On October 6 and 9, 1942, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 cleared the Międzyrzec ghetto, sending its inmates, including almost all the surviving Konstantynów deportees, by rail to the Treblinka extermination facility. The SS shot dead the surviving prisoners at the Małaszewicze and Kobyłany camps in February and May 1944. On March 15, partisans liberated the Rogoźnica camp, enabling some of its 400 prisoners to flee before the SS arrived and ordered the remaining inmates to march to an unknown destination.²⁰

A number of Konstantynów Jews evaded the expulsion Aktions, jumped from the deportation trains to Treblinka, or escaped from either the final liquidation Aktions in the Międzyrzec ghetto in the spring and early summer of 1943 or the labor camps, to which they had been sent. The fugitives almost all were rounded up and killed. In June 1944, the nascent Polish anti-Communist underground murdered three Konstantynów Jews hidden in a forest bunker. Only a handful of Jews were alive upon Konstantynów's liberation in July. Most of the approximately 30 Konstantynów survivors spent the war in the Soviet interior.

SOURCES Secondary works touching on the history of the Konstantynów Jewish community during the Holocaust include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 547–548; which appears in English translations in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 142–143; and on jewishgen.org. Meir Garbarz Gover, the translator of the JewishGen account, has added explanatory footnotes, based in part on interviews he conducted with survivors from Konstantynów and nearby communities. Some coverage of Konstantynów also appears in M.J. Fajgenbaum, *Podlaskie in umkum: Nótitsn fun ħurben* (Munich: Aroysgegebn fun der Tsentraler Historisher Komisy baym Ts. K. fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948), pp. 21–27, 46.

The published memoir by Łosice survivor Oscar Pinkus, *The House of Ashes* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, 1964), provides an account of Jewish life in Konstantynów in late August and September 1942 and depicts the struggle of Jews hidden in forests and villages near Konstantynów to survive after the liquidation of the region's ghettos. A contemporary press account appears in “Konstantynów n/B.,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 22, 1942, no. 60, p. 5.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Konstantynów Jewish community during World War II includes APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/419, 211 [201, pp. 57, 87; 207, p. 42; 208, p. 63; 557–559]); IPN (ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 12/70/BP/1–2, 24/67/1–2, 39/67/1–3, 247/67/1–2, 270/69/BP/1–2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG], reel 15 [49/3–5, 14–15, 130]); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E [1281, 3371]; O-3 [2181, 2230, 2723]).

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NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 22, 1942, no. 60, p. 5.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/419, pp. 5–8.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–12.
4. *Ibid.*, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/557, pp. 26–27.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36; 211/559, p. 2.
8. *Ibid.*, 211/557, pp. 12, 20.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 23; 211/559, p. 13; Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, pp. 97–99.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/558, p. 2.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
13. *Ibid.*, 211/557, pp. 20, 23, 27.
14. *Ibid.*, 211/558, pp. 20–22, 24, 27, 30–31, 35; 211/207, p. 42.
15. *Ibid.*, 211/559, pp. 2–3, 8–10, 15–24.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 45.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 53.
19. Pinkus, *The House of Ashes*, p. 100.
20. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/130.

KRAŚNIK

Pre-1939: Kraśnik (Yiddish: Krasbnik), town, Janów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Krasnik, Kreis Janow Lubelski, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kraśnik, Lublin województwo, Poland

Kraśnik lies 50 kilometers (31 miles) south-southwest of Lublin. In August 1939, its 16,747 residents included 5,132 Jews.

The Germans occupied Kraśnik on September 15, 1939. With the October 10 appointment of Otto Stössenreuther as Kreishauptmann of Janow Lubelski, the task of establishing a civilian administration for Kraśnik was almost complete. In August 1940, Stössenreuther was succeeded by Hennig von Winterfeld; then in October 1940, by Hans-Adolf Asbach; and finally in August 1941, by Kurt Lenk.

In December 1939, the Germans ordered a 12-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) established. Its chair in the spring of 1942 was Jankiel Wajsbrot. A 12-member unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was recruited.

Hundreds of Jews displaced by war devastation, mainly in Janów (Lubelski), resettled in Kraśnik. In December 1939, 1,230 Jewish expellees arrived from Łódź. By January 1941, 6,300 Jews, including 800 refugees, were residing in Kraśnik.

Plans to concentrate German troops in Kraśnik, for the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union, saw Asbach reduce, rather than ghettoize, the Jewish population. On January 23, the Kreishauptmann ordered 1,000 Jews expelled to Radomyśl nad Sanem, whose 350-member Jewish community already had swelled to 550 in September and October 1939 with the arrival of San River expellees, including Jews from Tarnobrzeg, Rozwadow, and Nisko. Between February 1 and 10, 1941, Polish (Blue) Police transferred 700 Kraśnik Jews to



A Jewish man, wearing an armband, carries a large piece of furniture on his back in Kraśnik, n.d.

USHMM WS #18602, COURTESY OF ŻIH IMIENIA EMANUELA RINGELBLUMA

Radomyśl. Most expellees (90 percent) were Łódź deportees. Conditions were dire. Some 600 expellees slept in the synagogue, on wooden bunks built one atop another. During the final February 20 transport, several hundred deportees fled. The police arrived with fewer than 50 people.¹

Upon becoming Kreishauptmann, Lenk demanded the police close 66 private Jewish enterprises and insisted German firms mobilize Jewish labor directly. The orders and the decision to transfer the Kreis administration from Janów to Kraśnik translated into a plan for the Schmitt & Junk construction firm to harness Jewish labor to build and refurbish buildings required for the move. By the late summer of 1941, the Heinkel Company mobilized additional Jews to convert a pre-war munitions factory in Dąbrowa-Bór, just north of Kraśnik, into an airplane repair facility. Other Jews built forestry service barracks and stables in the woods by Dąbrowa. When, in the summer of 1942, Odilo Globocnik, SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) for Distrikt Lublin, decided to transform the site into the Budzyń forced labor camp, Kraśnik Jews were mobilized to build the camp.

Probably because Lenk wanted to create residential living space for officials slated to be transferred to Kraśnik, the Jewish community was the first in the Kreis impacted by the deportations. In early April 1942, the Arbeitsamt (labor office) ordered Jews employed by German firms to have their work cards restamped. On April 12, the Gestapo, led by Gestapo chief Erich Augustin, and Gendarmes, assisted by Sonderdienst and Polish (Blue) Police units, forced the Jews to assemble at the market square. About 2,040 Jews without the stamps—mainly the elderly, children, and mothers with dependent children—were marched to the railway station and sent to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination facility. Another 500 Jews were shot in Kraśnik.² Some 2,671 Jews survived the deportation Aktion.

In late May 1942, Schmitt & Junk established the first closed labor camp in the Kreis at several buildings near the synagogue. The camp's 180 inmates, all artisans, were selected from throughout the Kreis to build furniture for the new offices of the Kreis administration. By July, 250 craftsmen were interned at the camp.³ In late September, Schmitt & Junk opened another closed labor camp, for 300 Jews mainly from Kraśnik. The inmates built fuel storage tanks near the railway station.

In late September 1942, the SS transformed the artisans' camp into a ghetto.⁴ Triangular in size, the ghetto included Bóżnica, Szkolna, Strażacka, Ogrodowa, and Gęsia Streets. To secure the area, a unit of Ukrainian SS auxiliaries took over a building on Olejna Street, opposite the ghetto.⁵ The artisans for whom the camp was constructed lived for most of September and October outside the ghetto, in private homes. (The Kraśnik Jews most impacted initially by the establishment of the ghetto were those whose residences were located behind its fence.)

The ghetto was used first to consolidate Jews from other parts of Kreis Janów Lubelski. The first Jews to arrive in late September were the residents of the expanded wartime Radomyśl nad Sanem gmina.⁶ Though Radomyśl was located much closer to a similar collection ghetto established in Zaklików, the Radomyśl Jews probably were ordered to Kraśnik because of the 400 Kraśnik expellees still residing there. The Gestapo also may have treated the gmina differently, as Lenk had used it from the spring of 1941 to resettle Jewish deportees to the Kreis, including in November some 384 expellees from Kraków, ordered to live in Radomyśl, Antoniów, and Chwałowice.⁷

Almost all the remaining Jews consolidated in the ghetto came from the northern half of the Kreis, defined roughly by an axis running east from Annopol (Annopol-Rachów) to Batorz. In Annopol, a Jewish community numbering 1,814 in August 1941, some 200 men were retained for labor at the Janiszów and Gościeradów labor camps before the October 15, 1942, expulsion. The Jewish residents of the neighboring Gościeradów and Kosin gminy probably were ordered to the ghetto at the same time.

In the Zakrzówek gmina, the approximately 1,100 Jews, mainly living in Zakrzówek, Bystrzyca, Studzianki, and Rudnik, learned on October 13, 1942, that they were to report to

the ghetto by October 15. Adam Ulrich, the Polish technical director and site manager (Bauleiter) of the water melioration camp in Zakrzówek, reminded Arbeitsamt officials in Kraśnik of paperwork filed to retain the Jews for labor. The officials claimed they had never received it. Ulrich left for Lublin to procure the authorization. The Jews opted to wait, rather than report to the ghetto as ordered.⁸

As several dozen people crowded together in a single room in the ghetto, the Security Police began using the not-yet-opened Budzyń forced labor camp as a second collection ghetto for the Jews living in settlements north of Kraśnik, including in the Urzędów (375 Jews) and the Dzierzkowice (146 Jews) gminy. At Budzyń, men, destined to be the first inmates at the camp, and a few women resided in the stables. The remaining Jews, slated for deportation, lived at a heavily guarded family camp or ghetto established in another set of barracks.⁹

The SS began sending the Jews consolidated in the Kraśnik ghetto to their deaths at Bełżec around October 15, 1942. (Nuchim Rozenel mentions the deportations began in late September; Hersz Broner dates them to October 17.) All the Jews from the provinces were enveloped in the deportations, about which little is known. Immediately after the deportation, the Dzierzkowice and Urzędów Jews, imprisoned in the family ghetto in Budzyń, were brought (on truck and by foot) to the Kraśnik ghetto. They were sent the next day to their deaths at Bełżec.¹⁰

The Zakrzówek Jews were forcibly transferred to Kraśnik late on October 16, 1942. Upon returning the next day, Ulrich discovered the 250 Jews that Lublin officials had promised would be retained at the Zakrzówek camp had been imprisoned instead at Budzyń. The remaining Jews had been sent to the Kraśnik ghetto. Kazimierz Cieśllicki, a Polish-Christian, recalled the SS executed all the Zakrzówek Jews for defying orders and arriving in the ghetto late.¹¹

After the execution, Kraśnik Jews living at work sites and in other places in town were ordered to reside permanently in the ghetto.¹² On November 1, 1942, Lenk invited 300 Jews, mainly the artisan camp inmates, to meet at a local school. The invitees were held captive for 24 hours while German Sicherheitspolizei (Security Police, or Sipo), under the leadership of Hantke, organized the final deportation. Hantke ordered the remaining ghetto inmates, mainly the wives and children of the school captives, to report to the *mikveh* (ritual Jewish bath) for showers and inoculations. The German police drove their half-naked victims from the building and forced them onto peasant carts waiting on the other side. Transported to Zaklików, the Jews were sent several days later to be gassed at Bełżec.¹³

As part of the expulsions, SS-Unterscharführer Otto Hantke, commandant of the Budzyń forced labor camp, chose about 150 Jewish men to be incarcerated at the camp but then sent 50 back to be expelled to Zaklików. He shot dead others, such as teenager Baruch Krumholz.¹⁴ Some 30 women, mainly the daughters and wives of Jewish Council members and Jewish policemen, probably also were transferred to Budzyń at this time.¹⁵ Removed from Budzyń by truck several weeks

later, the women were sent to the Lublin airfield camp, by then used as the off-loading ramps for the Majdanek concentration camp.

In Kraśnik, Hantke announced that unemployed Jews defying orders to report to Zaklików would be shot. The Germans and Ukrainian SS auxiliaries rounded up Jews, including 6 women employed at the Społem food wholesaler, and executed them at the Jewish cemetery. Hundreds tried to escape. Those caught were imprisoned at the synagogue. On November 4, 1942, some 120 prisoners, including 25 female servants of German officials added to the group, also were shot at the cemetery.

Lenk required construction laborers in Kraśnik to finish the German police and trade association building on Piłsudski Street. On November 15, 1942, Hantke ordered the laborers and a ghetto-clearing crew assembled at the square. Some 500 men were marched to Budzyń. The 230 remaining Jews, imprisoned at the synagogue, were shot the next day at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁶

By late November 1942, 300 Jews officially remained in Kraśnik, including about 200 mainly artisans confined to the former ghetto. On November 23, the SS in Lublin assumed control of the ghetto, which officially became a forced labor camp. In late June 1944, the 295 surviving Jews in Kraśnik's two labor camps were sent to the Płaszów concentration camp.

Of the approximately 7,500 Jews who passed through the Kraśnik ghetto, 400 to 500 survived. Almost all were native or wartime residents of Kraśnik.

A West German court convicted Hantke of many crimes, including murders committed during the Kraśnik deportations. In 1974, he received a life sentence.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the wartime history of the Kraśnik Jewish community include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 519–523; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 153–158.

Among the few published testimonies from survivors are Fiszel Swerdszarf, *Testimonio* (La Paz: Círculo Israelita, 1988); and those published in the yizkor book, David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Krasnik* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Krashnik be-Medinat Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1973). Part of the book, translated in English on jewishgen.org, is a scholarly survey by Tatiana Berenstein, particularly valuable for those interested in Jewish life in Kraśnik before the establishment of the ghetto in September 1942.

Contemporary wartime press documentation includes a discussion of the April 1942 deportation in “Jüngste Kreishauptstadt im GG,” *Krakauer Zeitung*, May 5, 1942. Verdicts of postwar German trials can be found in *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), Lfd. Nr. 1005; and in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1972, 2008, 2009), vols. 8, 39, and 40, Lfd. Nr. 289, 812 (for Hantke), and 813.

Additional documentation on the fate of the Kraśnik Jews and of the Jews from the communities consolidated in the Kraśnik ghetto can be found in the following archives: APL; APL-Kraśnik; AŻIH (e.g., 210/435, 211 [459, pp. 2, 8, 13, 16–20, 25, 42, 63, 66, 77; 460, pp. 8–9, 20–23, 31, 34, 38; 461, pp. 1–3, 6, 12, 15, 32–33, 37, 40–43; 462, pp. 2, 34, 41; 608–610], 301 [275, 542, 1292, 1516, 2221, 2544, 2845, 3324, 4348, 4399], 302/277); BA-BL (R 52III/30); BA-L (208 AR-Z 74/60, 8 AR-Z 384/61); IFZ (Gm 07.94/9; Ga 02.05; Gy 35; Gh 02.38/2; Gh 02.45/1+2); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAL [107–108, 185], SOL 171, SSKL 292); IPN-Lu (e.g., 34/67); LG-Hamb (147 Ks 2/72, 147 Ks 1/74, 147 Ks 3/72, [50] 23/73); LG-Mü I (1 Ks 2/51); Sta. Amberg (2 Js 930/64); Sta. München (116 Js 2/67); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); VHF (e.g., # 1861, 24001); and YVA (e.g., M-49/1516; O-3 [2184, 2780, 2941, 3603, 4242, 4245, 4312, 5004, 5224]).

Of the Jewish communities mentioned in the entry and located during the war in Kreis Janow Lubelski but not receiving coverage elsewhere in this volume, in Zakrzówek, leaders of the local branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) reported on the organization's April 1942 ghetto questionnaire that no ghetto, either open or closed, existed anywhere in the gmina. Here, see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1145, p. 48. The evidence is insufficient to determine whether ghettos were established in Batorz, Kosin, or Gościeradów, communities for which almost no documentation has survived.

The JSS in Annopol-Rachów did not return a ghetto questionnaire, but scholars have long held that an open ghetto existed there, based on the testimony of Eli Fishman in the Annopol yizkor book, Shemu'el Nitsan, ed., *Raḥov-Annopol: Pirḳe 'edut ve-zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Raḥov-Annopol vehavsevivah, 1978), available in a complete English translation at jewishgen.org. However, the reference probably was added by the editor, as Fishman in a subsequent testimony, at VHF, # 14967, went out of his way to emphasize that the Jews in Annopol were not confined to a ghetto but rather were subjected to limitations on movement, which applied to Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement from November 1941. After surveying all the available Jewish documentation for Annopol in the USHMM and VHF collections and finding no mention of a ghetto, the editors decided to exclude it from this volume.

The documentation is more mixed for Radomyśl nad Sanem. On one level, Lenk, upon ordering the November 1941 Kraków expellees resettled there, also dispersed the new arrivals and a part of the Kraśnik expellees among the three major Jewish communities (Radomyśl, Antoniów, and Chwałowice) in the expanded wartime Radomyśl nad Sanem gmina. The arrival of so many Jews in the smaller communities may have resulted in ghettoization orders, as Henryk Proper notes occurred in Antoniów, in the testimony at AŻIH, 301/2544, pp. 1–2. Unfortunately, the Radomyśl JSS, which represented the Jews in the entire gmina, never once mentioned any ghettos existing there and did not return the organization's April 1942 ghetto questionnaire. In the absence of corroborating testimonies from survivors or German documentation mentioning the presence of a ghetto, the editors had little choice but to conclude the evidence insufficient at this point to include entries for Radomyśl, Antoniów, and Chwałowice.

Laura Crago

VOLUME II: PART A

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/284, pp. 5–8; Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/870, pp. 8–20, 27.
2. AŻIH, 301/2221, testimony of Nuchim Rozenel, p. 2; 301/1516, testimony of Abraham Olender, p. 2; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/608, p. 34.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/610, pp. 16, 30, 34.
4. AŻIH, 301/3324, testimony of Hadasa Mincberg, p. 4.
5. Ibid., 302/277, testimony of Kazimierz Cieśllicki, p. 33.
6. Ibid., 301/2544, testimony of Henryk Proper, p. 2; 301/4399, testimony of Szulim Garen, p. 1.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/871, p. 49.
8. AŻIH, 301/2845, testimony of Adam Ulrich, p. 18.
9. VHF, # 1861, testimony of Gary Flumenbaum.
10. Ibid.; AŻIH, 301/2221, pp. 2–3; 301/275, testimony of Hersz Broner, p. 1.
11. AŻIH, 302/277, p. 34; VHF, # 24001, testimony of Abraham Ehrenberg.
12. AŻIH, 301/275, p. 1.
13. Ibid., 301/3324, pp. 2–3; 301/2221, p. 3.
14. IfZ, Gh 02.38/2, verdict of LG-Hamb, (50) 23/73, pp. 43–44, 144ff.
15. AŻIH, 301/1516, p. 4.
16. Ibid., 301/2221, pp. 3–4.

KRASNYSTAW

Pre-1939: Krasnystaw (Yiddish: Krasnistov), town, Krasnystaw powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Krasnystaw, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lublin województwo, Poland

Krasnystaw lies 54 kilometers (33.5 miles) southeast of Lublin. In August 1939, its approximately 10,000 residents included about 2,500 Jews.

The Germans occupied Krasnystaw after combating Polish troops on September 18, 1939. Seven Jews were blamed for this resistance and hanged. When the Poles renewed hostilities the



Jews are forced to stack munitions under German army supervision in Krasnystaw, July 4, 1941.

USHMM WS #81512, COURTESY OF NARA

next day, the German military commander placed 40 Jewish hostages on the German front line. Thirteen were killed; many more were wounded. Around September 26, the Germans ceded Krasnystaw to Soviet forces. After a border demarcation returned the town to Germany, almost 1,000 Jews joined the Soviet military evacuation. Before the last Soviet troops crossed the Bug River on October 7–8, the Germans had reoccupied Krasnystaw.

Krasnystaw became the center of the German civilian administration for Kreis Krasnystaw. From October 1939, Hartmut Gerstenhauer was the Kreishauptmann. In October 1940, Hennig von Winterfeld succeeded him, then Claus Volkmann in April 1941, and Adolf Schmidt in August 1941. In November 1940, 13,500 to 14,500 Jews resided in the Kreis. The Krasnystaw Jewish community, numbering 1,200 to 1,500, was the third or fourth largest, behind Izbica (5,000 to 6,000), Turobin (2,600), and perhaps Żółkiewka (1,400).

In January 1940, Gerstenhauer ordered that Jewish Councils (Judenräte) were to be established. Lipa Rajchman and Dawid Zylbercan served as the chair and deputy chair of the Krasnystaw Jewish Council. The council organized forced labor conscription and collected contributions demanded by German authorities. Gerstenhauer also ordered Jews throughout the Kreis to Germanize their surnames. In a September 10, 1940, situation report, he explained to Hans Frank that the change, made to simplify record keeping, did not jeopardize German interests, for “when they go to Madagascar after the war, the Jews can get themselves Madagascan names there.”¹

On August 9, 1940, Gerstenhauer gave the Jews three days to report to a ghetto located in the Grobla neighborhood. Known for its small wooden homes and absence of electricity and central plumbing, Grobla was the poorest Jewish neighborhood in Krasnystaw. Gerstenhauer limited the items the Jews could bring to small quantities of clothing and bedding.²

The unfenced, or open, one-street ghetto was among the earliest established in Distrikt Lublin. It was more isolated than most, because the Wieprz River separated Grobla from the rest of the town. Gerstenhauer gradually restricted the Jews to the ghetto. In the aforementioned situation report, the Kreishauptmann explained he had banned Jews from his offices, because the German administration was “besieged . . . with Jews naturally excited about the relocation of the Jews to the ghetto.”³ Gerstenhauer soon prohibited Jews from entering central Krasnystaw, except for work.

There were not enough residences in the ghetto to accommodate all the Jews. The homeless crowded into the synagogue or slept outside. No place existed for the Jewish Council to re-establish its medical clinic. Conscribed for forced labor, the ghetto inmates cleared war devastation, reconstructed burned-out buildings, and rebuilt a bridge over the Wieprz. Zylbercan admitted more than half the Jews did not have a crumb of bread to eat. Rather than establish welfare institutions, the Jewish Council from October 1940 protested and delayed until late April 1941 the appointment of Michał Szolsohn, a popular Talmud Torah activist, to head the Krasnystaw branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization.⁴

In a February 11, 1941, report in *Gazeta Żydowska*, the Jewish Council avoided mentioning the ghetto, while nonetheless indicating one existed. The report noted the Jews “had taken up residence in Grobla, where a Jewish ghetto [*getto*] was located many centuries ago.”⁵ Readers familiar with Polish history would recognize that bans on Jewish residence from 1569 to 1862 meant no Jewish quarter (*rewir*) ever had existed in Krasnystaw. The use of the word *getto*, rather than the more historically accurate *rewir*, presumably was intended.

Changes in German policies likely necessitated the bending of history. Generally, German authorities in Distrikt Lublin were required to provide Jews in ghettos limited rations. From December 2, 1940, they also could exclude Jews from the ration pool. Gerstenhauer and his successors chose the second option for the unemployed. Only from November 1941, when Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement were confined, on pain of death, to their places of registration, did the Kreishauptmannschaft (Kreis authorities) permit the 15,708 unemployed Jews (out of an expanded population of 18,493) to purchase potatoes (once) and very small amounts of bread (or flour) and sugar (regularly) from cheaper government stores.⁶

Though the *Gazeta Żydowska* report mentioned the community soon would be allowed to return to central Krasnystaw, Kreishauptmann Claus Volkmann permitted only a few Jews, probably craftsmen, to live in some buildings on May Third Square and just outside the ghetto on Mostowa and Kolejowa Streets.⁷ The Jews probably provided services to the local population and to Wehrmacht troops, concentrated in Krasnystaw before the June 22, 1941, invasion of the Soviet Union. On May 6, Volkmann ordered 950 to 1,250 ghetto inhabitants resettled in 15 villages in the Zakrzew gmina, located on the southwestern border of the Kreis, some 47 kilometers (29 miles) from Krasnystaw. Attacks on Jews by German soldiers and the burning of the synagogue probably provided the public rationale for the expulsions. By mid-June, just 250 to 300 Jews were residents of Krasnystaw.⁸

The Krasnystaw JSS provided services to the larger community, known as Zakrzew-Krasnystaw.⁹ Discovering subsistence difficult in Zakrzew, a gmina hitherto home to 30 Jews, the Krasnystaw expellees almost all departed just before the November 1941 orders permanently consigned Jews to their places of registration. About a fourth moved to Wysokie (koło Krasnegostawu). The rest settled closer to home, mainly in Kraśniczyn and Gorzków. By March 1942, just half the 200 Jews in the Zakrzew gmina were Krasnystaw expellees.¹⁰

By February 1942, 800 Jews were living in Krasnystaw. The fact that they received almost no charity assistance suggests only that the employed were permitted to reside with their immediate families in the ghetto. Some Jews worked for the municipal administration. Others labored at a munitions depot the Wehrmacht established outside of Krasnystaw by the Borek Woods.

On April 12, 1942, as many as 600 Krasnystaw Jews were expelled to Izbica together with Jews from nearby communities. Some 272 (of 435) Jews from the Siennica Różana gmina, 200 (of 378) in the Rybczewice gmina, and 556 (of 715) in

Kraśniczyn were among the expellees. On April 16, Szalomon Griffen, head of the JSS in Fajslawice, reported the 220 Jews in his gmina, half of them employed at a German estate, were unscathed by a deportation, which had impacted Jews in every town and settlement in the Kreis and in the neighboring Łopiennik Górny and Rybczewice gminy.¹¹ The expellees probably were marched directly to the Izbica railway station and then sent to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination center.

Objections Kreishauptmann Schmidt raised to a March 1942 proposal by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Höfle, one of the main architects of Operation Reinhard, to use Izbica to resettle Reich and Protectorate Jews help explain the early (for Distrikt Lublin) timing of the Krasnystaw deportations and perhaps why Jews in some places, most notably Krasnystaw and Kraśniczyn, almost all were murdered by April 1942. To overcome Schmidt’s protests, Höfle promised to create room for the newcomers by first “relieving” certain localities of native Jews.¹² Höfle at least initially responded to Schmidt’s concerns about overcrowding in Izbica by ordering thousands of the first Reich and Protectorate arrivals to several locations where most native Jews had been sent to their deaths.

After the April 1942 expulsions, 150 to 200 Jews remained in Krasnystaw. Probably at this time, the ghetto and the Wehrmacht armory were fenced with barbed wire. The latter was designated a Jewish labor camp.

In late April 1942, the Germans ordered 23 Reich Jews from Izbica to Krasnystaw. On April 28, a transport of 853 to 1,000 Reich Jews, officially destined for Izbica, arrived in Krasnystaw. The passengers—Jews from Bamberg (103 people), Fürth, Nuremberg, Schweinfurt, and Würzburg—were resettled instead in Kraśniczyn. On May 3, another Krasnystaw transport of 1,000 Reich Jews was ordered to Kraśniczyn. In late April, 250 German expellees, some from Breslau, were transferred from Izbica to Kraśniczyn. They joined 500 Czech and Slovak Jews, from a March 13 Terezín transport to Izbica, ordered to Kraśniczyn on March 18. Some 400 Czech and Slovak Jews probably were imprisoned at the Wehrmacht camp outside of Krasnystaw. On May 7, Schmidt ordered the Krasnystaw JSS to establish a kitchen for workers, including 40 Reich deportees.¹³

Before May 12, 1942, the Gestapo established a fenced collection, or transit, ghetto in Krasnystaw. Abutting the Grobla ghetto, the collection ghetto included an unfinished school and barracks for railway laborers.

On May 13, the Gestapo, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, Polish police and civilian guards, local Jewish Police, and Czech Jewish Police reinforcements (probably from Izbica) transferred most of the Jews from the southern part of the Kreis to the collection ghetto.¹⁴ Survivor Dov Freiberg, among 2,000 (of 3,500) expellees from Turobin, recalls first marching to Wysokie to pick up the Jewish community (approximately 800 people), then to Żółkiewka, where some 1,300 (of approximately 2,200) Jews were joined to the column. Among the latter were the remaining 178 to 200 Jews from Rybczewice ordered to Żółkiewka on May 7. In Gorzków, 1,000 (of 1,800) Jews were added to the march. Some 248 Jews from

the Rudnik gmina, 200 from the Zakrzew gmina including 100 Krasnystaw expellees, and all the Jews in the Łopiennik Górny gmina also were expelled to the ghetto.

Almost all the approximately 5,800 Jews imprisoned in the collection ghetto slept outside. The next day, on May 14, 1942, the Gestapo chose some 600 to 700 inmates for deportation to the Majdanek concentration camp.¹⁵ The remaining 5,100 to 5,200 Jews were sent to be gassed at Sobibór on May 14 and 15.

Among the May 15 deportees were Michał Szolsohn and his wife, added to the fifth Sobibór transport in an act of “personal retribution.” Szolsohn’s son defied a gag order and sent two telegrams that day, appealing to JSS leaders in Kraków to obtain his parents’ release.¹⁶ The JSS could do little, as the Szolsohns were gassed on arrival. Postal officials in Krasnystaw, moreover, sent the second telegram, in which Sobibór was listed as the couple’s destination, only on May 31. The telegram nonetheless is historically significant as it is the first time Sobibór was named as the place of deportation for the Krasnystaw Jews. It also is the earliest known direct reference to the killing center in any Polish-language documentation.

After the Jews were sent to their deaths, the SS consolidated in the collection ghetto almost all the Jews from Kraśniczyn. (Several hundred Jews were retained for labor at an estate in Bończa; 300 Reich and Protectorate deportees were interned at the so-called Augustówka labor camp, actually located in Surhów and Małochwiej Duży.) Some 1,000 Czech and Slovak Jews, transferred from Izbica to Gorzków in mid-March 1942, were included in the expulsion.¹⁷ The approximately 3,000 to 4,000 Jews were sent to their deaths at Sobibór.

On June 18, 1942, Szolsohn’s deputy reported to JSS leaders in Kraków that no Jews remained in Kraśniczyn, Wysokie, and Rudnik or in the Łopiennik, Rybczewice, and Zakrzew gminy. Of the 8,000 Jews held back from the expulsion residing outside of labor camps, 45 percent were Reich or Protectorate deportees (3,500 in Izbica and 70 in Krasnystaw).¹⁸ In Krasnystaw, Turobin, Żółkiewka, and Gorzków, only remnant native communities remained. The 221 Jews in the Fajslawice gmina were untouched by the deportation. Some Jews remained in the Siennica Różana gmina. Approximately 4,500 surviving Jews were employed.¹⁹

Following the deportation, the Krasnystaw Jews mainly cleared possessions from the ghetto. Some clearing crew laborers were sent to the Trawniki labor camp, probably in late August 1942, during the next major expulsion (mainly of agricultural laborers to Sobibór).

In October, the Krasnystaw ghetto was liquidated. All Jews in the Kreis living outside of labor camps were ordered to the Izbica ghetto. From there, the Jews were sent to be gassed, mainly at Bełżec but also Sobibór. A small group, including former Jewish Council members Leon Feldhändler (from Żółkiewka) and Moszek Merenstein (from Gorzków), were retained for labor at Sobibór.

A handful of Jews survived the Krasnystaw ghettos. Almost all the Grobla survivors were spring 1941 expellees who never reported to the Krasnystaw collection ghetto. The sur-

vivors of the Krasnystaw collection ghetto mainly were men, such as Dov Freiberg, retained for labor at Sobibór, who joined the October 1943 prisoners’ uprising.

SOURCES Secondary sources with coverage of the Krasnystaw Jewish community and the communities consolidated in the Krasnystaw collection ghetto include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 515–518 (Krasnystaw), pp. 118–119 (Gorzków), pp. 169–179 (Wysokie), pp. 196–198 (Żółkiewka), pp. 241–244 (Turobin), all available in English translations, by Morris Gradel, at jewishgen.org, and pp. 518–519 (Kraśniczyn).

A contribution by Robert Kuwałek about the Krasnystaw ghetto is located on the Web sites of the Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team and the Aktion Reinhard Camps (ARC). Kuwałek provides an overview of the Reich and Protectorate Jews expelled to Distrikt Lublin in “Getta tranzytowe w dystrykcie lubelskim,” in Dariusz Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 138–160, with the book also available in a German translation. It is best read together with the relevant table in Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH* no. 21 (1957): 70–72.

A published English-language testimony from survivor Maria Binder Greber can be found in Wiktoria Śliwowska, ed., *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak*, trans. Julian and Fay Bussgang (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), vol. 1, p. 75. The most compelling account of the Krasnystaw collection ghetto can be found in the memoir of Turobin survivor Dov Freiberg, *To Survive Sobibor* (Jerusalem and New York: Gefen, 2007). Additional testimonies from Krasnystaw survivors can be found in the yizkor book, Aryeh Shtuntsaiger, ed., *Yizker tsum ondenk fun di kedoyshy Krasnistov* (Munich: Farlag “Bafrayung” baym Ts. K. “Po’ale-Tsiyon,” 1948); and also include Mordechai Puterman, *Lebns-geshikhte fun a pshtutn Yid* (Tel Aviv: H. Leyvik-Farlag, 1983). There also is a yizkor book for Turobin: Me’ir Shim’on Geshuri, ed., *Sefer Turbin: Pinkas zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Turbin be-Yisrael).

Published documentation includes in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHWP, 1946), pt. 1, p. 51, an April 16, 1942, telegram from officials at the Department of Population and Welfare (BuF) in Kraków to the Krasnystaw Kreishauptmann and the Governor of Distrikt Lublin outlining ground rules for better communication between the SS and civilian officials during future expulsions, which scholars use to date the deportation to Bełżec of a large part of the Krasnystaw Jewish community. Contemporary press coverage includes “Krasnystaw,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1941, no. 12, p. 7.

Additional documentation for the Krasnystaw Jewish community and the Jewish communities consolidated in the Krasnystaw collection ghetto can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., GDL 273, p. 19); AŻIH (e.g., 210 [433 (Krasnystaw), 347 (Gorzków), 434 (Kraśniczyn), 605 (Rybczewice)], 211 [600–607 (Krasnystaw and Kreis Krasnystaw), 381–382 (Fajslawice), 423 (Gorzków), 597 (Kraśniczyn), 914

(Rybczewice), 954 (Siennica Różana), 1047 (Turobin), 1134–1136 (Wysokie), 1187–1188 (Żółkiewka), 301 [e.g., 1303, 1885, 5390 (Krasnystaw), 2785 (Gorzków), 11 (Turobin), 72, 104, 1204 (Żółkiewka)]; BA-BL (R 52III/23, pp. 76–81); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAL [12 (Żółkiewka, Poperczyn), 112 (Zakrzew gmina), 118 and 177 (Krasnystaw, Jaślików), 130 (Turobin), 148–149 (Łopiennik Górny), 164 (Kraśniczyn, Brzeziny)], SOL [62 and 76 (Krasnystaw), 114 (Żółkiewka), 149 (Łopiennik Górny)]; IPN-Lu (e.g., 98/67/1-5 [Krasnystaw], 192/67/1-3 [Krasnystaw collection ghetto], 245/67/1-2 [Fajslawice], 414/67/1-2 [Łopiennik Górny], 286/67 [Rudnik], 258/67 [Rybczewice gmina, aka Piłaskowice], 348/67/1-2 [Siennica Różana aka Wierzchowiny], 19/67/1-2 [Surhów-Augustówka], 369/67 [Turobin], 297/67/1-2 [Żółkiewka]); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); VHF (e.g., # 5789, 10690, 12282, 25543, 31407, 32182 [Krasnystaw], 40445 [Gorzków], 27443 [Siennica Różana], 7829, 12564, 25359, 45226 [Turobin], 1609 [Żółkiewka]); and YVA (e.g., O-16/1885 [Krasnystaw], O-3 [2923, 2940] [Turobin], O-3 [230, 11687, 2309, 2940], and O-16 [464, 1204] [Żółkiewka]).

Of the Krasnystaw communities mentioned in the entry but not accorded separate treatment in this volume, most survivors agree that no ghettos were established prior to the May 1942 deportations in Turobin, Żółkiewka, Gorzków, and Wysokie. Icek Lerer is an exception. In VHF, # 1609, he reports the November 1941 proscriptions on movement transformed all of Żółkiewka into an open ghetto. The Jews in Siennica Różana, Fajslawice, and Zakrzew lived dispersed across the three gminy and were never consolidated in ghettos. In Fajslawice, Szalomon Griffen responded negatively on the April 1942 JSS ghetto questionnaire, at USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/382, p. 35. Little is known about the specific conditions in which Jews lived in the Rudnik and Łopiennik Górny gminy prior to the May expulsions.

Though it seems likely remnant ghettos were established in communities such as Żółkiewka, Gorzków, and Turobin, where small numbers of Jews were retained for labor after the May 1942 expulsions, Leon Feldhändler and Moszek Merenstein do not recall such ghettos existing in either Żółkiewka or Gorzków. Feldhändler, the former head of the Jewish Council in Żółkiewka, in a testimony at AŻIH, 301/72, written shortly before his murder in Lublin in March 1945, noted: “The Jewish Council negotiated with officials from the Kreishauptmann’s office to overcome the threatening insecurity of a ghetto.” Merenstein, in his testimony at AŻIH, 301/2785, reported he resided and worked at Baranica (his former estate outside of Gorzków) until the Jews in the Kreis were ordered to Izbica in October 1942. There are no testimonies from survivors of the Turobin remnant community. Given the absence of documentation for Turobin and of corroborative documentation for Feldhändler’s and Merenstein’s claims, the editors of the volume concluded the evidence at this point insufficient to determine that remnant ghettos were established in Żółkiewka, Gorzków, and Turobin.

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NOTES

1. BA-L, R 52III/23, p. 81.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/433, pp. 35–36.

3. BA-L, R 52III/23, p. 81.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH, JSS), 211/601, pp. 1–2, 5–8, 12–14, 25–26, 70; 211/602, p. 1.
5. “Krasnystaw,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 11, 1941, no. 12, p. 7.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/600, pp. 18–19; 211/601, p. 39; 211/604, pp. 6, 26; 211/605, pp. 1, 6, 8, 26–27; 211/606, p. 9.
7. Ibid., 211/602, p. 15.
8. Ibid., pp. 5, 9–10, 39–40, 62–63.
9. Ibid., p. 67.
10. Ibid., 211/954, p. 2; 211/606, pp. 69–70.
11. Ibid., 211/606, pp. 65, 73, 88; 211/382, p. 20.
12. APL, GDL, 273, p. 19, Richard Türk BuF Lublin notes, “Removal of Jews” (Judenaussiedlung), March 20, 1942, cited in Kuwałek, “Getta tranzytowe,” p. 142.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/606, pp. 31, 66, 73, 84, 86, 88.
14. Ibid., 211/1188, p. 21a, for date.
15. AŻIH, 301/1204, testimony of Icek Lichtmann, p. 1.
16. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/606, p. 89; 211/607, pp. 4, 27–28.
17. Ibid., 211/606, pp. 33, 40; 211/607, pp. 10, 40–41.
18. Ibid., 211/607, pp. 3, 15.
19. Ibid., 211/382, pp. 20, 23, 27.

KURÓW

Pre-1939: Kurów (Yiddish: Koriv), village, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kurow, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Kurów, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Kurów lies 33 kilometers (20.5 miles) northwest of Lublin. Its pre-war 1939 population of 4,635 included 2,571 Jews.

On September 9, 1939, fires sparked by Luftwaffe bombardment destroyed about 120 (all but 3) Jewish-owned buildings in Kurów. Left homeless, the Jews fled to a number of towns and villages, including Wąwolnica, Kazimierz Dolny, Ryki, Opole, and Lublin. On September 15, a Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied Kurów. The soldiers compelled the few Jews remaining there to clear rubble. Some local Poles helped the soldiers search devastated Jewish homes for valuables.

Some 300 Jewish families never returned to Kurów. However, from January 1940, local officials in several localities began to order the Kurów refugees home. Former Kurów residents made up almost all the 40 Jewish families expelled from Wąwolnica and Kazimierz Dolny to Kurów in April 1941. A few families from Lublin were also among the April expellees.¹ The wealthiest among the early returnees purchased abandoned stables from peasants, salvaged the lumber, and built wooden sheds in which to live. Most Jews lived in the cellars of burned-out houses or in holes dug in fields.

A German civil administration was established for Kurów, perhaps not until January 1940. It was headed by Ulrich, a local ethnic German. Also in January, the Jews were ordered to form a six-member Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Abraham Goldberg.

VOLUME II: PART A

The Judenrat collected taxes and contributions demanded by German authorities. From June 1940, it was ordered to organize forced labor brigades to raze central Kurów and to pulverize bricks from the war-devastated structures, including the synagogue and ultimately the *matzevot* (gravestones) from the Jewish cemetery. The materials were used to pave the road from Kurów to Klementowice and to improve the railway track bed near Klementowice. In June 1940, the Judenrat conscripted laborers for a *Judenlager* in Janiszów (pre-war Janów powiat), on the Vistula River, to dig trenches for a flood control project. In June 1941, the council was required to send 28 men to a labor camp in Lublin. Thirteen of the conscripts were the most impoverished Jews in Kurów.²

Restrictions imposed on Jewish movement beyond Kurów in the early spring of 1941, probably several months before the German invasion of the Soviet Union, on June 22, 1941, effectively transformed Kurów into an open ghetto. The orders forbade Jews from leaving Kurów without permission. Moty Glazer was shot for disobeying the order.

With the arrival of more than 1,000 deportees from Warsaw in July 1941, a Jewish quarter was established. The Warsaw Jews more than tripled the Jewish population to 1,522 in September and 1,700 by October.³ They likely were resettled in Kurów for road and railway labor. The expellees were confined to a specifically designated neighborhood set apart from the Polish neighborhood. It was composed of just a few streets. The absence of housing likely provided a reason for establishing the ghetto. The Jewish Council received permission in November to construct additional shelter for a number of homeless deportee families.⁴ Some Kurów Jews also resided in the Jewish quarter. Survivor Helen Kotlar (Kotlarz), for example, remembers local Jews sneaking out in late summer and early fall of 1941 from what she described as the “prescribed area” to form *minyanim* at her house on the outskirts of Kurów and to say Kaddish for her mother-in-law.⁵ Kotlar’s remarks indicate ghettoization was not total; some native Jews continued to live outside the ghetto.

Many of the Warsaw Jews had contracted typhoid fever during the deportations. Several died within days of resettlement. To curb the spread of the disease, the Jewish Council established a quarantine facility for new arrivals in July 1941.⁶ Hundreds of Jews, including many native Kurów Jews, nonetheless became ill. The Kurów Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) provided free medicines to treat the sick. Because Kurów’s only physician was banned from seeing Jews, the JSS secured permission and paid to transport the most critical patients to an infectious disease hospital in Puławy. As scores perished, the JSS ended the practice of financially assisting local families to feed the most impoverished refugees. From the late fall of 1941, a communal kitchen offered reduced-cost dinners for the sick and indigent. In February 1942, the kitchen served 5,750 subsidized meals.⁷

By the winter of 1941–1942, a tannery and a workshop established by Ulrich to transform rabbit skins into winter coats and gloves for the Wehrmacht employed about 20 Kurów Jews. (These workshops employed mostly non-Jews.) Almost

all the Jewish tannery laborers from Kurów were family members of Judenrat officials.⁸ Kotlar remembers Ulrich appointing a Lubliner Jew, who had saved his life during World War I, to head the tannery, which employed another 20 Jews from Lublin.⁹ Conscripted to remove snow from the road from Kurów to Markuszów, a part of the main highway leading from Warsaw to Lublin, the ghetto inmates were subjected to exhausting work while being humiliated and beaten by the German soldiers supervising the work.

Denunciations by local Poles led to the arrest of several Jews for bartering material goods for food. German Gendarmes searched the lean-to of Mirl Merimberg, a woman with an illicit shoemaking workshop, confiscated her tools, and beat her severely. In late March 1942, on the eve of Passover, orders forbade Jews from baking matzot, which was a “privilege” accorded to Jews in Kreis Lublin. A Pole offered his oven to Jewish women to bake the unleavened bread illicitly. The women sneaked over to his house after midnight to cleanse the oven. Several Poles assisted in baking the matzot.¹⁰

On April 8, or perhaps May 8, 1942, a small SS contingent, including Ukrainian auxiliaries, arrived in Kurów to liquidate the ghetto. (Most Jewish survivors remember the expulsions as occurring in April, during Passover.) The Jews were ordered to assemble in front of the Judenrat building for “resettlement.” About 32 people, including 20 Kurów Jews, were retained for labor at the tannery. Only 1 woman, a cook, was held back from the expulsion. The remaining Jews were marched to Końskowola, about 9.6 kilometers (6 miles) west-northwest of Kurów.¹¹ About 20 people were murdered during the march. Imprisoned overnight in wooden barracks in Końskowola, the Kurów Jews were marched to the train station (located closer to Puławy) the next morning and forced onto trains destined either for the Sobibór or the Bełżec extermination camp.¹²

In July 1942, the 32 Jews officially held back for labor were ordered to reside in a closed ghetto. The postwar Polish Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation on ghettos describes the ghetto as located in a small house on Bóźnicza (Synagogue) Street on a fenced property measuring 12 by 8 meters (39.4 by 26.2 feet). Kotlar remembers the ghetto including several residences.¹³ Ulrich permitted Jews who had evaded the liquidation Aktion to report to the remnant ghetto, in exchange for a bribe, or entrance fee, of approximately 500 złoty. Some 20 to 30 Jews paid the fee to legalize their status and to enter the ghetto. Among the fugitives were the wives and children of several inmates. Many others lived illicitly outside the ghetto.¹⁴

The 45 to 50 ghetto inmates could leave the ghetto only for work, mostly at the tannery.¹⁵ Contacts with local Poles and with Czech or perhaps Slovak Jews imprisoned at a larger, neighboring camp were forbidden.

On November 13, 1942, a small SS contingent of about 12 men—6 Germans and 6 Ukrainian auxiliaries—arrived from Końskowola to liquidate the ghetto.¹⁶ Some Jews managed to flee. The SS rounded up another 36 Jews and executed them at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁷

A local tax collector denounced 25 Jewish fugitives hidden in an abandoned cellar. On December 19, 1942, the Germans, perhaps Gendarmes from the Michów and Puławy posts, executed the Jews in their hiding places. (Local Poles were ordered to bury the bodies at the Jewish cemetery.)¹⁸ Another large group of fugitives was hunted down and executed during a two-month encirclement of the forested areas surrounding Klementowice, Markuszów (Borek Woods), and Wola Przybysławska (Garbów Forest), beginning in early December 1942.¹⁹ Several Jewish partisans from Kurów were among the victims. Others reported to a collection ghetto in Końskowola 1943.²⁰

Local Poles sheltered approximately 10 Kurów Jews. Andrzej and Katarzyna Zarzycki, recognized in 1978 as Righteous Among the Nations, were two of at least six aid givers of the Kotlar family. A handful of Kurów Jews survived the liquidation of ghettos subsequently established in the towns and villages in which they found refuge after the 1939 bombardment of the village.²¹ Survivor Simcha Ritzer (Sam Rice) exploited the confusion during the attack to claim a false identity as a Polish Christian to evade ghettoization.²²

SOURCES Published testimonies from survivors, in the yizkor book Moisheh Grosman, ed., *Yizker-bukh Koriv. Sefer yizkor, matsevet-zikaron le-ayaratenu Koriv* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots'e Koriv in Yisroel, 1955), include a long contribution by Helen Kotlar, "Un dokh bin ikh geblibn leb'n," which was translated and published subsequently in English as *We Lived in a Grave* (New York: Shengold, 1980).

Secondary sources include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 480–482; its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 159–162; and the extensive entry for Kurów in Polish at the Wirtualny Sztetl, on the Web site of the Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich (Museum of the History of Polish Jews), www.sztetl.org.pl. Some coverage also appears in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, p. 925.

David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2003), p. 272, notes all the Kurów Jews were expelled to Końskowola on May 8, 1942, a point that challenges several long-held assumptions of Polish scholars and IPN investigators about the Kurów expulsions, including the belief they occurred on April 8, exactly a month earlier. The second date comes from the testimonies of Jewish survivors and local Polish police authorities interviewed by Polish investigators immediately after the war.

Much confusion exists about whether the remnant ghetto in Kurów was a ghetto or a labor camp, with the cited ASG documentation for ghettos describing it as both a ghetto and a camp. Non-Jews, including Helena Boguszevska, in *Nigdy nie zapomnę* (Warsaw: Wiedza, 1946), p. 145, describe the ghetto as the "small camp," as do some survivors. The same confusion marks the academic literature: Tatiana Berenstein, "Martyrologia,

opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," *BŻIH* no. 21 (1957): 77, mentions a ghetto in Kurów; Edward Dziadosz and Józef Marszałek, "Więzienia i obozy w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939–1944," *Zeszyty Majdanka* 3 (1969): 25, 67, 113, 197, call it a labor camp; and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 262, list the Kurów ghetto twice, first as a ghetto and then as a labor camp.

Archival documentation for the Kurów Jewish community during World War II includes APL (e.g., 498/0/270); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 210/608, 211/631, 301/4398); FVA (1065); IPN-Lu (e.g., Ds-2/67/1-6); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH] 211/631; Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AŻIH] 210/608; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 6, 16/789, 792, 786, and reel 15, 49/103]; RG-50.002*0051); VHF (# 23, 700, 2062, 5342, 21629, 22297, 22674, 27633); and YVA (e.g., 0-3/3555).

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NOTES

1. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 9–17, 23–26, 31, 36; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), ŻSS, 211/631, pp. 3, 8.
2. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 26–29, 33; USHMM, 50.002*51, testimony of Joseph Weinbuch; Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/631, p. 23.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/631, pp. 23, 26.
4. Ibid., p. 38.
5. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 27, 38.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/631, p. 24.
7. Ibid., pp. 23–24, 50, 55.
8. Ibid., RG-50.002*51.
9. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 42–44.
10. Ibid., pp. 31–32, 41–44.
11. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 15, 49/103, p. 1; VHF, # 21629, testimony of Joseph Chanesman; Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 44–47.
12. USHMM, RG-50.002*51.
13. Ibid., RG-15.019M, 49/103, p. 1; Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 50–52, 54.
14. USHMM, RG-50.002*51.
15. Ibid., RG-15.019M, 49/103.
16. VHF, # 21629.
17. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 49/103.
18. Ibid., reel 6, 16/789.
19. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 46–47; USHMM, RG-50.002*51; RG-15.019M, reel 6, 16/792, 796.
20. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 78–80.
21. VHF, # 2062, testimony of Nachemia Wurman.
22. Ibid., # 5342, testimony of Sam Rice.

ŁĘCZNA

Pre-1939: Łęczna (Yiddish: Lentcha), town, Lubartów powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Lentschna bei Lublin, Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łęczna, Łęczna powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Łęczna lies on the confluence of the Wieprz and Świnka Rivers, some 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) east-northeast of Lublin. Its 1935 population of 4,162 included 2,273 Jews.

VOLUME II: PART A

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Łęczna around September 18, 1939. By January 1940, the Germans had established a civil administration, led by Mayor Schultze, an ethnic German. The Polish (Blue) Police and a Sonderdienst unit were recruited. The latter unit was composed of local ethnic Germans and Ukrainians.

On September 23, 1939, the Day of Atonement, uniformed Germans evicted Jews from the synagogue. Several people were shot dead; many more were severely beaten. Two weeks later, the Germans arrived to order 200 Jews to remove the Torah and Holy books from the synagogue and Bet Midrash. The Germans set the works on fire.¹ Abraham Rachil Bromberg, the rabbi of Łęczna, died in late 1939, and Hugo "Ogen" Alter, a refugee from Warsaw, suggests the Germans drowned him in the Wieprz.² Jews were also rounded up for forced labor. In January 1940, a 12-person Jewish Council was established. Its chair, Icek Chaim Frochtman, was a 50-year-old tailor. That month, a decree required Jews to wear a yellow patch on the chest. Six months later, the order was changed to white armbands with a blue Star of David.

Icek Zylbersztajn, the head of the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), reported on the charity's April 1942 ghetto questionnaire that an unfenced open ghetto (*dzielnica żydowska*) had been established in Łęczna on January 1, 1940.³ A February 7, 1941, article about Łęczna in *Gazeta Żydowska* mentioned the Jewish Council's first duty in January 1940 was to house "several tens of Jewish families" expelled from "several Aryan streets."⁴ The ghetto may have been established because Emil Ziegenmeyer, the Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, claimed the estate at Łęczna as his home.⁵

Situated in the old Jewish neighborhood in northwestern Łęczna, the ghetto was composed of all the streets surrounding II, III, and Zielony squares. It also included the area south of the synagogue bounded by what now are Bożniczna (Synagogue), Partyzantka, and 11 Listopada Streets. In May 1941, some 150 refugees, mainly voluntary transplants, resided in the ghetto. In April 1942, the ghetto population stood at 2,250.⁶

Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto without permission. Survivor Hersz Zylbersztajn (Icek's brother) notes everyone ignored the restrictions but admits that those found illicitly outside the ghetto were beaten severely.⁷ As six people crowded into each of the ghetto's 400 rooms, hygiene standards declined. In May 1940, the Jewish Council established an eight-person sanitation force. A typhus epidemic erupted in December 1942.⁸

Ghetto inmates were conscripted for forced labor, including agricultural work on the Kreishauptmann's estate, at a quarry in Karolin (pre-war Lubartów powiat), and at the Fischereigenossenschaft (fisheries' cooperative). In the summer of 1941, the Arbeitsamt (labor office) permitted Poles to contract Jews as agricultural laborers. Some 65 tailors and shoemakers received concessions to maintain small craft workshops.

In August 1940, the SS arrived in consecutive weeks to conscript Jewish men for labor in camps. Local ethnic Germans, led by Becker and Milke, rounded up conscripts during the first raid in which they were marched to a nearby labor

camp, likely in Milejów, established for road construction work. In the second raid, carried out in Jewish communities throughout Distrikt Lublin on August 12–13 and 13–14, on the orders of SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) Odilo Globocnik, an SS contingent at 1:00 A.M. rounded up conscripts for the Belżec forced labor camp. The Polish police surrounded the ghetto to prevent escapes. A handful of Łęczna conscripts survived to be released in November.⁹ In the spring of 1941, additional conscripts were interned at a Lublin labor camp, known by Łęczna survivors as Plage-Laśkiewicz (for the pre-war airplane manufacturer on whose grounds the camp was established) but better known today as the *Flugplatz* (Airfield) camp. In May 1941, Icek Zylbersztajn reported that labor camp conscription made it impossible to maintain a JSS delegation or to assist the impoverished.¹⁰

By early 1941, the Germans had established a labor camp in Łęczna, probably by designating a block of ghetto residences on Bożniczna and Partyzantka Streets for the camp. The *Gazeta Żydowska* article reported Łęczna Jews provided clothing and shoes to inmates at the neighboring camp. Among the inmates were Jewish deportees from Slovakia.¹¹ These Jews arrived some time after March 1942, when deportations from Slovakia commenced.

In late February or early March 1941, an SS contingent, perhaps led by Goldfarb, executed 30 young Jews on an escarpment overlooking the Wieprz. (A few victims, only lightly wounded, fell into the river and drowned.) Zylbersztajn remembers conditions deteriorated after Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union in June: "There constantly were repressive measures against Jews. There constantly were sacrifices in human lives."¹² The Germans raided homes at night, pulled men from their beds, and shot them dead in a gully by the synagogue.

Before July 1941, the JSS established a community kitchen. It provided a daily meal to 682 impoverished ghetto residents.¹³ In autumn, the Jewish Council established a 25-person unit of Jewish Police. Its commander was Szmul Puterman. In December, the police and the Jewish Council collected fur coats the SS ordered surrendered. Zylbersztajn recalls in early 1942 that an SS contingent from Lublin and Lubartów beat some Jews to death and shot others dead. Alter may be describing the same event relating that the SS took 21 hostages and then summoned the Jewish Council. When council members did not appear, the hostages were tortured. A 100,000 złoty contribution failed to save the surviving hostages' lives.¹⁴ Between August 19 and 22, 1942, a delegation described by Zylbersztajn as from the Landwirtschaftskommissariat, led by Wilczek, but also including members of Gendarmerie Battalion I (motorized) commanded by Major Erich Schwieger, randomly chose every tenth person from a brigade of agricultural conscripts. The 12 victims were shot dead atop the gully near the synagogue in a larger Aktion during which the police were ordered to round up partisans, their helpers, and "wandering Jews."¹⁵

On October 25, 1942, an SS contingent, led perhaps by Kurt Engel, then head of the SS in Kreis Cholm, and SS

Ukrainian auxiliaries from Trawniki, liquidated the ghetto. The Jews were ordered to assemble on square II. The Jewish Council then designated 400 individuals to be held back for labor. Zylberstajn and Izaak Rozengarten recall some 3,000 deportees were marched to Piaski Luturskie. From there, the expellees were sent to the Sobibór extermination facility, where they were gassed on arrival. Jaczyński, an eyewitness cited in some secondary accounts, remembers the SS ordered young couples separated from their children and shot dead mothers who refused to relinquish children. The children, elderly, and others considered unfit for labor were marched to Piaski and from there sent to Sobibór. The other deportees were taken to the Trawniki forced labor camp.¹⁶

In Łęczna, the Jews retained for labor resided at the labor camp, which was fenced with barbed wire. Some have called the camp a closed ghetto, because about 100 Łęczna fugitives, including entire families, entered the camp and all the Jewish Council members and Jewish policemen also were inmates there. Another 300 Jews retained for labor in Lubartów and other localities were interned at the camp. Some 500 to 800 of the camp's 1,200 to 1,500 inmates were unregistered fugitives from the liquidation of nearby Jewish communities.¹⁷

On November 11, 1942, the SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries stationed in Piaski liquidated the camp. The SS executed 970 to 1,200 Jews in the synagogue gully. The next day, 23 Jews found hiding in the dairy on Kanałowa Street and another 50 discovered in bunkers on Łancuchowska Street were shot dead.¹⁸ The camp's prisoner census, reduced to 120, soon rose to 300 as fugitives from the November 9, 1942, liquidation of the Majdan Tatarski ghetto arrived in Łęczna.¹⁹ On April 29, 1943, the camp was liquidated. Some 120 inmates were removed to Trawniki. The remaining prisoners were sent to their deaths at Sobibór.

On November 3, 1943, SS and police units shot dead all the Trawniki inmates during Akcja Erntefest (Harvest Festival). Hersz Zylbersztajn, Izaak Rozengarten, and Szajner and his son escaped before the mass killing. The Szajners joined a partisan unit. After his son perished, Zelman hid at a local villager's farm.²⁰ Wiktoria Choma and her husband Feliks sheltered Zylbersztajn and Rozengarten in Ostrów Nadrybski village. Sara and Rachela Rajs (Reiss) escaped a roundup of seven family members and the Marciniak family, their aid givers, in Rachów village. A couple in Łańcuchów village sheltered Rachela; the Cyganiewicz family in Abramów (pre-war Lubartów powiat) hid Sara. A handful of Łęczna ghetto inmates survived the war.

SOURCES Secondary sources with coverage of the history of the Łęczna Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 287–289; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 169–171; Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews*

during the Holocaust, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 142–143, 152; and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo lubelskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHP, 1985), p. 149.

Because Łęczna today is home to the Lublin województwo's most well-preserved synagogue, now the Regional Museum in Łęczna, with a permanent exhibition documenting Jewish life in the town, a large number of articles, almost all by well-known historians, have appeared in *Merkuriusz Łęczyński*, the journal of the local cultural and historical society, on Jewish life during the war. See, for example, Janina Kiełboń, “Z dziejów łęczyńskich Żydów” and Emil Horoch, “Łęczna—spojrzenie w przeszłość miasta,” in *Merkuriusz Łęczyński*, respectively (1993), (1997), no. 10. Still valuable is Józef Marszałek, “Łęczna w latach wojny i okupacji,” in Emil Horoch, ed., *Łęczna—studia z dziejów miasta* (Łęczna, 1989). The extensive coverage provided on the Łęczna homepage at the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by the Museum of Polish Jews in Warsaw, is drawn from these publications and another 25 sources cited in the bibliography, all of which remain difficult to find in the United States. The author of the Polish-language entry for Łęczna on the Światła w ciemności—Sprawiedliwi wśród narodów świata Web site, available at <http://sprawiedliwi.tnn.pl/index.php>, established by the Ośrodek Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN in Lublin, relies mainly on unpublished testimonies from Jewish survivors, cited below at AŻIH 301.

Unfortunately, no yizkor book or other published work with survivors' accounts has appeared for Łęczna. Krystyna Modrzewska, a Lublin survivor who lived and worked under a false identity in nearby Mełgiew, relates the story of a young Łęczna fugitive, rescued by a Polish policeman, in the second part of her diary published in *BŻIH* (1959), nos. 31 and 32, and in English in the translation of Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewin, eds., *Righteous among Nations: How Poles Helped the Jews, 1939–1945* (London: Earls Court Publications, Ltd., 1969), pp. 145–146. The Światła w ciemności Web site includes interviews in Polish and English translation with Weronika Choma and Edward Cyganiewicz, both recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. Contemporary press coverage appears in “Łęczna Lubelska,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 7, 1941, p. 7.

Archival documentation for Łęczna includes APL; AŻIH (e.g., 211/668; 301 [1, 2018, 2183, 2184, 4879]; IPN (e.g., ASG, Kommandeur der Gendarmerie Lublin [KdGL] records); IPN-Lu (e.g., 42/67, 162/67/1-2, 174/67/1-4, 199/67/1-2, 282/67); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG15.011M [IPN, KdGL] [reel 21, 276, p. 135]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 5 (14/467-470), reel 15 (49/56)]; VHF (e.g., # 8764, 28343, 35072); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2183, testimony of Hersz Zylbersztajn, p. 1.
2. Ibid., 301/1, testimony of Hugo “Ogen” Alter, p. 1.
3. Misfiled in USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/469, p. 8.
4. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 7, 1941, p. 7.
5. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/56.

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6. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/469, pp. 5, 8.
7. AŻIH, 301/2183, p. 3.
8. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/469, p. 8.
9. AŻIH, 301/2183, pp. 2–3.
10. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/469, p. 3.
11. Ibid., RG-15.019M, 49/56.
12. AŻIH, 301/2183, p. 4.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/668, p. 4.
14. AŻIH, 301/1, p. 1.
15. Ibid., 301/2183, p. 4; USHMM, 15.011M (IPN), reel 21, 276, p. 135.
16. AŻIH, 301/1817, repeated at 4879, testimony of Izaak Rozengarten and Hersz Zylbersztajn, p. 1.
17. Ibid.
18. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 5, 14/468-70; but date from AŻIH, 301/1817, p. 1.
19. AŻIH, 301/2184, testimony of Zelman Szajner, p. 5.
20. Ibid.

ŁOMAZY

Pre-1939: Łomazy (Yiddish: Lomaz), village, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Łomazy, Kreis Biala Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łomazy, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Łomazy lies 17 kilometers (11 miles) south of Biała Podlaska and 107 kilometers (66 miles) northeast of Lublin. In August 1939, some 1,152 Jews resided there.¹

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Łomazy on September 13, 1939, but quickly abandoned it to Soviet occupation. Tensions between Jews and Poles erupted during the time that the Soviets occupied the town and afterwards, leading to at least two Jewish deaths and prompting many Jews to flee to Parczew or Soviet-occupied territory.²

On reoccupying Łomazy on October 15, 1939, the Germans appointed Bronisław Zdancewicz head (wójt) of a local,



Jews are held on a sports field in Łomazy, August 18, 1942, as part of a round-up by Reserve Police Battalion 101 in preparation for a shooting Aktion.

USHMM WS #57621, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG

Polish collaborationist administration. A force of Polish (Blue) Police was recruited. The Polish administration and police were subordinated to German authorities in the Biała Podlaska Landkommissariat. In March 1942, Łomazy was transferred to the Wisznice Landkommissariat, then overseen by Landkommissar Klemmer.

In late 1939, the local administration ordered the Łomazy Jews to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Josel Sklarz.³ A Jewish police force was established.

From late 1939, German authorities designated Łomazy to receive expellees from territories soon to be attached to the Reich. By April 1940, 404 Jewish newcomers had arrived, mainly from Jeleniewo (near Suwałki), Serock, Suwałki, and Wiśniowa Góra (near Łódź).⁴ In May 1942, *Gazeta Żydowska* reported that 45 percent of the 1,461 Jews in Łomazy were expellees.

A survivor remembers “ghetto conditions” being established in Łomazy in early 1940. The “ghetto” was not surrounded by a fence, but the Germans imposed a strict curfew. They forbade Jews from leaving their residences, except for work, to prevent them from trading or speaking with their non-Jewish neighbors.⁵ The *Pinkas ha-kehilot* entry for Łomazy, in contrast, mentions that the Germans from early 1940 expelled Jews from their homes and required them to live in a distinct residential area, which subsequently was designated the ghetto.

An unknown number of Jews were evicted from their homes, mainly to make way for Polish-Christian expellees from Kujawy and Pomorze. The Jews were concentrated in residences located on Małobrzaska Street, but other Jews continued to reside in their pre-war houses. Jewish residents of Szkolna, Wisznice, and Kościuszko Streets, moreover, lived amid new Polish-Christian neighbors, the beneficiaries of the anti-Jewish eviction policies.⁶ Because the process of ghettoization was partial, Łomazy was excluded from a list of ghettos Hubert Köhl, the Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann, submitted in December 1941 to Richard Türk, head of the Population and Welfare Department (BuF) for Distrikt Lublin. Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) officials also never used the word *ghetto* to describe living conditions in Łomazy. Instead, they mentioned restrictions (from November and December 1941), which imposed the death penalty on Jews in Kreis Biala Podlaska found outside their places of registration without permission.⁷

A number of Łomazy Jews worked as domestics or agricultural laborers for their Christian neighbors. Antoni Kutnik, employed as a translator for the Łomazy administration from March 1942, paid wages (likely to the Wisznice labor office [Arbeitsamt]) for his servant Sala Goldwasser. He also provided Goldwasser a daily meal and permitted her to take leftovers home to her parents.⁸

From the spring of 1940, the Luftwaffe drafted 112 Łomazy Jews for a nearby construction project (probably reconstructing landing fields at the airplane manufacturing plant near Biała Podlaska).⁹ In July, another 107 Jews were sent to a labor camp established by the Biała Podlaska Water Regulation

Authority (Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion) in Szenejki, near Studzianka village.¹⁰ Shortly after March 1942, the Szenejki inmates were forced to grind the *matzevot* (gravestones) from the Łomazy cemetery for use in a cement overcoat for nearly finished construction projects, including a bridge over the Zielawa River and a dyke. The Łomazy Jews probably also were conscripted for local road improvement projects. (Kutnik hints of such projects in describing the administration subsequently using its road construction wagons to transport and consolidate the Jews' belongings.)

On May 2, 1942, the local Polish administration received orders to prepare for the "resettlement" of the Łomazy Jews. Though secret, the Jews learned of them immediately. Klemmer exempted 12 craftsmen and their families from deportation by ordering them transferred to Wisznice to work for the German civilian administration.¹¹

After the SS retracted the resettlement orders, Zdancewicz, on May 19, 1942, ordered a formal ghetto established. The Jewish Council paid more than 12,000 złoty to postpone the decree's implementation by one year. Enraged because Zdancewicz had acted without authorization, Landkommissar Klemmer demanded the money be turned over to the German administration.¹²

On June 13, 1942, Gendarmes from Wisznice and Sławatycze expelled to Łomazy some 200 Jews from Rososz, 250 from Opole-Podedwórze, and another 200 from Sławatycze.¹³ The deportees mainly were women, the elderly, children, and other "nonuseful" Jews.

On July 22–23, 1942, a unit from the Peasants' Battalions (Bataliony Chłopskie), a Polish underground group, raided the Polish police post, the local administration office, Zdancewicz's home, and the dairy. A roving Gendarmerie unit retaliated the next day by shooting 30 Jews at the Szenejki camp. On August 8, an SS officer from Biała Podlaska arrested additional Jews for Bolshevism. The arrestees were shot dead near a shrine on the road to Biała Podlaska.

After the raid, a succession of German police forces was stationed at the pre-war public school, including a 15- to 18-man squadron from the 2nd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 101 brought to liquidate the Jewish community on August 13, 1942. The day after arriving, the policemen pulled 30 Jews from their homes, forced them to perform hours of exhausting physical exercises in front of the administration building, and then executed the captives at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁴

At 4:00 A.M. on August 17 or 18, 1942, the entire 2nd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 101, Gendarmes from the Wisznice and Sławatycze posts, a small SS contingent from Biała Podlaska, and eventually a contingent of Ukrainian SS auxiliaries from Trawniki began rousting Jews from their residences. As the policemen drove the Jews towards the school grounds, they shot dead those too old or frail to walk there unaided. Once assembled, the 2,187 Jews sat for hours waiting. Shortly after 7:00 A.M., a number of officials, including the deputy Kreishauptmann, the Wisznice Landkommissar,

and the chief of the Biała Podlaska Gestapo, arrived to breakfast with Poles from the local administration. (The Poles reportedly had not been forewarned about their arrival or of the impending Aktion.) After breakfast, the Biała Podlaska SS chief asked Zdancewicz for shovels and the August 1 Jewish registration list.¹⁵

At the school, the police chose a labor brigade to dig three mass graves in the Hały Woods. After they were completed, the reserve policemen marched the Jews in small groups to the edge of the Woods, where they were separated by sex and sent on to collection points to surrender valuables and undress. Driven from there into the pits, the victims were shot by the SS auxiliaries and the policemen. About 100 Szenejki inmates also were executed at the same killing site. The inmates were brought there either that same day to help dig the graves and to clear dirt from three sides of the pits to fulfill a plan proposed by one of the policemen to facilitate the killing Aktion or early the next morning to remove the dirt surrounding the graves.

Baruch Goldszer, a Szenejki inmate from Łomazy, was the only person to escape from the forest.¹⁶ A day after the killings, the German reserve policemen still in Łomazy searched for Jews hiding in their homes. Kutnik reports they found several scores of fugitives. Postwar German court testimony places the number at 20 to 30. Held overnight at the school, the Jews were marched the next day by German and Polish police to the forest and executed. In the fall of 1942, the Szenejki camp's 32 remaining prisoners were shot dead.¹⁷

Only a handful of Łomazy Jews, mainly those who had fled to other localities at the war's outset or escaped subsequently from labor camps, survived the German occupation. Another approximately 100 Łomazy Jews were repatriated from the Soviet Union after the war.

In 1967, the Office of the State Prosecutor in Hamburg indicted 14 former members of the Reserve Police Battalion 101 for a large number of crimes related to the liquidation of Jewish communities in Kreise Cholm, Biała Podlaska, and Radzyn. Among the 11 men tried in April 1967, 5 were found guilty, including the leader of the squadron stationed in Łomazy in August 1942. A lengthy appeals process, concluded in 1972, upheld his guilty verdict but resulted in no prison time.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the history of the Łomazy Jewish community during the World War II German occupation include the relevant entries in M.J. Fajgenbaum, *Podlaskie in umkum: Nojitsn fun ħurben* (Munich: Arroysgegebn fun der Tsentraler Historisher Komisy baym Ts. K. fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948), pp. 114–121; and Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 273–274. An English translation of the latter is available at jewishgen.org; and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 172–179.

The yizkor book, Yitzhak Alperowitz and Simcha Appelbaum, eds., *Sefer Lomaz: 'Ayarah be-hayebab uve-kbilyonah* (Tel Aviv: Irgune Lomaz be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1994), includes testimonies from survivors. "Łomazy pow. Biała Podl.," *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 24, 1942, no. 61, p. 4, offers contemporary coverage.

The murder of the Łomazy Jewish community is detailed in Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 78–87; and in the diarylike memoir by Antoni Kutnik, now available uncensored as "Miasto i powiat Biała Podlaska podczas II wojny światowej," *Podlaski Kwartalnik Kulturalny* (PKK), 9 (1996), no. 2, pp. 3–25, no. 3, pp. 3–11, no. 4, pp. 3–18; 10 (1997), no. 1, pp. 18–30, no. 2, pp. 50–61, no. 3, pp. 57–72, no. 4, pp. 16–32; 11 (1998), no. 1, pp. 76–82, no. 2, pp. 57–69. The first work dates the murders to August 17, 1942; the second, a day later. The memorial, erected at the killing site in 1989 by a group of survivors, their descendants, and the Union of Jews in Poland, uses the date of August 18–19 because of the chronology in the latter work, the yizkor book testimonies, and the research of Romuald Szudejko, most recently presented in "Społeczność żydowska w Łomazach— przyczynek do dziejów," *BŻIH*, no. 188/4 (December 1998): 79–90.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Łomazy Jewish community during the German occupation includes: APL AŻIH (e.g., 301 [167, 987, 2327, 4419, 5680], 302/1, 210/470, 211 [206, pp. 19–24, 64; 209, pp. 34, 37, 50–51, 53, 64; 663–665]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/14281–14282); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOS BP [23, 41, 43, 45]); IPN-Lu (e.g., 24/67/1–2, 131/67/1–57, 219/67/1–2, 284/204/1–2); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 4 (12/31–35), reel 15 (49/6)]); VHF, # 5517; and YVA (e.g., TR-10/764; 0–16 [201, 389]).

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NOTES

1. *Gazeta Żydowska*, May 24, 1942, no. 61, p. 4.
2. Testimony of Abraham Wunderbojm, in Alperowitz and Appelbaum, *Sefer Lomaz*, p. 38; VHF, # 5517, testimony of Adam Winder (Abraham Wunderbojm).
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/206, pp. 19–24, 64.
4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/470, pp. 5–19.
5. Alperowitz and Appelbaum, *Sefer Lomaz*, pp. 167–170.
6. Kutnik, "Miasto," PKK, 10 (1997), no. 2, pp. 55, 59.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/665, p. 39.
8. Kutnik, "Miasto," PKK, 10 (1997), no. 2, p. 61.
9. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/663, p. 14.
10. Ibid., pp. 36–39.
11. Kutnik, "Miasto," PKK, 10 (1997), no. 2, p. 58.
12. Ibid., p. 59.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/665, p. 52, 211/209, pp. 45, 53.
14. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 4, 12/35, 31.
15. Kutnik, "Miasto," PKK, 10 (1997), no. 3, pp. 62–64.
16. AŻIH, 301/167, testimony of Baruch Goldszer, pp. 1–2.
17. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/6.

LUBARTÓW

Pre-1939: Lubartów (Yiddish: Levertov), town, Lubartów powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Lubartow, Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lubartów, Lublin województwo, Poland

Lubartów is located about 24 kilometers (15 miles) north of Lublin. In 1939, 3,411 Jews were residing in Lubartów. In total, there were 8,121 persons inhabiting the town.¹

The Germans invaded Lubartów on September 19, 1939. The majority of the Jews did not evacuate but remained there waiting vainly for the Soviet army to arrive. Only a small number of Jews escaped from Lubartów before the Nazi occupation began.



Born in the Lubartów ghetto in April 1942, Elke Plech (later Elke Bozena, now Ellen Echeverria) is pictured with her rescuer, Janina Wysocka, during an Easter holiday event, April 1946. Plech's mother, Maria, entrusted the baby to Wysocka before fleeing the ghetto and assuming a Polish identity.

USHMM WS #30781, COURTESY OF ELLEN W. ECHEVERRIA

From the start of the occupation, German forces plundered Jewish shops. They forcibly cut off the beards and side locks (*payot*) of religious Jews on the streets. At first these actions were taken by soldiers of the Wehrmacht on an individual basis. But on October 12, 1939, German soldiers carried out an organized mass Aktion. The Germans ordered all the Jews of Lubartów to assemble at the first marketplace square (Rynek I). The soldiers then surrounded the Jews and held them captive. The Jews remained in this state all day long, while at the same time other German soldiers plundered their homes and shops, taking anything of value. During this Aktion, many Jewish houses were demolished.²

Shortly after this mass looting, another act of persecution took place, which would have an even greater effect. One source recounts that this took place on October 20, 1939, while another notes the date as sometime in early November. The local German authorities ordered most of the Jews of Lubartów to leave the town. After the forced removal, only 818 Jews were left in Lubartów. They were assigned to different forms of labor for the Germans in the town. Meanwhile, 850 persons were forcibly resettled to Ostrów (Lubelski), 634 were taken to Parczew, and small groups were brought to Kamionka (Lubartów powiat) and Firlej. All of these places were not far from Lubartów. The Jews of Lubartów remained in these places until September 1940, although some bribed their German captives and thereby succeeded in escaping and returning to their hometown. The details of how this happened are not known, but it may have been a local initiative by the German authorities.³ Some Jews attempted to return to Lubartów illegally, but the German police checked documents frequently. In the best case, persons in Lubartów illegally were simply sent back to where they had come from. In the worst case, they were arrested and sent to prison at the castle (*zamek*) in Lublin.⁴

For those Jews who remained in Lubartów, at the start of 1940 a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. Mosze Joel Edelman was appointed as its chairman, and Szlomo Ber Cieśla was his deputy. The Germans also named other members of the Judenrat, including Moszek Sruł Danemark, Jakub Lichtenfeld, Szlomo Rubinstein, Menasze Kassman, Sruł Reinsilber, Ber Reichnudel, Pinkwas Duman, Szyja Suchowolski, and Chil Weinberg.⁵ The Judenrat of Lubartów was reorganized several times. For instance, in November 1941 Dawid Peretz resigned as vice-chairman.⁶ In 1940, an 11-person Jewish police force was established.

In September 1940, the Kreishauptmann in Janów Lubelski, Winterfeld, was assigned to Kreis Krasnystaw and replaced by Fritz Schmiede. In consequence, about half of the Jewish families expelled from Lubartów were able to return to their native town. The Judenrat started a kitchen to provide hot meals to the Jewish residents, which was supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) until 1941. It served not only the local poor but also many refugees and evacuees whom the Germans had resettled in Lubartów in 1940 and 1941.

On December 16, 1940, more than 1,000 additional Jews arrived in Lubartów from Mława in Regierungsbezirk Zichenau. A visit by an official of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), Naftali Birnheck, in late December, noted the existence of an open ghetto in Lubartów at this time:

This small town presently counts 350 Jewish families. At the beginning of the war, 80 percent of the Jewish population was evacuated and their apartments in part occupied. After two months, 170 families managed to return, some legally, a part are here illegally. None of the re-emigrants secured their apartments and they are living in overcrowded streets designated as the Jewish quarter [or ghetto, i.e., *dzielnica żydowska*]. To this place [meaning the ghetto] have been sent 1,028 deportees from Mława.⁷

In March 1941, a few hundred Jews were resettled from Lublin to Lubartów.⁸ Lubartów was one of the first places in the Lublin region from which the Germans started to deport the Jews in 1942. In April 1942, 250 Jews were removed from Lubartów and resettled in Kamionka, Ostrów, and Firlej. It is unclear if this happened before or after the first mass deportation Aktion.⁹

The first deportation Aktion against the Jewish population began on April 9, 1942. The local German Gendarmerie seized all the Jews and brought them to a synagogue, where the process of selection began. Some Jews were allowed to remain in Lubartów to carry out work for the Germans. The German authorities selected 814 people for transport and sent them to the railway station. The Germans loaded them onto wagons all through the night and sent them to the extermination camp in Bełżec.¹⁰

Three days later, large groups of Slovak Jews started to arrive in Lubartów. On April 13, 1942, 900 persons arrived; on April 15, 1942, 680 persons arrived; and on May 7, 1942, 841 persons arrived, bringing the total to 2,421 Slovak Jews.¹¹ Initially they were made to live in the synagogue and a military barracks, essentially a stables built by the Germans on the grounds of the Jewish cemetery. As one witness recalls:

They differed from our Jews. They did not wear traditional headgear and yarmulkes. Their women had wavy hair and instead of wigs, wore hats. They were dressed in fashionable, woolen costumes and their husbands in suits. They did not put on armbands with the blue star, but they had stars made from yellow material on their breasts. Despite being forced to sleep in the dirty straw left by the horses, every morning they went from the barrack clean and neat. The Poles from Lubartów as well as the local Jews were very interested in them. And, the Jewish policemen, armed with sticks and quite often brutal toward the Lubartów Jews, lost self-assurance when meeting with the Slovak Jews. The inhabitants of

the barrack on Legiony Street [Jews from Slovakia] were not in Lubartów for very long. Suddenly they disappeared.¹²

After their arrival, the Slovak Jews were resettled again from Lubartów to other nearby places, mainly to Firlej and Ostrów.

Because Jews could not leave Lubartów to obtain food, hunger quickly ensued. The Germans organized teams to perform heavy labor within the town. This went on until October 1942, when another general resettlement of the Jews of Lubartów was ordered. This second cleansing operation took place on October 11, 1942. The Jews from Kamionka, Firlej, Ostrów, and Tarło were brought to Lubartów. In total there were about 6,000 or 7,000 Jews, counting the ones already in Lubartów. According to one account, “[T]he people stood four abreast on Lublin Street and were taken to be loaded onto the train. Then the Jews, arranged like a troop of soldiers, were driven from the first zone of the marketplace [Rynek I] to the railway station. Those people were compressed into freight cars, in which they could not breathe. When the wagons were full, the Germans shot anyone left stranded on the platform.”¹³

The transport then brought the Jews to the extermination camp in Treblinka.¹⁴ During this mass “resettlement” the Germans continued with the mass murder of any Jews who remained in their homes or on the streets of Lubartów. Some 300 unfortunate people, including the elderly and children, were shot on the grounds of the new Jewish cemetery. The Jews who were shot on the streets and by the railway platform were also taken to the cemetery and buried in a mass grave. The Jewish Police and sanitation workers dug the graves. Several days later, in spite of German guarantees that there would be no more Aktions, another several hundred Jews were deported to the ghetto in Piaski Luterskie and taken from there to the extermination camp in Sobibór. The members of the Judenrat in Lubartów were also resettled into the ghetto in Łęczna.¹⁵

In the town of Lubartów, a few hundred Jewish craftsmen initially were spared. They worked for the local Gendarmerie. On January 29, 1943, they were shot at the new Jewish cemetery in Lubartów.¹⁶

Along with the annihilation of the Jewish community, the Germans destroyed the buildings and all traces of Jewish presence. The synagogue was converted into a stable. The cemeteries were devastated. The old Jewish cemetery in the center of the city became a gallows, where Germans carried out public executions of Jews from Kamionka and other places. The tombstones from both cemeteries were taken to be sorted for building purposes in the school, where Wehrmacht soldiers were stationed.¹⁷

Only 40 Jews from Lubartów survived the Nazi occupation. They did so mainly by hiding in the villages around the town. In the town itself, two Polish families saved the lives of 5 Jews.¹⁸

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Lubartów can be found in the yizkor book, Barukh Tshubinski, ed.,

Hurben Levertov: A matseyve Levertov un Levertov kdotsim (Paris: fun di fraynt fun Levertov, 1947). Further information can be found in an article by J. Kiełboń, “Martyrologia ludności Lubartowa w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej,” in *Lubartów i ziemia lubartowska* (Lubartów: Lubartowskie Towarzystwo Regionalne, 1993), and in R. Kuwałek and P. Sygowski, “Z dziejów społeczności żydowskiej w Lubartowie,” in *Lubartów i ziemia lubartowska* (Lubartów: Lubartowskie Towarzystwo Regionalne, 2000). A number of articles, including accounts by Polish witnesses who lived in Lubartów during the occupation, have also been published since 1990 in the local daily press in Lubartów.

Relevant documentation on the fate of the Jews of Lubartów under Nazi occupation can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., GDL; and Kreishauptmannschaft Lublin-Land); AŻIH (211/646 [JSS]); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.076M; RG-50.030*0185); and YVA.

Robert Kuwałek
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Kiełboń, “Martyrologia,” p. 224.
2. Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, p. 7.
3. Ibid., pp. 7–8; Kiełboń, “Martyrologia,” p. 224.
4. APL, Polizei Battalion Zamość, 104.
5. Ibid., Kreishauptmannschaft Lublin-Land, 111, p. 4. This list of Judenrat members is from November 1941.
6. Ibid.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/646, p. 47.
8. Kuwałek and Sygowski, “Z dziejów społeczności,” pp. 81–82.
9. Ibid.
10. Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, p. 7; Kuwałek and Sygowski, “Z dziejów społeczności,” p. 82.
11. APL, Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin (GDL), 749, 893; Kreishauptmannschaft Lublin-Land, 141, pp. 114, 137.
12. M. Derecki, “Kromka chleba,” *Gazeta Lubelska*, April 23, 1993, p. 5; translation cited as in Robert Kuwałek, “Lubartow Ghetto,” on holocaustresearchproject.org Web site.
13. Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, p. 34.
14. Chiel M. Rajchman survived from this transport and the extermination camp in Treblinka. He was deported from Ostrów via Lubartów to Treblinka. See his oral history interview: USHMM, RG-50.030*0185.
15. On the mass shootings at the new Jewish cemetery in Lubartów, see M. Danielkiewicz, “Oczy pełne łez,” *Dziennik Lubelski*, July 30, 1990, p. 5; Derecki, “Kromka chleba”; on the fate of the Jews in the town after the deportation, see Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, pp. 7–8.
16. Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, p. 8.
17. Testimonies of Halina Domańska and Janina Stelmazenko in the private collection of Paweł Sygowski.
18. In Lubartów, in the shelter prepared by the Czekański family, Josef Honigsblum and his wife Bluma survived. The Sienkiewicz family rescued Debora Erlich and her five-year-old son Michał and her sister-in-law Noemi Erlich. Others were rescued by Polish families in neighboring villages or survived in hiding places in the forests; see Tshubinski, *Hurben Levertov*, pp. 8–9.

LUBLIN

Pre-1939: Lublin, city, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lublin województwo, Poland

Lublin lies about 160 kilometers (99 miles) southeast of Warsaw. In August 1939, around 37,000 Jews were living there among a total population of some 122,000.

In September 1939, following the German invasion, thousands of Jewish refugees fled to Lublin. The aerial bombardment of the city was quite heavy, resulting in around 1,000 civilian deaths and leaving thousands more homeless. German forces reached Lublin on September 17. Soon after their arrival they started to seize Jews for forced labor and rob Jewish property. In the fall of 1939, the Jewish community was required to pay several very large contributions to the German authorities. Initially the Jews were forced to wear yellow stars on their clothing, but in December 1939, these were replaced with white armbands bearing a blue Star of David.¹

At the end of 1939, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). It consisted of 24 members, headed by Henry Becker. Under him served two deputies, Dr. Marek Alten and Shlomo Kastenberga. The German authorities confirmed its membership in January 1940. Subsequently Alten became the dominant figure within the Lublin Judenrat.

During the winter of 1939–1940, a number of Jews were evicted from their apartments, especially near the city center, and were resettled into the worst neighborhood. Starting in the spring of 1940, a number of Jews were rounded up and sent to work at various forced labor camps in Distrikt Lublin.² In December 1940 and January 1941, more than 3,000 Jewish-Polish prisoners of war (POWs), who could not be released as they came from parts of Poland then still occupied by the Soviet Union, were transferred to Lublin and confined within a POW camp at Lipowa Street no. 7. Some of these prisoners were used subsequently to help construct the Majdanek concentration camp.



Deportation from the Lublin ghetto, ca. 1942.
USHMM WS #02597, COURTESY OF JERZY FICOWSKI

On or just before January 11, 1941, the five-man presidium of the Jewish Council in Lublin met with Dr. Walter Bausenhardt, the head of the Housing Department within the German administration of Distrikt Lublin. The meeting was to discuss a “voluntary” transfer of Jews out of Lublin, in preparation for placing the remaining Jews into a ghetto.³

In March, however, the Germans resorted to force to reduce the city’s Jewish population. Between March 10 and March 13, 1941, around 12,000 Jews were rounded up and resettled from Lublin to at least 11 separate localities within the Distrikt, including Bełżyce, Chodel, Lubartów, Rejowiec, Siedliszcze, and Sosnowica. The transfer was conducted to make space for the Wehrmacht in the city, as Poles were then moved into the former Jewish areas, as well as reducing the Jewish population to be moved into the ghetto in Lublin. Smaller deportations continued into April, but most of the subsequent transfers were voluntary, in connection with the ghetto’s establishment.⁴ At this time the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was established in Lublin, initially consisting of 10 officers but later increasing to more than 100.

On March 24, 1941, Gouverneur Ernst Otto Zörner, as the head of Distrikt Lublin, issued a proclamation concerning the establishment of a consolidated Jewish residential area (*geschlossener jüdischer Wohngebiet* [ghetto]) in the city of Lublin. The proclamation included a plan of the ghetto area. All Jews were to reside inside the ghetto. Non-Jews living there were given until April 10 to move out. Jews living outside the ghetto boundaries had to leave their residences by April 15, with the exception of those in the Kalinów and Sieraków neighborhoods, who had until May 1. Jews failing to make these deadlines were to be forcibly expelled from the city of Lublin.⁵

At a meeting on March 31, Zörner noted that to force an additional 15,000 Jews to leave the city voluntarily, some pressure needed to be exerted. It was reported that so far only about 2,500 Jews had registered for resettlement. Regierungsrat Bausenhardt therefore declared that he would attempt again to get the military to lift their opposition to the resettlement of Jews to a number of locations within the Distrikt.⁶

To encourage more Jews to leave, those who left were permitted to take all of their belongings, while those moving into the ghetto could bring in only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of possessions. The ghetto was situated in the old Jewish quarter, where many Jews already were living, but the small area assigned only had room for some 20,000 people. Nevertheless, a new housing department established by the Judenrat had to find space in the ghetto for at least 6,000 additional Jews, and the actual number that moved in was almost 10,000 more, as only a few thousand decided to leave.⁷ In mid-April, the deadline for Jews to move into the ghetto was extended by a few days until April 24. Living conditions continued to deteriorate, as additional Jews came into the ghetto after its establishment, including some who returned after the initial resettlement.

Initially the Lublin ghetto remained an open ghetto. On May 1, 1941, Zörner imposed a strict curfew on the ghetto between 9:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. Outside the ghetto, the

curfew applied to the Jews at 7:00 P.M.⁸ The Germans changed the boundaries of the ghetto several times followings its establishment. Subsequently, probably in early 1942, the ghetto was surrounded by a fence, and two guarded gates were established to control exit and entry.

In July 1941, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) received 24,000 applications for welfare support; but it was only possible to help 15,063 people. In that month, more than 78,000 meals were served, some 22,000 of them free of charge and the rest at a subsidized rate. At this time there were 34,149 Jews living in the ghetto. Daily rations consisted only of 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per person, half that of the Polish population.⁹ Religious services were banned, as was schooling for Jewish children, but both were continued on a smaller scale clandestinely inside the ghetto.

Starting in May 1941, there was a serious outbreak of typhus in the Lublin ghetto. In July, the German authorities ordered 87 buildings (out of 348 in the ghetto) to be quarantined. At this time the Jewish hospital for infectious diseases was moved into the ghetto and expanded. The Jewish Council also had to find new sources of revenue, including even a 50 groszy fee for ration cards, to cover the extra expenses involved. By October, the quarantine hospital had some 380 beds, but this remained inadequate to deal with the more than 500 new cases per month at the peak of the epidemic. One survivor, who arrived in the ghetto in November, noted that people were dying of hunger, cold, and exhaustion in the streets. In December, there were 1,000 Jews sick with typhus, and all three available hospitals were overflowing.¹⁰

On December 9, 1941, on account of the typhus epidemic, Zörner announced that any Jew caught outside the ghetto or their assigned labor camp without permission would face the death penalty. Non-Jews were also forbidden to enter the ghetto, except for necessary official tasks.¹¹ At this time, about 7 percent of the Jewish population, mainly doctors, members of the Judenrat, and other privileged people, were still living outside the ghetto. In December 1941, the Jews learned of German plans to split the ghetto into two sections: Ghetto A and Ghetto B.¹² At the end of December 1941, the Germans demanded that the Jews surrender their furs and other items of warm clothing. Several members of the Judenrat were taken hostage to ensure that additional German demands for wool and woolen garments were also met.

At the end of February 1942, the extension of the Lublin ghetto by the establishment of a separate Ghetto B section was implemented.¹³ The newly created Ghetto B was separated from Ghetto A by barbed wire, and Jews from the two ghettos were not permitted to visit each other.

On March 16, 1942, German forces subordinated to the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Distrikt Lublin, Odilo Globocnik, assisted by several SS and police detachments (including more than 200 non-German Trawniki men), started the liquidation of the Lublin ghetto. The deportation of most of the Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp also marked the beginning of the state-organized mass murder of the Jews in the Generalgouvernement. Among the officers assigned to con-

duct the ghetto liquidation, SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Worthoff played an especially active role. Shortly after the start of the Aktion, the Judenrat was informed that selections would be conducted in the synagogue and only Jews with a Sicherheitspolizei (Security Police, Sipo) work stamp would be transferred to Ghetto B, while the others would be deported by train. Jews found in apartments after they had been cleared were to be shot. Security Police instructions for the Aktion indicated also that the elderly, sick, and disabled were to be shot on the spot. The Germans planned to deport 1,400 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp each day.¹⁴ The deportations were conducted with great brutality, especially by the Trawniki men, who drank too much and also seized Jews with valid Sipo work stamps. Hundreds of Jews were left dead on the streets. On March 24, around 200 children from the orphanage at Grodzka Street no. 11 were murdered at a pit prepared on the northern edge of town.¹⁵ Two hospitals and an old-age home were liquidated between March 24 and March 27, with the patients shot nearby.

On March 29, there was a brief break in the Aktion. Rumors spread that the Germans would stop the deportations in return for a large ransom payment. The Judenrat soon organized 500,000 złoty in gold and delivered it to Worthoff. However, the Germans took the money and shot the 2 Judenrat members who delivered it. Then on March 31, Worthoff ordered a special meeting of the Judenrat. At the meeting, he announced that the Judenrat would be reduced from 24 members to 12, and he added 6 new, more compliant members, such that 16 former members and their families were now added to the deportees. At the same time, the Jewish Police was reduced in size from 113 to 78 men, with the others subject to deportation. It was also announced that henceforth only those Jews with a "J" permit would remain, as opposed to the Sipo work stamps, used for the selections up to this point. Far fewer Jews had these J permits, which had only been issued in March.¹⁶ The deportation Aktion continued until April 16, 1942. Many more Jews now went into hiding, and even more brutality was employed to extract them. In total, at least 25,000 Jews were murdered during the entire period of the Aktion.

The Jews remaining in Ghetto B, about 3,000 to 4,000 people with so-called J permits, and almost as many "illegals" were transferred on April 17–19, 1942, to the remnant ghetto in Majdan Tatarski, which was surrounded by a fence.¹⁷ Then on April 20, a roll call was conducted and almost 4,000 Jews were permitted to return to the camp, but some 3,000 Jews found to be without J permits were sent to the Majdanek concentration camp, where they were killed shortly afterwards.¹⁸

Conditions for the surviving Jews in the Majdan-Tatarski ghetto were somewhat better than in the former ghetto area. Officially it was described as an "exemplary Jewish estate" and was located in a suburb of the city, from which all the Poles had been removed. Each house had a small garden, which the Jews used to grow vegetables. However, it was also overcrowded, with some 8 to 10 people sharing each room.¹⁹ Two hospitals functioned within the ghetto. Everyone living in the ghetto was supposed to be working. Some worked at various

sites in Lublin, a few became domestic servants for the Germans based nearby, and others worked in the ghetto. The Germans searched the ghetto frequently, looking for illegal Jews and killing those they discovered.

Three transports, two from Terezín and one from towns in the Reich, including Weimar, arrived in Lublin in May 1942, carrying some 3,000 Jews.²⁰ Many were sent to the Majdan Tatarski ghetto, but some may have been transferred to other camps, such as Majdanek. Laura Hillman, who arrived in the ghetto from Weimar, recalled that some of the Jews were nicely dressed, while others wore only rags and appeared hungry and defeated. Nonetheless, she saw children carrying books and singing Hebrew songs that raised her spirits. She also recalled that the ghetto had its own currency and that it was possible to buy food from a store with this money that resembled play money. Near the store there was a crowd of people bartering their clothes for food.²¹ Hillman and other survivors note that there were frequent roundups in the ghetto as well as new arrivals. However, between May and September 1942, the number of Jews receiving rations in the Majdan Tatarski ghetto remained fairly stable at around 4,000 people.

On September 2, 1942, the Germans surrounded the ghetto and conducted a selection. Around 500 elderly men, women, and children were sent towards Majdanek and killed on the way. Another 500 were sent to various labor camps. Another selection on October 25 saw around 1,000 Jews transferred to the Majdanek concentration camp, including some of those with work cards. Following the announcement of eight remnant ghettos in Distrikt Lublin by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, on October 28, which did not include Lublin as a place where Jews were permitted to reside, the Jews feared another Aktion would soon follow. On November 7, the Germans demanded that the Jewish Police participate in the ghetto's liquidation, offering to protect the policemen and their families.²² Two days later, the elderly, the sick, and any children were deported to Majdanek and killed, while some able-bodied Jews were transferred to labor camps. At this time the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Alten, and the head of the Jewish Police, Moniek Goldfarb, were both murdered. The "protected" policemen were also shot or deported to Majdanek. Some Jews were kept alive to clean out the ghetto area until the end of the month, when they in turn were killed.

During the Aktion to liquidate the first ghetto in April and again during the Aktions against the Majdan Tatarski ghetto in the fall of 1942, many Jews knew what to expect and went into prepared hiding places or tried to escape to the Aryan side.²³ Due to the detailed searches of the ghetto area and draconian punishments for anyone caught hiding a Jew, only some of those who evaded capture during the Aktions managed to survive. A few of those who escaped fled from Lublin and survived in the Warsaw suburbs or in the countryside. Among the non-Jews who risked their lives to help Jews escaping from the ghetto was Zofia Młodawska-Socha, who smuggled two children out of the first ghetto, just before the transfer to Majdan Tatarski. Ryszard Postowicz, a member of the Polish underground, also



The furnishings of Jewish homes are collected and unloaded in a public square in the Wieniawa district after the liquidation of the Lublin ghetto, ca. 1942.

USHMM WS #73202, COURTESY OF IPN

assisted 2 Jews to find a safer hiding place outside the city, after they had fled from the Majdan Tatarski ghetto.²⁴ One estimate is that only about 230 Jews from Lublin returned at the end of the war, including a number who had escaped to the Soviet Union in 1939.

SOURCES Secondary sources regarding the fate of the Jewish community of Lublin during World War II include the following: Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 13–38; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 14–52; Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999); Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), pp. 275–276; Dieter Pohl, *Von der "Judenpolitik" zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), pp. 92–94; Tadeusz Radzik, *Zagłada lubelskiego getta* (Lublin: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2003); and David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003).

The yizkor books for Lublin—M. Lerman, ed., *Dos bukh fun Lublin: Zikbroynes, gvies-eydes un materyaln ibern lebn, kamf un martirertum fun Lubliner Yidishn yishuv* (Paris, 1952); and N. Blumenthal and M. Korzen, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Poland Series—Lublin Volume* (Jerusalem, 1957) [in Hebrew]—contain accounts concerning the ghetto and some relevant documents.

Published sources include Nachmun Blumenthal, ed., *Te'udot mi-geto Lublin: Yudenrat le-lo derekh* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1967); Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S." ("Oneg Shabbath")* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986); and Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto,*

Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961) (hereafter cited as *FGM*). Among the personal memoirs of survivors, there is: Laura Hillman, *I Will Plant a Lilac Tree: A Love Story amidst the Destruction of the Holocaust* (New York: Writers' Club, 2003). The verdicts of three relevant West German trials can be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vols. 38, 40, 41 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008–2009), Lfd. Nr. 790, 826, and 833.

Relevant archival documentation includes APL (Fond 22); AŻIH (e.g., 211/644–654; 301/801, 1291, 1295, 2184, 2232; 302; Ring II/305 and 307); IPN (e.g., ASG; Fond 185); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.019M [IPN, ASG]; RG-15.034M [IPN, Fond 185, Records of the KdS Lublin]; RG-15.075M [APL, Records of the City of Lublin]; RG-15.079M [Ring]; RG-15.101M [Jewish Council in Lublin, 1939–1942]); VHF (e.g., # 14326, 43812, 45132); and YVA (e.g., O-3).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1295, testimony of Franciszka Mandelbaum.
2. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring II/305, as cited in Ker-mish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 181–188.
3. Blumenthal, *Te'udot mi-geto Lublin*, p. 211.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/649, pp. 26–29; 211/650, p. 14; Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, eds., *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1975), p. 338.
5. *Krakauer Zeitung*, no. 73, March 30–31, 1941, p. 3.
6. Note of a meeting with the Gouverneur of Distrikt Lublin, Zörner, March 31, 1941, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, pp. 123–124.
7. Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” pp. 155–156.
8. Bekanntmachung reprinted in Blumenthal and Korzen, *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora*, p. 700.
9. USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/652, p. 2.
10. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 167–169; Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 162; AŻIH, 301/801, testimony of Bolesław Kopelman; USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/654, p. 39.
11. USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, 211/654, p. 5.
12. Ibid., pp. 39–40; AŻIH, 301/1295.
13. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 27, 1942, no. 25, p. 5.
14. *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 41, Lfd. Nr. 833a, pp. 258–259.
15. Berenstein et al., *FGM*, pp. 272–273.
16. Blumenthal, *Te'udot mi-geto Lublin*, pp. 314–318; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 41, Lfd. Nr. 833a, p. 256.
17. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 19, 1942, no. 46, p. 8; *ŻuNS-V*, vol. 41, Lfd. Nr. 833a, p. 260.
18. AŻIH, 301/1291, testimony of Anna Bach; 301/2184, testimony of Zelman Szajner.
19. Ibid., 301/2232, testimony of Mina Beinsdorf.
20. *Gedenkbuch: Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933–1945*, 2nd ed. (Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 2006), vol. 4, p. xix.
21. Hillman, *I Will Plant a Lilac Tree*, pp. 29–35. VHF, # 45132, testimony of Kitty Hart-Moxon, 1998, also mentions the ghetto currency.

22. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger, October 28, 1942, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, pp. 342–344; USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring II/307 [353].

23. VHF, # 43812, testimony of Nechama Tec, 1998; # 14326, testimony of Victor Cynamon, 1996.

24. Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 524, 635–636.

ŁUKÓW

Pre-1939: Łuków (Yiddish: Lukov), town, Łuków powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Lukow, Kreis Radzyn, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Łuków, Łuków powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Łuków lies 90 kilometers (56 miles) north-northwest of Lublin. In August 1939, its Jewish population stood at around 6,000.

On September 17, 1939, a Wehrmacht unit occupied Łuków. In retaliation for Polish soldiers ambushing a reconnaissance patrol, its military commander ordered 70 Jews executed and some 1,000 Jewish and Christian men marched to a penal camp located near Ostrów Mazowiecka. By the time of the prisoners' September 29 release, the Germans had ceded Łuków to Soviet occupation. However, a border negotiation, concluded the previous day, had assigned the town to Germany. On October 4, 500 Jews joined the Soviet evacuation behind the Bug River. Upon reoccupying Łuków, the Germans devastated the synagogue, humiliated Jews, and compelled them to clear rubble from the fighting.

In October 1939, the Łuków powiat was incorporated into Kreis Radzyn. A German became Landrat of Łuków. Gendarmerie and Eisenbahnpolizei (Railway Police) posts were established. The Polish (Blue) Police and an ethnic German Sonderdienst unit were recruited. The Lublin SS established



Members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 publicly humiliate a group of religious Jewish men in Łuków, 1942. Two of the men are forced to pose in their prayer shawls in a crouching position with their hands up. Among those pictured is Motl Hershberg [with white beard].

USHMM WS #49189, COURTESY OF YIVO

a Kreis-level branch office, under SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Fischer, and claimed the Polish army base (with railway station) in suburban Łapiguz. In May 1940, the SS moved its office to Radzyń but left some six employees behind to secure its Łapiguz warehouses.¹

In November and December 1939, 5,000 Jewish deportees arrived from Suwałki, Nasielsk, and Serock. On December 7, between 850 and 1,000 newcomers were forcibly expelled to Kock.² By December 31, 3,550 Jewish deportees were residing in Łuków.

In December 1939, Landrat Fischel appointed a 12-person Jewish Council (Judenrat). He named kehillah president Mosze Aron Wajntraub (Weintraub) its chair. In November 1940, when the SS arrested Wajntraub, Hersz Lejzor Lendor became council chair. The council established a Jewish police force, commanded by Salomon "Salek" Cukierman.

Jewish forced labor conscripts reconstructed the war-damaged railway station. From the fall of 1940, 1,000 laborers employed by the Reckmann construction firm cleared an interior section of a forest near Łapiguz, extended railway tracks there, and built a concealed armory.³ Craftsmen added barracks to the Łapiguz base. In April 1941, German troops, amassed in Distrikt Lublin for the June invasion of the USSR, were billeted there.

Łuków's militarization likely prompted authorities in May 1941 to establish a ghetto. Local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) leaders noted the unfenced, open ghetto (*dzielnica żydowska*) occupied a pre-war Jewish neighborhood but described its boundaries as fluid.⁴ Maps show the ghetto encompassed most of the area within Staropijarska, Pastewnik, Kanałowa, Browarny, and Szopen Streets. To retain access to the magistrate's office and to permit traffic along major arteries, all but a block on the western side of Międzyrzec Street and what now is Wyszyński Street were excluded from the ghetto. As a result, the ghetto was composed of three separate areas.

Initially, the Jews were permitted much freedom of movement but were required to return to the ghetto by curfew. From the summer of 1941, the mayor forbade Jews from leaving Łuków. Some were shot for violating the order.⁵ Because the ghetto was overcrowded, many refugees departed for nearby villages.⁶ In April 1942, the ghetto population stood at 8,093. On May 8–9, 1942, 2,031 Jews (many of them identifying themselves as Hungarian Jews) arrived from Slovakia.

Jewish conscripts unloaded and loaded cargo at the railway station, the armaments depot, and the SS warehouses. They extended municipal water lines and built a locomotive repair facility for Reckmann. Craftsmen worked for the SS, the Gendarmerie post, and the municipal administration. Women labored at the Dietz (Dieter) poultry firm, preparing chickens for shipment to the Eastern Front. In the spring of 1941, 1,500 Jews became prisoners at water irrigation camps in Rogoźnica and Zarzec Ulański and at a wood-cutting camp in Łapiguz. Some Łapiguz inmates worked at a nearby sawmill.

The 2 złoty Reckmann paid Jews for 10 hours of labor was insufficient to purchase a loaf of bread. During Passover 1942, the JSS doubled (to 882) the families served by its com-

munity kitchen. In March, a day-care program provided 300 children (under 14) free daily meals, with milk, and religious instruction.⁷

In March or April 1942, police from the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) Radzyń branch office, killed between 15 and 47 Jews during a search for fur coats. Among the victims was Mr. Węger, shot by Anton Neumann, an ethnic German SS recruit from nearby Łazy. Josef Bürger, assigned from October 1939 to KdS Radzyń, and Neumann, his translator, planned a raid, in some accounts in April and in others in June or July, during which Security Police and local ethnic Germans killed between 44 and 89 ghetto residents. The next morning, Fischer threatened to murder half the ghetto population if he did not receive 20 kilograms (44 pounds) in gold. When the Jews could not raise the sum, Fischer agreed to a down payment of half as much.⁸

In June 1942, as part of Operation Reinhard, the Security Police assumed control of the ghetto. Bürger became the ghetto's SS administrator (or commandant). Neumann was his deputy. In late July, a part of the 1st Company of Reserve Police Battalion 101 was moved to Łuków to assist in the impending ghetto liquidation.

To shield "useful" Jews from deportation, many newly arrived Slovak deportees were interned at Łapiguz. In the summer of 1942, conscripts from Łuków and the Stanin gmina were sent to the Hochtief camp in Dęblin to work on constructing a railway bridge over the Wieprz River. Reckmann also transferred some laborers to its Dęblin construction site.⁹ In Łuków, most Jewish laborers were required to reside at work sites.

From the summer of 1942, ghetto inmates realized that the Germans were sending Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp; however, they mistakenly believed it was a place of resettlement beyond the Bug River. Because Polish railway workers had described German mass killings of Jews in Ukraine, most nonetheless feared deportation.¹⁰ On August 25, an empty train pulled into the railway station but soon departed for Międzyrzec Podlaski to transport Jews from there to Treblinka. Shortly thereafter, Lender announced that the authorities had informed him that the Łuków Jews would be spared deportation, as some 80 percent worked for German employers. In mid-September, the Security Police ordered the ghetto surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. When, on October 1, transports to Treblinka resumed in Kreis Radzyń, with the deportation of 2,000 Jews from Radzyń, many Łuków Jews prepared to evade expulsion.

Early on October 5, 1942, the ghetto was surrounded by Security Police from Radzyń, members of the Reserve Police Battalion 101, SS auxiliaries (Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Latvians), Gendarmes, and local ethnic German and Polish police units. After ordering the Jews assembled at the trading square on Międzyrzec Street, the German police and SS auxiliaries entered the ghetto and shot dead the patients and staff at the hospital and those who refused to leave the ghetto. At the square, men able to work were separated from women, the

elderly and children from those able to work. German employers read lists of those exempted from deportation. Eleven Jewish Council members were shot. They were among 500 Jews murdered on that day. Some 4,000 mainly women, children, and the elderly were marched to the railway station and sent from there to be gassed at Treblinka.¹¹

Trains carrying Jews to Treblinka, from Parczew and Irena-Dęblin, stopped to pick up those located during searches of the ghetto and lured from hiding on October 8, 1942, by promises of permanent work.¹² Some 640 of 2,000 deportees may have been retained to dig mass graves at a clearing near Malcanów, where they, too, were executed.¹³ During the searches, Bürger shot dead older and child fugitives he uncovered. He ordered others to form a fire brigade to help the Polish (Blue) Police guard and clear houses of the deported and a sanitation force to assist Jewish Police and Chevra Kadisha (Burial Society) members to bury the dead at Malcanów. Some 2,000 to 3,000 Jews evaded expulsion.

The ghetto was reduced in size to Kanałowa, Jatkowa, and Międzyrzec Streets. Some 2,500 to 3,500 Jews from the Łuków Landkommissariat then were consolidated there. The consolidations, completed by October 25, 1942, included as many as 1,300 to 1,700 Jews from the Gułów gmina, mainly from Adamów, Okrzeja, and Wola Okrzejska; almost 460 from the Stanin and Mysłów gminy, including in the latter from Kamień, Wandów, and Wandów-Antoniówka; 350 from the Tuchowicz gmina, including from Anonin, Kij, Celiny, and Tuchowicz; and 432 from the Ulan gmina, where in the spring of 1942 Jews had lived in Kępki, Paskudy, Sętki, Sobole, Stok, Ulan, Wierzchowiny, Zakrzew, Zarzec, and Żyłki.

An unstudied September 1942 mass killing in Wojcieszów makes it impossible to determine how many of the gmina's 214 Jewish residents were consolidated in the ghetto.¹⁴ Some September executions, including 98 Jews in Okrzejska by SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries responsible for sawmill operations in Korwin, targeted fugitives from deportations in Żelechów and Kreis Pulawy. However, Reserve Police Battalion 101's September 22 mass killing of 200 to 300 Jews from Serokomla and Charlejew left a handful of the Serokomla gmina's 295 Jewish residents to transport to Łuków.¹⁵ An execution in Krzywda, that day or on September 29, in which 125 railway conscripts perished, also murdered most Jewish inhabitants from the pre-war Radoryż gmina.¹⁶ A volunteer civilian guard rounded up and transported the Jewish residents of Trzebieszów to Łuków.¹⁷ On October 10, another 70 of the Trzebieszów gmina's 142 residents were shot in Grochówka. Only in Stanin and Wola Okrzejska were some Jews retained for work outside a labor camp.

On October 27, 1942, the Security Police, Reserve Police Battalion 101, and their collaborators again cleared the Łuków ghetto. Approximately 2,000 newcomers were sent to their deaths at Treblinka.

The next day, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, named Łuków one of the eight Jewish residential areas where Jews in Distrikt Lublin legally could reside. Near Łuków,

Krüger's orders sparked searches for fugitives from the ghetto consolidation. Some 25 Adamów Jews located during an October 30 search in forests near Burzec village were shot. Another search occurred on November 5 in Siedliska village.¹⁸ On November 6, Reserve Police Battalion 101 transferred 600 Jews from Kock to Łuków.

On November 5 and 7, 1942, the Łuków ghetto again was cleared. The November 5 expulsion targeted ghetto residents. The November 7 deportation enveloped some 3,000 Jews, including hundreds of Łuków laborers marched directly from work sites to the deportation train. These Jews were later gassed at Treblinka.

The German police and their collaborators once more searched the ghetto for those in hiding. They offered Polish civilians sugar and vodka to locate fugitives outside of Łuków. A "peasant gang" gathered some 250 train jumpers by the railway tracks and forced the captives to surrender their clothing and shoes before requesting that the railway police claim the prisoners.¹⁹ Captives were incarcerated in the prison at the magistrate's office, the synagogue, and the Łapiguz barracks. Late on November 7, 1942, Bürger and another German executed 80 to 200 children (all central prison inmates under age six) in the inner courtyard of the magistrate's office.²⁰ The remaining captives were shot in groups of 200 at Malcanów, with the last central prison inmates, all men, killed on November 10.²¹ A yizkor book testimony, describing the Chevra Kadisha's activities, estimates the society's members buried 1,500 to 2,000 victims.²²

About 10 to 17 days later, the ghetto's fence, dismantled during the expulsion, was reconstructed. The remaining Jewish laborers, mainly at Dietz, Reckmann, and the SS warehouses, were ordered to reside permanently in the ghetto. The Stanin Jews probably were marched to the ghetto at this time. Upon the Reckmann laborers' return from Dęblin in January 1943, Łuków natives composed 20 to 30 percent of the approximately 3,000 to 4,000 ghetto residents. Ryszka Huberman-Iwan recalls Slovak and Hungarian deportees formed a significant part of the population.²³ However, most survivors report the majority of the ghetto's inmates came from nearby villages and towns.

Conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded. Some 15 to 25 people lived in a room. The ghetto's only pump frequently broke, and rations were practically nonexistent. In late winter 1942–1943, unsanitary conditions caused a typhus epidemic.

Some Jews worked at Dietz or Reckmann. Others likely dismantled 100 mostly Jewish residences located outside the ghetto.²⁴ Most survived by sneaking from the ghetto to barter material possessions for food. Water became more plentiful after Jewish craftsmen began repurposing the *mikveh*, located opposite the ghetto. The construction site also became an illicit market, at which Jews and non-Jews intermingled with laborers to exchange goods.

Bürger shot tens of people dead, including a Łuków teenager surnamed Rybak, found outside the ghetto, and venders and water carriers at the mikveh.²⁵ Construction firm owner Richard Reckmann asked Security Police from Radzyń,

including his brother, to enforce labor discipline. In 1942, at least 20 conscripts, many too sick to report to work, were shot. In December, Bürger ordered 500 to 600 Jews executed in Malcanów. In Wola Okrzejska, an execution, on December 28, overseen by the SS and Ukrainian and Lithuanian auxiliaries, claimed 36 victims, mainly children and women older than 39.²⁶

On May 2, 1943, the Łuków ghetto was liquidated. To force Jews from hiding, SS and SS Ukrainian auxiliaries set many buildings afire. Hundreds fled to nearby forests. The remaining 2,000 to 3,000 Jews were sent to their deaths at Treblinka. On learning of the ghetto liquidation, the 40 surviving Jews in Wola Okrzejska escaped to the forest.

Upon Łuków's liberation in July 1944, 60 survivors returned to the town.

In 1970, Josef Bürger received a life sentence for the shooting deaths of individual Jews before, during, and after the Łuków ghetto liquidation.

SOURCES Secondary sources providing coverage of the World War II history of the Łuków Jewish community and of the other Jewish communities consolidated in the Łuków ghetto include Krzysztof Czubaszek, *Żydzi Łukowa i okolic* (Warsaw: Danmar, 2008); and the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 39 (Adamów), pp. 67–68 (Okrzeja), pp. 275–280 (Łuków), p. 347 (Stok), pp. 349–350 (Stanin), p. 378 (Serokomla), pp. 477–448 (Kock); and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 52–53 (Adamów), pp. 134–139 (Kock), pp. 183–190 (Łuków).

An English translation of a testimony authored by two Finkelsztajn siblings describing the fall 1942 Łuków ghetto liquidation, cited in the entry as AŻIH, Ring [352] II/306, is available as “The Destruction of Łuków,” in Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 210–213. Though used by almost all scholars to date the Łuków deportations, the testimony unfortunately contains a calendar error in recalling the deportation on Saturday, November 8. In 1942, Saturday fell on November 7. This entry used the November 7 date because survivors and other eyewitnesses report the deportation occurred on a Saturday.

Memoirs and testimonies from survivors include Eta Wrobel, with Jeanette Friedman, *My Life My Way: The Extraordinary Memoir of a Jewish Partisan in WW II Poland* (New Milford, NJ: Wordsmithy LLC and Yad Vashem, 2006); the transcript of Lily Fenster's testimony, accessible electronically at the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive, University of Michigan, Dearborn; Sonia Hurman and Abram Hurman, with Halina Birenbaum, *Pod osłoną nocy. Wspomnienia z lat 1939–1945* (Kraków and Oświęcim: Fundacja Instytutu Studiów Strategicznych and Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu, 2007), which provides coverage of the fall 1942 Łuków ghetto consolidations through its

treatment of the experiences of the Jewish communities of Okrzeja and to a lesser extent of Stanin. Additional testimonies can be found in the yizkor book Binem Heller, ed., *Sefer Lukov: Geheylikt der borev-gevorener kehileh* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Lukov be-Yisrael un der Lukover Landsmanshat in di Fareynikte Shtatn, 1968), available in a French translation by Alain Zylbering and Françoise Rudetzki, *Le Livre de Lukow, 1200–1945* (Paris, 1987). The above-cited Czubaszek *Żydzi Łukowa* work contains a 150-page document appendix that includes Polish translations of Yiddish-language testimonies from AŻIH 301; depositions, memoirs, and letters from survivors to the IPN and the Regional Museum in Łuków (Muzeum Regionalne w Łukowie); and testimonies from Jewish survivors, their descendants, and local Polish Christians collected by the author during his research. The book also includes photographs of a map of the ghetto, in the collections of the Regional Museum in Łuków.

Excerpts from the diary of Stanisław Żemiński, the Polish-Christian chronicler of the fall 1942 Treblinka deportations, first appeared in publication as “Kartki dziennika nauczyciela w Łukowie z okresu okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, no. 27 (1958): 105–112, with an English translation widely available on the Internet; however, the excerpt in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 108–111, may be more valuable, as it appeared after the collapse of communism in Poland and therefore was not subject to censorship.

An overview of Polish IPN research into murders perpetrated by German forces in and around Łuków is provided in the relevant volumes of *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP and IPN, 1985–), with the volume for the Siedlce (siedleckie) województwo covering the largest part of the region. Christopher R. Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992) and Daniel J. Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996) discuss the role members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 played in the liquidations of the region's Jewish communities, including in the fall of 1942 in Łuków. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 34 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), Lfd. 737, discusses the criminal investigation and trial of Josef Bürger.

Additional documentation for the Jewish community of Łuków is located in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/477, 211 [675–677; 885, pp. 43, 53–55; 886, pp. 31, 43, 56, 62; 887, pp. 56–57, 91, 99; 888, pp. 12, 26, 38, 48–49, 51; 889, pp. 10, 15, 22–27, 43, 51, 62, 64; 890, pp. 21, 25, 46, 59, 72], 267, 301 [43, 44, 789, 1198, 3880, 4265, 4747, 5628, 6242], 302/30, 310/L, 303/V/709, Ring [352] II/306); BA-L (B 162/2188–2190, e.g., pp. 1029–1035, 1169–1177, 1283–1296, 1321–1332, 1380–1422, 1461–1483); FVA (HVT [e.g., 265, 717, 721, 733, 734, 1366]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAL [76, 144, 153, 165, 173–174, 179, 188]); IPN-Lu (e.g., 05-142, 98/67/1-5, 131/67/1-57, 151/67/1-5, 284/436/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6 (16/684, 688–689, 703, 724, 738, 742), reel 15 (49/83)]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring]; RG-50.120*0201); VHF (# 1642, 3210, 5897, 6118, 6146, 8327, 9775, 10911, 10912, 11663, 11932, 13813, 17693, 23342, 24067, 24208, 26955, 27870,

32079, 36916, 41057, 42816); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [1649, 2860, 3153, 4052], O-33/1315). The Holocaust Memorial Center Zerkelman Family Campus, Farmington Hills, MI, includes in its collections the Klein-Biegel oral history, one of the only known testimonies from a Slovak deportee to the Łuków ghetto.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 11663, testimony of Hershel Prengler; BA-L, B 162/2188-2190 (208 AR-Z 236-60), pp. 1029–1030 (Jakob Keselbrener deposition).
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/477, p. 2.
3. AŻIH, 301/3880, testimony of Abram Sylbersztejn, p. 1.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/677, p. 17.
5. AŻIH, 302/30, testimony of Stanisław Żemiński, p. 2.
6. Ibid., 301/4265, testimony of Pinia Fuksman, pp. 1–3.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/677, p. 14; 211/890, p. 46.
8. BA-L, B 162/2188-2189 (208 AR-Z 236-60), p. 1031 (Keselbrener), and pp. 1284–1290 (Sol [Szłoma] Prengler deposition).
9. AŻIH, 301/4265, pp. 4–5; VHF, # 11663.
10. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring II/306, p. 1; VHF, # 11663.
11. *Le Livre*, pp. 40–43 (Laibish [Lajbisz] Barn testimony).
12. AŻIH, 302/30, p. 3. See also USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring II/306, p. 3.
13. BA-L, B162/2189 (208 AR-Z 236-60), p. 1285.
14. Czubaszek, *Żydzi*, pp. 173–174.
15. Hurman et al., *Pod*, pp. 33–37; Marianna Kurchand-Adamczek testimony, in Czubaszek, *Żydzi*, pp. 231–233.
16. AŻIH, 301/1198, testimony of Mała Połosecka, p. 2.
17. Ibid., 302/30, pp. 4–5.
18. Ibid., pp. 6, 8.
19. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring II/306, p. 4.
20. BA-L, B 162/2190 (208 AR-Z 236-60), p. 1482 (Anszel Kac deposition).
21. USHMM, RG-15.079M, Ring II/306, p. 5.
22. *Le Livre*, p. 104.
23. Ibid., pp. 53–71.
24. *Nowy Głos Lubelski*, April 16, 1943, p. 3.
25. BA-L, B 162/2189 (208 AR-Z 236-60), pp. 1321–1322 (Mosze Grajcer deposition).
26. Hurman, in Czubaszek, *Żydzi*, pp. 239–240.

MARKUSZÓW

Pre-1939: Markuszów (Yiddish: Markushov), village, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Markuszów, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Markuszów, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Markuszów lies 27 kilometers (17 miles) northwest of Lublin. Its pre-war 1939 population of approximately 3,000 included some 2,000 Jews.

Luftwaffe bombardment on September 8, 1939, sparked fires that destroyed all but eight houses in central Markuszów, a neighborhood inhabited exclusively by Jews. On September 11, the Germans occupied the town.

The local military commander immediately imposed forced labor obligations on the Jews. Within a few weeks, German authorities mandated the wearing of white armbands, with a blue Star of David. By early 1940, the Germans ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) established. Its chair was Shlomo Goldwasser. The council created a Jewish police force to help organize forced labor conscription.

In the several months it took to establish a German civilian administration, many homeless Jews moved to Opole and other places. Twelve Jews, mostly from even more war-devastated Kurów, settled permanently in Markuszów. In July 1940, the Jewish population stood at 1,320. By late fall 1940, it topped 1,500, mainly because Jews from Warsaw with ties to Markuszów fled there rather than report to the Warsaw ghetto, which had been established during October.¹ In March 1941, the Jewish population crested at 1,643, including 133 refugees.

Because of the war devastation in Markuszów, the local German administration established its offices in Garbów. A wójt (head), surnamed Spolck, oversaw affairs in Markuszów. A locally recruited unit of Polish (Blue) Police exercised day-to-day police authority. Wehrmacht units occasionally were billeted in Markuszów.²

Some survivors mention that because local German authorities did not initially ban Jews from engaging in trade, many Markuszów Jews began, during the first months of the German occupation, to rebuild their houses and a large part of their pre-war lives. To assist them, the Jewish Council paid bribes for an informal suspension of orders forbidding Jews from moving more than 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) beyond Markuszów's borders.³

Anti-Jewish decrees became harsher from the spring of 1940. The Jewish Council filled SS-imposed quotas for labor at camps in Janiszów, for flood-control projects on the Vistula River, and in the summer in Bełżec, for building border fortifications. From July on, the council had to organize between 300 and 360 Jews daily for local forced labor: 120 for road construction projects under Kreis administration; 100 to widen the Kurów-Markuszów-Garbów stretch of the Warsaw-to-Lublin highway, and 100 for projects organized by the local German administration, including at the Garbów sugar refinery and for clearing snow on the Markuszów-to-Garbów road.⁴ German authorities suspended Jewish home building, ordering the council by autumn to erect wooden barracks for 650 still homeless Jews.⁵

Leopold Lind, a Jewish physician from Lublin who was resettled in Markuszów in June 1940 to treat a typhoid epidemic, describes local German authorities placing endless demands on the Jews, including orders for the Jewish Council to surrender a long list of goods ranging from butter and chickens to a large number of luxury items.⁶ In December 1941, the Jews were required to turn over their fur (or winter) coats.⁷

Sources vary on the date an open ghetto was established in Markuszów. The *Pinkas ha-kehillot* entry notes it was created in May 1941. Lind remembered authorities issuing the orders forbidding Jews from leaving Markuszów that same year, but

in October. He recalled the Germans, the day after establishing the ghetto, shooting dead Goldwasser's mother for being 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) outside of Markuszów.⁸

The orders limiting the Jews to Markuszów created immediate food supply problems. The ability to locate food narrowed further from the summer of 1941, when another 100 Jews were imprisoned at a labor camp established in Kłoda to gather and pulverize stones for the ongoing highway construction projects.⁹ From time to time, Horst Göde, the deputy Kreishauptmann, and from 1942 the Opole Landkommissar, arrived to impose contributions. At assemblies, Göde ordered Jews, including children, humiliated, beaten, and sometimes shot dead.¹⁰ Lind also describes local German authorities beating Jews during frequent visits to Markuszów, ostensibly for hiding from them. In April 1941, inebriated German soldiers broke into a Jewish residence and attempted to rape several young women. After the women escaped, the soldiers opened fire on the house's residents, killing one girl's brother and injuring several others, including a Polish medical assistant aiding the wounded.¹¹ Poor sanitary conditions, compounded by overcrowding, provoked a typhus epidemic in April 1942.

Survivors describe a two-stage liquidation of the Markuszów ghetto.¹² In April 1942, the SS deported about 500 Jews, mostly the elderly and the sick. Assisted by the local Polish (Blue) Police, the SS ordered the Jews into marching formation. A group of elderly Jews was shot dead for refusing the orders. The remaining expellees were marched to Nałęczów, about 12.9 kilometers (8 miles) south of Markuszów, and there ordered onto trains, most likely destined for the Bełżec extermination camp. (The *Pinkas ha-kehillot* entry for Markuszów suggests the expellees were sent to the extermination camp in Sobibór; however, deportations to Sobibór did not begin in Distrikt Lublin until May 1.) The SS limited the residence of the Jews remaining in Markuszów to Lubelska Street.

Five trucks of German Gendarmes, SS, and SS Ukrainian auxiliaries arrived in Markuszów on May 8, 1942, to expel the rest of the Markuszów Jewish community. After Goldwasser was ordered to surrender a list of Jewish residents, he urged all those who were able to flee to the forest. Only a few hundred people reported the next day to the market square for "resettlement." About 70 men were held back for labor at camps in Kłoda, Kurów, and Końskowola. Survivors are divided over whether the rest of the Markuszów Jews were sent to their deaths at Sobibór from the train station in Nałęczów or spent the night in the empty ghetto in Końskowola, about 14.7 kilometers (9 miles) north-northwest of Markuszów, before being sent to Sobibór the next morning from the railway station in Puławy.

In late May 1942, a labor camp, also referred to as a ghetto in postwar Polish Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation, was established for approximately 100 to 150 Slovak Jews brought to Markuszów to dig up stones in local fields to use in road construction projects. The camp was liquidated on

September 2, 1943. Its prisoners were marched to the train station in Nałęczów. Nothing is known of their precise fates.¹³

Almost all the Markuszów fugitives from the Sobibór deportation were rounded up and killed. Two days after scores of Markuszów escapees arrived in Bełżyce, the SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries surrounded the settlement and then oversaw the deportation of about 50 unregistered Markuszów Jews to the labor camp in Majdanek.¹⁴ Another group, of about 60 Markuszów Jews, led by Mordechai Kierstzenbaum and brothers Jerucham (or Jankiel) and Jacob Gothelf, had obtained arms before the expulsion and were determined to protect the more than 1,000 Jews, including hundreds from Markuszów, hidden in the Wola and Borek Forests. Joined subsequently by escaped Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) and fugitives from the deportations of the Garbów and Kamionka Jewish communities, they formed three partisan units. However, the partisans mostly were in forests closer to Lublin in December 1942, when a large group of SS and Ukrainian auxiliaries arrived to search the two forests closer to Markuszów for hidden Jews. On December 2, the first day of the search, about 400 Jews were killed. Another 600 perished before the sweep ended on January 20, 1943.¹⁵

The Adamczyk family, in Wola village, a forest gateway, was determined to assist Dora Wasserstrum after discovering her sister among the Jews murdered in the forest. (Like many Wola families, the Adamczyks belonged to the Polish underground Bataliony Chłopskie, an organization that assisted the Jewish partisans.) However, on December 10, 1942, and February 18, 1943, the Germans executed at least 14 Wola Poles for aiding Jews. Four others, similarly accused, disappeared without a trace.¹⁶ Unfortunately, the postwar documentation is ambiguous for Jan Nalewajek and Aniela Kamińska, two villagers mentioned as among the murdered in the Markuszów yizkor book. On December 22, 1942, Nalewajek was shot along with 5 other Poles, accused mostly of Polish patriotism. No reason is provided for the June 1943 executions of Kamińska, her husband, son, and 5 other Poles.¹⁷ After the executions, many Poles ordered Jews they were protecting to find other hiding places. Most ended up in the forests and fell victim to subsequent forest sweeps, including in the Borek Forest during the winter of 1942–1943, which claimed the lives of 42 Jews.¹⁸

Fewer than 30 Markuszów Jews survived the war. They included Wasserstrum; a few of the approximately 40 partisan survivors; and Leopold Lind, his wife Janina, and their children, Robert and Kamila. The Linds, who fled to Warsaw, were aided by Zofia Sokołowska, a friend, and Zofia Socha (later Młodawska), their nanny, who lived with the family until the war's end.¹⁹

SOURCES The yizkor book, David Sztokfisz, ed., *Hurbn un gvure fun shtetl Markushov* (Tel Aviv: Farayn fun Markushoyer landslayt in Yisrael, 1955), includes many testimonies by survivors. It has been translated into Hebrew, *Hurbanah u-gevuratab shel ha-'ayarah Markushov* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Markushov, 1989).

Secondary accounts touching on the Markuszów Jewish community under German occupation and the ghetto include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 315–317; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 190–192.

On the partisan movement, see Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944*, trans. Orah Blaustein (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1984); and Adam Puławski, “Postrzeganie żydowskich oddziałów partyzanckich przez Armię Krajową i Delegaturę Rządu RP na Kraj,” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, no. 2 (4) (2003): 271–300.

Of the communities mentioned in the entry but not given their own entry, the documentation is too sparse to determine whether a ghetto existed there. Garbów, a gmina, in November 1940 was home to 110 Jews (30 families). Here, see the letter from the Garbów Jewish Council chair in the Markuszów AJDC documentation at USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH], 210/486, p. 21. A discussion of Jewish life in Garbów after the deportations appears in IPN-Kat, S 61/01/ZK, pp. 2156–2173, 2316–2327, a controversial case involving the immediate postwar activities of the partisan and Garbów survivor Salomon Morel.

Archival documentation pertaining to the history of the Markuszów Jewish community during World War II includes APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/486, 211/685, 301/1478); IPN (e.g., Ankiety, ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 2/67/1-6, 284 [394/1-2, 397/1-2, 469/1-2, 473/1-2]); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG]; RG-15.084 [AŻIH 301]); VHF (# 28528, 31955); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, AJDC, 210/486, pp. 24, 27, 58.
2. Ibid., p. 27; Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, p. 163.
3. Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, pp. 163–164.
4. Ibid., pp. 163, 257; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/486, p. 27.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/486, pp. 3, 57.
6. AŻIH, 301/1478, p. 4 (typescript).
7. Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, p. 258.
8. AŻIH, 301/1478, p. 4.
9. Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, p. 257.
10. AŻIH, 301/1478, pp. 4–5.
11. Ibid., p. 4.
12. Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, pp. 258–259.
13. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 15, 49/104.
14. Sztokfisz, *Hurbn*, p. 260.
15. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 6, 16/796.
16. Ibid., 16/794–95.
17. Ibid., 16/797 and 16/793, respectively.
18. Ibid., 16/792.
19. VHF, # 31955, testimony of Zofia Młodawska.

MIĘDZYRZEC PODLASKI

Pre-1939: Międzyrzec Podlaski (Yiddish: Mezritch or Mezrych), town, Radzyń Podlaski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Meseritz, Kreis Radzyn, Distrikt Lublin, General-gouvernement; post-1998: Międzyrzec Podlaski, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Międzyrzec Podlaski lies 100 kilometers (62 miles) north of Lublin. The town's August 1939 population of around 16,000 included 12,000 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Międzyrzec on September 13, 1939, but soon abandoned it to Soviet occupation. Soviet forces arrived on September 25, 1939. Ten days later, they joined the regional Soviet evacuation behind the Bug River. Approximately 2,000 Międzyrzec Jews followed them. On October 9, the Germans reoccupied Międzyrzec.

From the occupation's outset, German authorities evicted Jews from the wealthiest neighborhoods in central and northern Międzyrzec.¹ The evictees almost all were resettled in the poorest Jewish neighborhood, known as Szmulowizna. Located in eastern Międzyrzec, the neighborhood stretched from Brzeska Street to the Krzna River. About 1,800 of the town's Jews were relocated there.

The residents of Szmulowizna also sheltered thousands of Jewish deportees. By April 1940, 3,500 expellees—from Nasielsk, Gdynia, Kalisz, Łódź, Pułtusk, Rybnik, and Serock—resided in Międzyrzec. In November 1940, 350 deportees arrived from Kraków and another 1,400 from Mława. In January 1941, the SS brought 300 former prisoners of war (POWs) to Międzyrzec. By then, Międzyrzec was home to some 4,000 Jewish newcomers, both voluntary refugees and expellees. After the arrival of 780 expellees from Mielec on March 14, 1942, the Jewish population of 16,555 included 5,480 refugees. The Jewish population crested at 17,546 with the May arrival of 1,025 Slovak deportees.²

Because so many Jews were concentrated in Szmulowizna, many survivors believe an open ghetto existed in Międzyrzec



A section of the Międzyrzec Podlaski ghetto, as seen through the barbed-wire fence surrounding it, October 1942 to May 1943. USHMM WS #46319, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG

from the early fall of 1940. However, Gitel Donath, a September 1941 voluntary arrival from Siedlce, recalls that some Jews, including wealthier deportees, lived in southern neighborhoods in Polish-owned and -occupied buildings. In April 1942, moreover, Jewish charity officials reported on the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) ghetto questionnaire that neither an open nor a closed ghetto existed in Międzyrzec.³ (In Distrikt Lublin, open ghettos were defined territorially, rather than by Hans Frank's November 1941 orders imposing the death penalty on Jews found outside their places of registration without permission.)

Officially, a ghetto was established in Międzyrzec only after the first deportation Aktion on August 25–26, 1942. During the Aktion, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries from Trawniki, local Gendarmes, and SS from Radzyń, rounded up and forced 8,000 to 11,000 Jews onto trains destined for the Treblinka extermination camp. A surviving railway schedule indicates the deportation train of 50 wagons departed Międzyrzec at 9:30 A.M., only to return at 9:42 P.M. for another trip to Treblinka the next morning.⁴ Almost all the deportees were gassed on arrival. Another 960 to 1,800 Jews were shot dead in Międzyrzec. The victims accounted for one third to more than one half of the 3,000 Jews killed in Międzyrzec during the deportations.⁵

An enclosed ghetto immediately was created for approximately 6,000 to 7,000 Jews retained for work outside the labor camp system. The ghetto encompassed 6 hectares (14.8 acres) of land, including the Szmulowizna neighborhood and some of the Polish neighborhood, near Jatkowa and Warszawska Streets.⁶ Most survivors recall its sole residents initially were members of the Jewish Council, led by Szymon Klarberg, and the Jewish Police. Ordered to sleep at work sites during the deportation, the remaining Jews were ordered to the ghetto only in early September.

A barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto. Initially, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries guarded the fence from the outside; local auxiliary Polish (Blue) Police soon replaced them.⁷ The Jewish Police maintained security inside the ghetto. Inmates left for work under Jewish Police escort through two gates, including one on Brzeska Street. Otherwise, Jews were forbidden, under penalty of death, to leave the ghetto. SS-Untersturmführer Franz Adolf Fischer, head of the Radzyń office of the Security Police, was responsible for the ghetto. In practice, Kurt Heine and Karl Leiter, two junior officers, oversaw its day-to-day operations. Members of the Międzyrzec Gendarmerie post, most notably Franz Bauer, also exercised considerable authority.⁸

After several Treblinka escapees returned to Międzyrzec, the ghetto inmates learned that the deportees had been murdered. Some fell into deep despair. Others, determined to evade a future deportation, constructed elaborately concealed hiding places. Most inmates labored in their previous jobs, including at a tannery and a brush-making workshop in Międzyrzec, on local road construction crews, as agricultural laborers on an estate in Aleksandrówka, digging and drying peat at a farm in Wysokie, in water irrigation labor in

Rogoźnica, hewing trees in forests near Sokule, and cutting the timber at local sawmills and loading it onto trains. Others worked as domestic or agricultural servants for local ethnic Germans and Poles. About 40 inmates, mostly craftsmen, maintained the Gendarmerie post. Others staffed a kitchen at a canteen established for the members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, stationed in Międzyrzec from September to liquidate the Jewish communities of Kreise Biała Podlaska and Radzyń.

The Międzyrzec ghetto also served as a collection and transit ghetto. Between September 26 and 29, 1942, members of Police Battalion 101, the SS auxiliaries, Security Police, and Polish police transferred to the ghetto almost all the approximately 12,300 surviving Jews of Kreis Biała Podlaska, except those incarcerated in labor camps.⁹ Imprisoned at the synagogue (and probably other buildings), the 5,000 to 6,000 expellees, mainly women, children, and the elderly, were sent to Treblinka on October 6. Another 150 were killed at the Jewish cemetery.

That same day, around the midday meal, security forces rounded up nonworking women, children, and the elderly from the Międzyrzec ghetto and imprisoned them at the synagogue. Laborers from the sawmill and some road construction crews also were brought there. The prisoners were held under Jewish Police and armed SS auxiliary and German police guard.¹⁰ On October 7 or 8, almost all the Jews from smaller communities in northern Kreis Radzyń (consolidated earlier in Parczew) were transferred to Międzyrzec. On October 9, the synagogue prisoners and the Parczew deportees were sent to Treblinka. The October 7–9 deportation included about 7,000 Jews in Międzyrzec. (The overall number probably was greater. Biała Podlaska survivor Mojsze Fajgenbaum recalls the October 6 train originated at that town's railway station, where mainly labor camp inmates were forced onto the wagons.)¹¹

Because hundreds had evaded the deportations or jumped from the trains, the ghetto population, which likely stood at 5,000 to 7,000, included a significant number of women and children from Międzyrzec and fugitives from the Kreis Biała Podlaska and Parczew deportations. The ghetto area was then reduced by half, forcing some 10 to 25 people to reside in a single room. Rations were suspended. Some 30 people perished daily, mainly from illnesses related to starvation and from typhus.¹² The Gendarmes and Polish (Blue) Police shot Jews found illegally outside the ghetto bartering material possessions for food. Labor crews were established to clear and sort the belongings of the deported.

In mid-October 1942, 219 older family members and children of agricultural laborers in Wohyń were transferred to Międzyrzec.¹³ Between October 14 and 16, another 1,000 to 2,000 Jews arrived from Radzyń. The expellees were imprisoned at the synagogue and in buildings outside the ghetto. Late one night, inebriated Gendarmes, including Bauer, Heine, and a group of ethnic Germans, opened fire on one makeshift prison, a barracks at a sawmill, killing more than 100 Radzyń deportees. The next morning, Fischer promised to spare the lives of survivors, if they came out of hiding, by marching them to the ghetto.¹⁴ On October 27, members of Reserve Police Battalion

101 and an SS contingent led by Heine sent the Wołyń expellees and almost all the other Radzyń deportees to their deaths at Treblinka, in the third Międzyrzec deportation.

The next day, on October 28, 1942, Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Leader of the Generalgouvernement, named Międzyrzec one of eight Jewish residential areas in Distrikt Lublin. Around October 30, additional Jews arrived in Międzyrzec under armed escort. The deportees included children of labor camp inmates in Suchowola and others, presumably members of property clearing crews and labor camp inmates from a geographic area spanning from Łuków to Terespol.¹⁵ Incarcerated at the synagogue and in abandoned Jewish properties just beyond the ghetto, many deportees, deprived of food and water, perished before members of the Reserve Police Battalion 101 cleared the buildings on November 7–9 by sending the survivors to their deaths at Treblinka.¹⁶ Some of the Międzyrzec ghetto inmates were included in the deportation, which aimed to retain just 1,000 young, male inmates for labor.¹⁷ Because so many hid, the ghetto population likely stood closer to 3,000.

After the deportation, the ghetto was again reduced to half its size. A seven-month period of relative calm encouraged a large number of fugitives hiding in forests or among the local population to enter the ghetto voluntarily. Jews from some 70 different localities resided there. The Jewish Council restored a tiny part of its extensive preghetto welfare institutions, including a sanitation commission and medical clinic.

In late December 1942, German officials from the Trawniki concentration camp established a temporary registration office to recruit Jews for “voluntary” deportation. An SS officer overseeing the road construction crews informed ghetto residents that Trawniki offered the only hope for survival.¹⁸ Some 500 to 550 employees of the brush-making workshop, whose industrial plant was disassembled and sent to Trawniki, were given three days to register for deportation. Included in the December 30, 1942, voluntary resettlement were a number of involuntary deportees, including the remaining Jews in Wołyń (save for about 50 killed during the deportation). The next day, New Year’s Eve 1942, inebriated Security Police from Biała Podlaska “celebrated” the holiday by dragging ghetto residents from their beds and shooting them. Some 56 to 65 people were killed. Scores more were wounded.

On May 1–4, 1943, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, and the Radzyń SS renewed deportations from Międzyrzec. The Germans and Ukrainians surrounded the ghetto, relied on informants to locate ghetto bunkers, and demolished walls to uncover hidden Jews. All the Aleksandrówka and Suchowola labor camp inmates were included in the expulsion.¹⁹ Most of the 2,000 to 3,000 deportees were gassed at Treblinka. A small group was sent to Majdanek. Some 200 to 800 Jews were executed at the Jewish cemetery. (The figures vary in survivors’ accounts.) Among the victims were the Jewish Council members and most of the Jewish Police.

After the Aktion, the ghetto was reduced to about two streets. Many more of its approximately 1,500 inmates worked

for the office of property liquidation sorting “abandoned” Jewish belongings at the synagogue. Lubicz, a longtime SS informant, now named the Jewish “ghetto commander,” recruited a Jewish police force. Most survivors blame him for turning over unregistered fugitives to the Gendarmerie. (These Jews were shot.) Survivor Lejb Goldberg maintains Lubicz suggested the Germans rely on chicanery, which left inmates unprepared for another deportation on May 26, 1943, and institute strip search (ostensibly for property stolen from the synagogue) at a railway station barracks.²⁰ That day, some 700 to 1,000 Jews arrived nearly naked at Majdanek.

Officially, only 300 Jews—a small clearing crew and the Jewish Police—remained in the ghetto. (The actual population was probably double.) On July 17 or 18, 1943, the Polish underground killed two Germans. Maintaining the Jews also were responsible for the murders, Leutnant Dreyer, a member of the Schutzpolizei unit assigned to Międzyrzec, ordered the ghetto liquidated.²¹ Some 23 to 35 ghetto inmates were killed during the Aktion. Four German policemen transported (by truck) another 120 to 179 Jews and 3 Polish-Christian suspects to Piaski, a local livestock burial ground, and killed them.²²

Only a small part of the Międzyrzec deportees retained for labor at Majdanek were transferred to other camps (mainly Skarżysko-Kamienna and Auschwitz) before November 1943, when the Germans shot dead the Jewish inmates of Majdanek and Trawniki during the “Aktion Erntefest” massacres. A smaller group of fugitives attempted to survive by adopting false identities as Polish Christians and working as forced laborers in the Reich or by hiding locally, some with Poles, but many more in vacated Jewish residences in Międzyrzec or in nearby forests. Many local fugitives perished in forest raids organized by the Germans, as a result of denunciations by the local population, and at Polish hands. Of the at least 30,000 Jews who passed through the Międzyrzec ghetto, only 300 survived the war.

At least 16 Germans, 6 Poles, and 1 Jew suspected of contributing to the liquidation of the Międzyrzec Jewish community or the ghetto were tried after the war in either Poland or West Germany, though in four cases for mass killings of non-Jews. Ten Germans were found guilty. Most served little or no prison time. Three of the 5 suspects tried in Poland, including Franz Fischer and Wilhelm Trapp, the commander of the Reserve Police Battalion 101, received death sentences. Trapp, though, was convicted of mass killings of Poles in Talcyn and of Soviet prisoners of war. He was executed in 1948.²³ Fischer, convicted of numerous mass killings, including of Jews in Międzyrzec, was hanged in 1949. The outcomes of the Polish collaborators’ trials are largely unknown.²⁴ A 10-person court appointed by Jewish survivors sentenced 1 Pole to death for murdering a fugitive from the ghetto liquidation. It submitted to Polish prosecutors its findings for 3 Jewish suspects. Two of the men, Lubicz and Szymon Tob (Topf), a former Jewish policeman, were arrested but escaped from prison in 1946 and joined the third suspect abroad.²⁵ Because Tob disappeared during his trial, a Polish court waited six months before resuming the proceedings without

him in July. In January 1949, Tob was sentenced to death for revealing to the Gestapo the hiding places of Jews during the deportations.²⁶

SOURCES Secondary sources about the Międzyrzec Jewish community during the German occupation or about the collection and transit ghetto of Międzyrzec include the relevant parts of Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); Artur Domański, *Żydzi w Międzyrzeczu Podlaskim* (Międzyrzec Podlaski: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Międzyrzeczu Podlaskim, 2009); M.J. Fajgenbaum, *Podlaskie in umkum: Notitsn fun ħurban* (Munich: Aroysgegebn fun der Tsentraler Historisher Komisye baym Ts. K. fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner Zone in Daytshland, 1948); H. Rylski, “Międzyrzec in the Period of the Hitlerite Occupation,” *Bleter far Geszichte* 9:3–4 (1955); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 305–310; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 194–200.

Survivors contributed memoirs to all four Międzyrzec yizkor books, among them, Yosef Horn, *Mezritsh: Zamlbukh in beylikn ondenk fun di umgekumene Yidn in undzer geboyrn-shtot in Poyln* (Buenos Aires: Aroysgegebn fun Mezritsher landslayt-farayn in Argentine, 1952); and Nathan Livneh, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilah Mez'irish* (Tel Aviv: Hutsa le-or 'al yede Va'ad yots'e Mezirish be-Yisrael, 1973). Additional memoirs include Moshe Brezniak and Naphtali Brezniak, *Atse ba-livneh ba-zekufim: Lohem Yebudi ba-tsava ba-Polani, be-Geto Mezerits' uvva-mahanot* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2003); the testimony of Lejb Goldberg, in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 113–118, a translation of part of the 68-page Yiddish-language testimony cited below at AŻIH, 302/95; Joe Rosenblum, with David Kohn, *Defy the Darkness: A Tale of Courage in the Shadow of Mengele* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001); Rywka Rybak, *A Survivor of the Holocaust* (Cleveland, OH: Tricycle Press, 1993); Gitel Donath, *My Bones Don't Rest in Auschwitz: A Lonely Battle to Survive German Tyranny* (Montreal: Kaplan Publishing, 1999); and “Irena (Agata) Bołdok (Likierman),” in Jakub Gutenbaum and Agnieszka Latała, eds., *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak*, trans. Julian Bussgang and Fay Bussgang, 2 vols. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 27–35.

For memoirs and published interviews by survivors from communities consolidated in the Międzyrzec transit ghetto or by those who sought temporary shelter there, see, among others, Oscar Pinkus, *The House of Ashes* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, 1964); Joseph Schupack, *Tote Jahre: Eine jüdische Leidensgeschichte* (Tübingen: Katzmann, 1984), in English translation as *The Dead Years*, trans. Paul Kleinbart (New York: Holocaust Library, 1986); and “Dwojra Zielona,” in Zofia Nałkowska, *Medaliony* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1946), available in English as *Medallions*, trans. Diana Kuprel (Northwestern, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000), pp. 29–34.

Relevant German trial verdicts can be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 670, and vol. 41 (2009), Lfd. Nr. 833.

Contemporary press coverage includes from *Gazeta Żydowska*, December 20, 1940, no. 44, p. 4; October 17, 1941, no. 99, p. 2; November 19, 1941, no. 113, p. 2; February 11, 1942, no. 18, p. 3; March 6, 1942, no. 28, p. 4; March 18, 1942, no. 33, p. 3; March 22, 1942, no. 35, p. 4. Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann Hubert Kühn's directive forewarning that Jews throughout the Kreis were to be deported to Międzyrzec between September 25 and 29, 1942, can be found in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHWP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 57–58.

Archival documentation includes AŻIH (e.g., 210/492, 211 [132, pp. 7, 50; 142, pp. 19, 27, 29, 32, 49–55; 143, pp. 25–26; 646, pp. 49, 51; 699; 886, p. 29; 890, pp. 14, 21, 59, 66, 72; 891, pp. 30, 45, 48, 81, 88–91, 94], 214, 301 [71, 1946, 2019, 2091, 2236, 2397, 2404, 2940, 3237, 3502, 4371, 4477, 4516, 5423], 302/95); BA-L (e.g., B 162/2190 [ZStL, 208 AR-Z 236/60, vol. 8]); FVA (HVT [730, 1638, 1721, 1869, 2751, 3237, 3502]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAL [72, 139], SOS BP [12, 15, 15a, 15b, 16–19, 20, 20a, 23, 41, 43–45]; IPN-Lu (e.g., 131/61/1–57, 415/67/1–2); USHMM (e.g., Acc. 1996.A.0227 [AŻIH 214]; Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.006 [IPN]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 5, 12/888–891, reel 15, 49/6–8, 14–15, 125, 129–130]; RG-50.030*0073; RG-50.120*0218); VHF (e.g., # 214, 401, 479, 677, 2964, 9390, 13752, 17927, 51694, 12734, 13741, 14339, 16395, 17006, 18103, 30275, 30422, 49629); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Rosenblum, *Defy the Darkness*, pp. 12–15.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/132, p. 50; 211/142, pp. 25–26, 49–55; 211/891, p. 48; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/492, p. 1.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/699, p. 11.
4. Ibid., RG-15.006 (IPN), pp. 139–140.
5. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 5, 12/888.
6. Ibid., reel 15, 49/125.
7. VHF, # 14339, testimony of Dora Abend.
8. BA-L, B 162/2190, pp. 1438–1443 (deposition, Edward Bleiweiss).
9. Kermisz, *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 57–58.
10. AŻIH, 301/2019, testimony of Elias Magid, pp. 6–7; Lejb Goldberg testimony, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, pp. 113–114.
11. AŻIH, 301/71, testimony of Mojsze Josef Fajgenbaum, pp. 3–4, 6.
12. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/125.
13. AŻIH, 301/2091, testimony of Halina Petruszka, p. 1.
14. Ibid., 301/2019, pp. 7–8; Goldberg, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 114.
15. AŻIH, 301/2767, testimony of Michał Himmelblau, p. 3; 301/2019, p. 8.
16. Goldberg, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, p. 114.
17. AŻIH, 301/2019, pp. 8–9.
18. Donath, *My Bones*, pp. 121–123; Goldberg, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, pp. 114–115.

19. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/129; AŻIH, 301/2767, p. 3.
20. AŻIH, 301/3502, testimony of Lejb Goldberg, pp. 1–2.
21. Ibid., 301/2019, pp. 9–10.
22. Goldberg, in Grynberg and Kotowska, *Życie*, pp. 116–117; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 5, 12/889.
23. IPN, SOS BP, 15–19.
24. Ibid., 12, 20, 20a, 23; SAL 72, 139.
25. AŻIH, 301/3502, pp. 3–4.
26. IPN, SOS BP, 15, 15a, 15b.

OPOLE

Pre-1939: Opole (Yiddish: Apla), town, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Opole Lubelskie, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Opole lies 51 kilometers (32 miles) southwest of Lublin. In 1939, its pre-war population of 6,500 included 4,325 Jews.

On occupying Opole in mid-September 1939, the Germans ordered Jews to surrender a monetary “contribution.” They released 20 to 50 hostages on its receipt.¹ Additional anti-Jewish decrees mandated wearing white armbands and forced labor. Jews fleeing war devastation in Kurów and Markuszów settled in Opole.²

The Germans ordered a Judenrat established before April 1940. Jakob Nussbaum was its first chair.³ The 18-person council organized a Jewish police force, composed of 30 men, to help organize labor conscription.

On December 29–30, 1939, the Jewish community from Puławy, the Kreis center, and some 300 Jews (150 families) from Józefów nad Wisłą were expelled to Opole. In May 1940, 847 of the 1,965 Jewish refugees in Opole were Puławy expellees.⁴ The refugees included many Nałęczów expellees. Nałęczów youth, ordered to a labor camp in Antopol (Puławy

powiat), joined their families in Opole in the fall of 1940.⁵ On February 15 and 26, 1941, 2,006 mostly elderly Jews arrived from Vienna.

The Viennese Jews’ arrival prompted Puławy Kreishauptmann Alfred Brandt to order a ghetto established in Opole. Survivor Zrubawel Werba remembers his parents trading apartments with a Pole living in western Opole, the area designated for the ghetto, and moving their belongings there.⁶ On March 15, 1941, local German authorities gave Poles still living in the ghetto 24 hours to vacate their residences and Jews several hours to relocate there.

The ghetto, roughly a rectangular shape, spanned 121,500 square meters (30 acres), bounded in the west by Nowa Street, in the south by Józefów, Nowy Rynek, and Stary Rynek Streets, and in the east by Lublin Street. In June 1941, a 2.5-meter-high (8.2-foot-high) wooden fence replaced the barbed wire surrounding the ghetto. The fence’s three gates were on Józefów and Nowa Streets, at the corner of Stary and Nowy Rynek Streets, and on Długa Street. In May 1941, the *Krakauer Zeitung* maintained the Opole ghetto’s establishment had furthered the Germanization and “beautification” of Distrikt Lublin.⁷ That month, regional Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) authorities listed the ghetto’s population at 8,000: 4,500 native Jews and 3,500 refugees, including 2,000 Viennese.⁸

Horst Göde, from 1942 the Opole Landkommissar, served as the German ghetto “commissar.” The *Krakauer Zeitung* lauded him as a model National Socialist administrator who cut bureaucratic red tape and sent Jews to work for a “useful purpose.”⁹ However, Jewish survivors recall Göde demanding craftsmen remodel the palace in Niezdów for his personal residence, ordering valuables surrendered, and organizing attacks, including the July 1941 execution of 30 ghetto hospital patients, and in 1942, the kidnapping, rape, and murder of young Jewish teenagers. Survivors remember German Gendarmes, Ukrainian Sonderdienst, and the Polish auxiliary police at various times guarding the ghetto and its gates from the outside. The Jewish Police patrolled the same areas from inside the ghetto.

Ghetto residents were conscripted for numerous forced labor projects, including in Opole for road construction, train station labor, and sugar refinery work. Women cleaned the residences and offices of German authorities and cooked at SS and police mess halls. Some conscripts worked at agricultural or forestry labor in villages near Opole. Many male Jews were sent to labor camps, including in Gołab (Puławy powiat) for railway construction, outside of Józefów nad Wisłą for quarry labor, and in Józefów for a dam building project on the Wyżnica River.¹⁰

Overcrowding forced between 7 and 10 people to live in each of the 950 rooms located in the ghetto’s 300 residential dwellings. Because the Viennese had been permitted only 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of luggage each and were stripped of their German currency and issued just 40 złoty on arrival, half could not pay to rent rooms in the ghetto. The Jewish Council provided materials for them to construct wooden



Jews line up to receive packages at the post office in Opole, shortly before the ghetto’s enclosure, May 1941.

USHMM WS #45836, COURTESY OF LILLI SCHISCHA TAUBER

barracks in which to live.¹¹ Photographs sent in June and July 1941 to Lilli Schischa Tauber by her parents show families sleeping in double- and triple-tiered wooden bunks.¹²

The overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions created by the lack of indoor plumbing and the presence of just two wells resulted in a typhus epidemic in the winter of 1941–1942. “H.E.,” a deportee from Vienna, reported that some 300 inhabitants had died from typhus by mid-November 1941.¹³ Another 200 people perished before the epidemic was controlled.

Meager rations required ghetto residents to develop illegal trading networks to survive. Initially, Poles, permitted to enter the ghetto to seek the services of Jewish craftsmen, smuggled food to barter. However, in June 1941, orders forbade Poles entrance to the ghetto. A drastic decline in ghetto living standards followed, forcing almost all families to find other means to barter material possessions or services for food. Some survivors note it was relatively easy to escape from the ghetto because the Polish and Ukrainian guards accepted bribes, though they acknowledge hundreds were shot dead for taking similar risks.¹⁴ Bribes also enabled Poles to barter food at openings in the ghetto fence. However, as hunger among the Jewish population intensified, food prices also increased.¹⁵

The Viennese refugees’ situation was particularly dire. Lacking local connections, they depended on the most expensive forms of black market trade for survival. One evacuee estimated she needed 45,000 złoty per month to subsidize her daughter and herself.¹⁶ As many as 200 younger Viennese escaped from the ghetto in small groups in the summer of 1941 and attempted to return home. Most were arrested. After serving brief prison sentences for possessing sums in Polish złoty, considered for them a foreign currency, those under the age of 18 were sent to forced labor camps in Distrikt Krakau. The others were returned to Opole.¹⁷

In Opole, the needs of the Viennese refugees limited the Jewish Council’s and the local JSS’s assistance to local refugees and impoverished Jews. From June to August 1941, the organizations spent 77,271 złoty to provide the Viennese blankets, bedding, and two daily meals; to build barracks; to outfit a kitchen and a 25-bed medical clinic; and to bury the dead. Because the JSS and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) covered just 7,300 złoty in costs, the organizations financed the projects by suspending aid to 1,500 local refugees and using funds designated for a community kitchen for all ghetto residents.¹⁸

From the spring of 1942, the SS consolidated in the ghetto Jews from the southern and western parts of the Kreis to facilitate their expulsion to extermination camps or to the forced labor camp in Poniatowa. (A narrow-gauge railway ran from Opole to Poniatowa and to Nałęczów. The latter was the transfer point to the main railway leading to the extermination camps in Bełżec and Sobibór.) From March 19–26, 200 labor camp inmates from near Nałęczów, 900 to 2,000 Jews from Kazimierz Dolny, and 800 to 1,000 Wąwolnica Jews were brought to the ghetto. In April, Jews arrived from small villages around Opole, including Lubomirka and Wólka Kątna.¹⁹ That month, a report in *Gazeta Żydowska* placed the Opole

ghetto population at 11,200.²⁰ On May 7, 1,400 to 2,000 Jews from Józefów were marched to the ghetto; about 100 were killed on the way. Between April 22 and May 25, five transports carried 4,302 Slovak Jews to Opole. Some Polish eyewitnesses also recall French Jews arriving in the ghetto during the same period; however, the only documentation for French transports to Distrikt Lublin is from 1943. Most Slovak Jews were sent to labor camps; some 1,400 were consolidated in the ghetto.

Most new ghetto arrivals were sent within weeks to their deaths. On March 30, 1942, the first 1,950 Jews, including all the Kazimierz Dolny deportees, were held prisoner overnight in three barracks located about a kilometer (0.6 mile) outside the ghetto. The next day, they were expelled to Nałęczów: women and children via the railway and men on foot. There, they were ordered onto trains destined for Bełżec. On May 25, 2,000 more Jews were expelled to Nałęczów. Because no trains were waiting there, the expellees were imprisoned for two days at a transit camp, located in Strzelce, about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) north of Nałęczów, before being sent to Sobibór.²¹ The deported included the Józefów Jews, those from smaller nearby villages, and longer-term ghetto residents without work documents. On October 15, some 600 ghetto inmates were sent to the Poniatowa labor camp. From October 24–26, almost all the remaining 8,000 ghetto inhabitants were ordered to the Strzelce transit camp: women and children in peasant carts and men on foot. The deportees were sent to their deaths at Sobibór. Several hundred Jews were held back for labor at Poniatowa.

Historian Bogdan Musiał maintains Brandt rejected SS support to liquidate the ghetto; instead, he relied on Göde and German and Polish (Blue) Police. However, survivors recall Ukrainian forces playing a major role and maintain the SS shot 500 people dead in searches for hidden Jews during the final ghetto liquidation. The bodies were packed into the deportation barracks and incinerated.

The number of Opole ghetto survivors is unknown. Of the approximately 100 Opole Jews retained for labor at Sobibór, only 2, Hersz Cukierman and his son, survived until the uprising in October 1943 and lived to see the war’s end. Almost all other Opole survivors had sought shelter with Poles on the eve of the ghetto liquidation. The family of forester Stanisław Stankiewicz assisted 65 Opole Jews hidden in four forest bunkers and on their property in the Głodno Woods; however, a denunciation led to the murder of those in the bunkers. Six fugitives, including Jan Śmulewicz, concealed in the family’s outbuildings, survived the war. A number of Opole Jews fled to Warsaw, where they contributed militarily to the August 1944 Polish insurrection against German rule.

In 1943, a Nazi Party Court in Lublin convicted Göde of murdering two Polish women. He received an 18-month prison term. The Russians killed Brandt in 1945 at Stolp (now Słupsk, Poland).

SOURCES Most of the JSS materials document the Viennese refugees. The photography collections at USHMMPA and

YVA also are from Viennese refugees. Photographs taken by members of the Werba family, from Opole, appear in Zrubawel Werba's VHF testimony. (Because the Germans arrested the only Polish photographer in Opole, the Werba family received a concession to provide limited photographic services in the ghetto to local German officials.)

Several contemporary press articles appeared on the Opole ghetto, including "Die Stadt Opole schuf Judenghetto: Um den alten Marktplatz gelegen—Verschönerung des Stadtbildes im Gange," and G[ustav] A[ndraschko], "'Verlängerter Arm' der Verwaltung: Beim Landkommissar von Opole—Die 'Stadt im Grünen'—Gemüseanbau im Ghetto," *Krakauer Zeitung* (hereafter cited as *KrZ*), May 16, 1941, and April 26, 1942; "Opole Lubelskie," *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 10, 1942, p. 5. Some German documentation for Opole can be found in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Frankfurt: Röderberg-Verlag, 1960), pp. 62–63, 271–272.

The yizkor book, David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Opolah-Lubelski* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Opolah bi-medinat Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1977), includes testimonies from survivors, including Werba. Letters from expellees to the ghetto can be found in Else Behrend-Rosenfeld and Gertrud Luckner, eds., *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski: Briefe Deportierter aus dem Distrikt Lublin 1940–1943* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1970), pp. 132–141, for Viennese refugees; *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, vol. 1, *Listy o Zagładzie*, ed. Ruta Sakowska (Warsaw: ŻIH and PWN, 1997), pp. 136–141, from a Kazimierz Dolny expellee; and the AJDC documentation for Opole, cited above, for correspondence from Puławy refugees.

Secondary sources for the Opole ghetto include Eugeniusz Kosik, "Martyrologia i zagłada Żydów w Opolu Lubelskim," *BŻIH* 150:2 (1989): 73–83, with a synthesized English translation by Opole Lubelskie schoolchildren available on the Web site of the Foundation of the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland (Fundacja Ochrony Dziedzictwa Żydowskiego); and the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 64–67, available in English translation on Jewishgen, at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol7_00064.html; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 205–208.

Horst Göde's publicity while Landkommissar is discussed in Lars Jockheck, *Propaganda im Generalgouvernement: Die NS-Besatzungspresse für Deutsche und Polen 1939–1945* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2006). Additional information, particularly about the careers of Brandt and Göde, is in Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin, 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999).

Of the towns and villages mentioned in the entry but not treated independently in this volume, confusion exists about whether a ghetto existed in Józefów nad Wisłą. Because Józefów was destroyed by fire during war operations in September 1939, some 1,168 homeless Jews (258 families), in January 1940, mostly were accommodated in the synagogue and Bet Midrash. In April 1940, they became the first inmates of a

labor camp established there. ITS researchers refer to the camp, which averaged about 800 inmates, as a ghetto. The IPN, ASG documentation, available too at USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/117–118, and reel 6, 16/824–25, is similarly confusing, with the first group of questionnaires containing no documentation for a ghetto in Józefów but instead noting the synagogue and Bet Midrash were designated one of two Jewish forced labor camps, but the second group, the records for mass graves, documenting 7 Jews executed on two different dates in March 1943 (more likely in 1942), for escaping from the Józefów ghetto. Why some accounts maintain the Józefów Jews were sent to the extermination camps via the Dęblin ghetto, rather than Opole, is unknown. Further documentation for Józefów includes AŻIH (e.g., 210/390, 301/4985); with copies available at USHMM.

No ghetto existed in Nałęczów, because its German mayor used Nałęczów's status as a resort town to expel its Jewish residents before the start of the 1940 tourist season. The ban probably was related to using the Nałęczów railway station from June 1940 to off-load 5,007 Polish (non-Jewish) expellees from the Warthegau and another 991 from lower Silesia. The first rationale was more important than the second in determining ghetto policy elsewhere in the Kreis, most notably in Kazimierz Dolny. Survivors do not mention ghettos existing in either Lubomirka or Wólka Kątna. For Jewish life in the three places during the war, see the testimonies, cited below, respectively, of Rose Welner, Fajn Brandla, and Hersz Cukierman.

Documentation pertaining to the history of the Opole Jewish community during World War II includes APL (e.g., 498 [273, pp. 21–23]); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 210/527; 211 [134 (pp. 2–3, 10, 20), 135 (pp. 21, 55, 59, 64, 68), 136 (pp. 1, 3, 6, 12, 33–35, 38, 40–41, 47, 49, 97–98), 137 (pp. 3, 25, 44), 138 (pp. 7, 13–15, 18, 42, 64–65, 76, 82–87), 139 (pp. 6, 17, 21, 43), 140 (pp. 41, 43, 48–49), 141 (pp. 10, 34, 36, 47, 49, 53–55, 79–81, 89–90, 95), 142 (pp. 35, 37), 143 (p. 109), 646 (pp. 23, 43), 650 (pp. 1–8), 651 (pp. 38–39), 653 (p. 20)]; 301 [14, 1187, 58.18, 5817, 5819]; [943.] Ring I/587); BA-BL (BDC, Akte Göde); ITS (1.2.1.1, VCC 148, Ord. 28); FVA (HVT-78); IPN; IPN-Lu (i.e., 2/67/1-6, 85/67/1-3); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH, Ring]); USHMPA (WS [18349-50, 18624-27, 27119, 45836-44, 77558]; VHF (e.g., # 751, 10209, 18373, 18896, 29824, 31584, 39945, 42114, 51744); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [3554, 4847]; O-16 [1815, 5817]).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 39945, testimony of Morton Berman.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), AJDC, 210/527, pp. 5, 105.
3. Ibid., p. 26.
4. Ibid., pp. 4, 17, 56–63.
5. VHF, # 31584, testimony of Rose Welner.
6. Ibid., # 51744, testimony of Zygmunt Werba.
7. *KrZ*, May 16, 1941.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), JSS, 211/136, pp. 3, 47.
9. *KrZ*, April 26, 1942.
10. VHF, # 18373, testimony of Ervin Greenwood.

11. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/527, p. 105.
12. USHMPA, WS # 45840, 45837.
13. H.L. letter, November 19, 1941, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen*, p. 140.
14. VHF, # 39945 # 51744.
15. Ibid., # 31584.
16. J.E. letter, February 21, 1941, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen*, p. 137.
17. VHF, # 751, testimony of Regine Cohen.
18. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/527, pp. 105, 109–115; and Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/138, p. 65; 211/141, pp. 47, 49, 53–55, 79–81, 89–90.
19. AŻIH, 301/1300, testimony of Fajn Brandla, p. 2; and 301/14, p. 1, testimony of Hersz Cukierman, p. 1.
20. *Gazeta Żydowska*, April 10, 1942, p. 5.
21. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/110, pp. 1–2, reel 6, 16/808, pp. 1–2.

OSTRÓW

Pre-1939: Ostrów (Yiddish: Ostruv), town, Włodawa powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Ostrow, initially Kreis Radzyn then Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Ostrów Lubelski, Lubartów powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Ostrów lies 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) northeast of Lublin. In July 1939, its 5,034 inhabitants included 1,994 Jews.

On September 22, 1939, the Red Army occupied Ostrów. With the September 28 demarcation of the Soviet-occupation zone east of the Bug River, the soldiers (and many Jews) abandoned Ostrów. The Germans occupied Ostrów shortly thereafter. In October, German civilian authorities ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) established.

That month, Landrat Hennig von Winterfeld, the Kreishauptmann of Radzyn, began establishing a so-called Jewish reservation (*Judenreservat*) in Ostrów (and Kock) for the Kreis's 32,430 Jewish inhabitants.¹ On October 20, 850 Jews from Lubartów were expelled to Ostrów. On December 15, 851 (of 1,500) Jews arrived from Poznań, including the residents of the Jewish home for the aged.²

Winterfeld appointed Poznań refugee Isidor “Józef” Flanter (or Flatner) the new Jewish Council chair.³ By 1941, a 13-member Jewish police force also had been established. Its commander was Mendel Zyman. Emil Hecht, another Poznań deportee, headed the Ostrów branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS). In October 1938, he had organized relief for the 17,000 German-Polish Jews expelled by the Germans across the border to Polish Zbąszyń.⁴

Mojżesz Apelbaum, a survivor from Firlej, recalled the German authorities established the Ostrów ghetto just before the Poznań expellees arrived. On the April 1942 JSS ghetto questionnaire, Hecht reported an unfenced open ghetto (*dzielnica żydowska*) “always” had existed in Ostrów.⁵

The ghettoization order limited new arrivals to 295 residences in the pre-war Jewish neighborhood, located in southwestern Ostrów, including on the market square, Plac

Wolności, and Floriańska, Garbarska, Lubartów, 3 Maja, Minister Pieracki, and Żaba Streets. Before the war, 1,817 Jews had resided there. Apelbaum recalls a simultaneous decree forbade Jews from leaving Ostrów. To reinforce the order, a German Gendarme soon shot a Jew outside the town and then ordered Flanter to dig the man's grave. When the victim regained consciousness, the Gendarme demanded that Flanter bury the man alive.

By early summer 1940, Winterfeld permitted local expellees to leave Ostrów. About 500 Lubartów Jews and 500 Poznań deportees remained. In April 1941, Hecht reported 200 “voluntary deportees” from Lublin, among that city's poorest residents, had arrived so infested with lice and scabies that native Jews had refused them accommodation. The JSS housed the deportees in two large halls. Immediately after the Lublin Jews' arrival, the town council ordered the Jewish Council to establish in a separate building a medical clinic to accommodate 50 sick, elderly, and “incompetent” (*niedołężni*) deportees and a separate quarantine facility for new arrivals. By August 1941, 3,249 Jews inhabited the Ostrów ghetto's 572 rooms.⁶

In a May 1941 report, Hecht noted 2,441 (of 3,333) ghetto residents were unemployed. Another 830 workers probably were interned in labor camps. (Hecht mentioned 668 Jews were inmates of local labor camps and another 162 were interned at more distant camps.) Another 40 tailors and shoemakers had received concessions to work as craftsmen. Some 50 others officially recognized as craftsmen were denied the concessions.⁷

Chiel (Chil) M. Rajchman mentions living conditions in Ostrów were still tolerable upon his legal transfer from the Warsaw ghetto after the summer of 1941. To survive, he and his sister bartered their possessions with local Poles for food.⁸ Because only the employed received daily rations of 40 grams (1.4 ounces) of bread, many Jews by then had few possessions left to trade. In August, at a school the Germans had permitted the Jews to establish the previous year, one third of the 400 pupils were too malnourished or poorly clothed to register for the new term.⁹

By May 1941, three nutritional centers, a community kitchen, and several additional welfare programs aided all 1,842 of the elderly, sick, young, and unemployed seeking assistance. In August, 130 (of 800) children from age four to seven received two daily meals, including for breakfast a piece of bread with cheese, a glass of milk, and fruit (when available). The kitchen served 600 to 700 adults daily meals. The relatively large welfare program depended on subsidies from Jewish charity organizations and from the German authorities. From October 1940, the Kreislandwirt permitted the Ostrów JSS to purchase monthly from cheaper government stores at least 700 kilograms (1,543 pounds) of kasha and potatoes.¹⁰

Ostrów's September 1, 1941, transfer to Kreis Lublin-Land dismantled the welfare programs, because Kreishauptmann Emil Ziegenmeyer refused to provide the same access to cheaper food sources. An October outbreak of a virulent form of typhus quickly became an epidemic in which initially half the sick perished. Describing the epidemic as “catastrophic,” Marek Alten, the head of the JSS in Distrikt Lublin,

secured a 750-złoty subsidy to help pay for medicines. Because the ghetto residents had no access to pharmaceuticals, Hecht asked JSS officials in Kraków to purchase and send a long list of medicines. New sanitary measures forbade Jews to gather. From mid-January 1942, Hecht distributed meals house to house twice daily but could afford to feed just 200 adults and 32 children. In February 1942, 34 new cases of typhus were reported, but the death rate had substantially decreased. Overall, the epidemic likely claimed 75 to 100 lives. In April, some 2,778 Jews resided in the ghetto.¹¹ (Because of the impending deportations, 300 to 400 ghetto residents likely had been interned permanently at labor camps.)

In March 1942, with Operation “Reinhard” tentatively under way in Distrikt Lublin, German authorities consented to several JSS proposals to finance the Ostrów organization’s welfare programs. Ziegenmeyer permitted the JSS to collect a 2-złoty room tax. The Ostrów mayor agreed to an additional income tax, of between 0.25 and 1 złoty weekly, for medical and sanitation costs. That month, Hans Frank’s office began remitting to JSS organizations throughout the Generalgouvernement 50 groszy from each prepaid bread ration card. The Ostrów JSS used the money to restore its welfare programs and to supplement its nutritional programs by purchasing ration cards (available to nonworking Jews after the transfer to Kreis Lublin-Land) for all those in its programs.

On April 13 and 15, 1942, as part of Operation Reinhard, 307 Slovak Jews—mainly women and small children—were deported (via Lubartów) to Ostrów. Another 200 of 300 Slovak deportees on the May 27 and 29 Lubartów transports subsequently arrived in Ostrów.¹² On May 19, Ziegenmeyer designated Ostrów, then with 3,062 Jews, among six Jewish communities that could be “resettled” (murdered). In September, German officials noted 3,250 Jews resided in Ostrów. On September 15, Jews in Distrikt Lublin again were prohibited from corresponding with residents of the Reich, the Protectorate, or abroad. JSS officials in Kraków, not covered by the ban, forwarded 50 postcards on behalf of the Slovak deportees.¹³

On October 7 or 10, 1942, a group of SS, SS Ukrainian auxiliaries, and German Gendarmes ordered the Jews assembled at the market square. A ghetto-clearing force went house to house, searching for those hiding. The postwar Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation indicates 50 people were killed for refusing to heed the assembly order.¹⁴ About 30 deemed too frail to march to Lubartów were brought to the synagogue to await transfer by peasant cart. In Ostrów, the SS shot dead the Jews at the synagogue. According to Rajchman, on October 10, the surviving expellees were forced onto transports destined for the Treblinka extermination center. Some 105 men, including Rajchman, were retained for labor at Treblinka. The remaining deportees were gassed. In a yizkor book testimony, Mechi (Mischa) Eckhaus describes another survivor telling him that some Ostrów deportees, including Eckhaus’s two brothers, were sent to the Majdanek concentration camp.

Before the ghetto’s liquidation, a number of Ostrów Jews escaped to the Parczew Forest. Only a few survived the more than 18 searches the Germans conducted in the forest beginning in November 1942. Most joined the Parczew partisans, a Jewish partisan and family group subsequently associated with the Polish Communist underground’s Gwardia Ludowa (People’s Guard). The partisan Josef Cynowiec mentions in a frequently cited Yad Vashem testimony that the antisemitism of prominent Ostrów Poles, including the local Roman Catholic priest, diminished chances for Jewish survival. Perhaps for this reason and also likely too because the Germans retaliated against the local population for aiding the partisans, most notably in Białka village, where all 96 men were killed in December 1942, and for partisan attacks, Ostrów’s Roman Catholics sheltered just a few Jewish children.¹⁵ Rajchman escaped from Treblinka during the August 1943 uprising. On July 19, 1944, the Parczew partisans unsuccessfully fought Wehrmacht forces for control of Ostrów.¹⁶ Four days later, when Soviet forces liberated the town, a handful of former Ostrów ghetto residents were alive.

SOURCES Secondary sources pertaining to the history of the Ostrów Jewish community during the World War II German occupation include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 50–52; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 209–211; and the more detailed contributions by Isidore Last, “History of Ostrow-Lubelski,” in the yizkor book, David Sztokfisz, ed., *Sefer-yizkor Ostrov-Lubelski* ([Israel]: Irgun yots’e Ostrov-Lubelski be-Yisrael, [1987]); Janina Kielboń, “Ostrów Lubelski w latach II wojny światowej,” *Lubartów i ziemia lubartowska* 11 (1990): 59–78; Janina Kielboń, “Ostrów Lubelski w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej,” in Ryszard Szczygieł, *Dzieje Ostrowa Lubelskiego* (Ostrów Lubelski: Multico, 1998), pp. 225–270; and Robert Kuwałek, “Społeczność żydowska w Ostrowie Lubelskim,” available on the Żydzi w Lublinie—Jews in Lublin Web site, at www.jews-lublin.pl/?page_id=154, a particularly important contribution because it summarizes Kielboń’s works, which remain virtually unobtainable in the United States.

The aforementioned yizkor book also contains testimonies from survivors. Unfortunately, the only two available in English translation on the Nizkor Project Web site are by Mechi (Mischa) Eckhaus and Bronya Wasserman-Eckhaus, who both fled Ostrów in 1939 for then Soviet-occupied Kowel. Particularly important is the brief coverage accorded Ostrów in the published accounts by Chil Rajchman, including *Un grito por la vida: Memorias* (Montevideo: Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 1997); *Je suis le dernier juif: Treblinka (1942–1943)* (Paris: Arènes, 2009), forthcoming in English translation as *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Memoir* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2011); and Rajchman’s March 1987 testimony at the trial of John (Ivan) Demjanjuk, with English-language transcripts widely available online, which provides the most specific date for the Ostrów community’s expulsion to Treblinka.

Primary documentation for the Ostrów Jewish community includes APL (e.g., 43/0/[830, 833], 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/531, 211 [139, p. 59; 650, p. 2; 653, pp. 35, 45–50; 654, pp. 20–22; 766–768, 887, p. 20], 301 [5567, 2013]); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 174/67/1-4, 283/67/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6, 18/1174, 1195–1198]; RG-15.076M [APL 35/43/0/833]; RG-50.030*0185); VHF (e.g., # 5, 16316); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [2937, 3009]).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2013, testimony of Mojżesz Apelbaum, pp. 1–3.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/766, pp. 2, 15.
3. AŻIH, 301/2013, p. 5.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/653, pp. 46–47.
5. Ibid., 211/768, p. 42.
6. Misfiled in USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/531, p. 23.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/766, pp. 14, 39; 211/768, p. 23.
8. Ibid., RG-50.030*0185, testimony of Chiel (Chil) Rajchman.
9. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/766, p. 39; 211/767, p. 11.
10. Ibid., 211/766, pp. 14, 37; 211/767, p. 10.
11. Ibid., 211/768, p. 42.
12. Ibid., pp. 44, 63, 73.
13. Ibid., pp. 99–105.
14. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 6, 18/1197.
15. Ibid., 18/1174, 1195.
16. AŻIH, 301/5567, testimony of Marek Dworecki, pp. 1–12.

PARCZEW

Pre-1939: Parczew (Yiddish: Partchev), town, Włodawa powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Radzyn, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Parczew powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Parczew lies almost 62 kilometers (38.5 miles) northeast of Lublin. Its pre-war 1939 population of about 10,200 included some 5,000 Jews.

German forces occupied Parczew in early October 1939. In late December, the German civil administration for Kreis Radzyn ordered Jews to wear white armbands and to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Parczew Jewish Council members included L. Mandelkiern, M. Elkenbaum, and Szlomo Fuks. A Jewish police force was also established. Its commander, Rudy Kresch from Berlin, was a 1938 expellee to Poland.

In November 1939, an SS contingent demanded the Jews pay 60,000 złoty to construct a prison. In February 1940, a commander of an antitank unit ordered the Jewish Council to transform the Elbaum (Öhlbaum) house into a brothel, to pay for the services its prostitutes provided German soldiers, and to pay Jewish workers to clean the facility. An SS unit sta-

tioned at an estate in Jabłoń demanded the council send and pay the wages of 60 women laborers. In August, the same unit ordered the wealthiest Jews to a forced labor camp in Bełżec. The council paid bribes to secure the men's release.¹ In February 1940, the council raised a large gold payment, the price an SS commander had demanded for permission to bury 200 to 350 Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) shot dead by his men. (About half the victims were executed in Juliopol.)²

In January 1940, nearly 1,000 Jewish refugees had settled in Parczew, including 604 expellees from Lubartów, 30 from Radzyń, and many fleeing ghettoization in Wisznice.³ Most local refugees returned home in the spring of 1940. The refugee population nonetheless remained constant because newcomers continued arriving, including expellees from Suwałki, Łódź, Kalisz, Poznań, and other territories attached to the Reich by August of 1940. In late December, 425 deportees from Mława spent a month in Parczew awaiting transportation to Wisznice. Many subsequently returned to Parczew.⁴ In March 1941, some "voluntary" Lublin refugees ordered to Sosnowica fled instead to Parczew. That month, the Lubartów Jewish Council expelled 200 Lublin Jews to Parczew. In April, the Biała Podlaska Jewish Council sent 70 Suwałki refugees.⁵ In November 1941, 6,200 Jews (1,550 families) were residing in Parczew.⁶

During this same period, orders banning Jews from living on specific streets gradually resulted in their concentration in Parczew's old Jewish neighborhood.⁷ Bounded by the Konotopa and Piwonia Rivers, the neighborhood included Bóżniczna, November 11, Koński Rynek, Kościelna, Nadwalna, Nowowiejska, Piłsudski, Piwonia, Szeroka, Warsaw, Żabia, and Żydowska Streets. In April 1942, the Parczew Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) reported that neither an open nor a closed ghetto had been established for the town's 6,316 Jews.⁸

The Jews nonetheless experienced declining material conditions. In the spring of 1940, Jewish-owned businesses in Kreis Radzyn were ordered transferred to non-Jews, and forced labor quotas were increased. In Parczew, 100 to 200 of the 2,000 forced labor conscripts hewed trees in the Parczew Forest. Others worked at a sawmill in Pohulanka village or on various projects for municipal authorities, including "paving" sidewalks with *matzevot* (gravestones). From September 1940, 180 Parczew Jews were interned at a labor camp established in Ossowa. In May 1942, the Jewish Council was required to send 600 men to camps in Ossowa, Suchowola, and Romaszki.⁹

Poor sanitation from overcrowding caused numerous typhus outbreaks, including an epidemic in January and February 1941. Dr. Josef Hechter cared for the sick in a two-room, 35-bed hospital. In the winter of 1941–1942, accounting errors and shortfalls in winter potato rations forced JSS administrators to suspend operations at the community kitchen for days at a time, leaving 1,200 of the poorest Jews (mainly refugees) with nothing to eat. Because of complaints about the kitchen, Kreis-level JSS leaders conducted a surprise inspection in late November. In April 1942, Müller, the Jewish Affairs Officer in the Kreis Radzyn Population and Welfare Department (BuF) admonished JSS leaders in Parczew,

warning them that if it were not for the heavy burdens under which they operated, he would have sent them to forced labor camps.¹⁰ By early 1942, many refugees were sick and some had died from diseases related to starvation.¹¹ In January, the JSS opened an orphanage for 17 (of 30) children of deceased refugees. It provided 200 of the most impoverished children free daily breakfasts, typically 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread and a quarter to a half liter (1 to 2 cups) of milk or sweetened coffee. In February, another 100 children were included in the program.

In the winter of 1941–1942, some refugees arrived after fleeing the liquidation of many ghettos in the Wilno region. On May 1, 1942, German authorities executed 12 leftists, including the female Bundist leader Sternówna. Many Jews began constructing hiding places to evade a future roundup. Leftists discussed resistance but concluded it was wiser to join Jews volunteering for forestry labor and to flee deep into the Parczew Forest. Chaim Szczeplicki (Pszeplikier) had helped a group of escaped Soviet POWs there to purchase arms. He likely convinced the unit's commander, Lieutenant Fyodor Kovalev (Kovalyov), to establish a separate Jewish unit for the fugitives, known as the Pushkin group. After 400 young Jews disappeared into the forest, the SS began taking some of their parents as hostages and executing them when the children failed to return to Parczew.¹²

On August 18, 1942, the commander of the Gendarmerie post in Parczew ordered the Jewish Council and Jewish Police to assemble the Jews the next day on the market square for "resettlement." On August 19, the 1st and 2nd Companies of Reserve Police Battalion 101 and a unit of Trawniki auxiliaries arrived to oversee the expulsion. During a two-day Aktion, the 1st Company and the Trawniki men extricated Jews from hiding places and killed the sick and elderly in their beds. Several Poles searched for Jewish neighbors or informed the Trawniki of their absences.¹³ Some 400 Jews were killed during the searches. Another 3,000 to 4,000, including all but two Jewish Council members, were sent from the Parczew railway station in two transports, on August 19 and 20, to the Treblinka extermination facility. A relatively large number of Jews jumped from the trains and returned to Parczew.¹⁴

After the expulsions, an open ghetto was established for 700 to 800 Jews retained for labor in Parczew. Survivor Nuchim Perelman reported it was located "on a few of the worst streets."¹⁵ Authorities appointed Kresch, the police commander, the Jewish Council chair.

From late August, residents of nearby localities were consolidated in the ghetto. The new arrivals included about 800 deportees from Wołyń, 100 mostly refugee families from Kock, 600 deportees from Komarówka Podlaska, 1,030 expellees from Czemierniki, and the Jews from smaller villages surrounding these settlements. Most expellees were required to pay wagon drivers to transport them to Parczew. They could bring with them their remaining possessions, except for furniture.¹⁶ Michał Himmelblau recalled that authorities informed the Czemierniki Jews on October 2 that they were being sent to the ghetto to shield them from future expul-

sions, as Parczew soon would be named a "Judenstadt" (Jewish town), one of a few places in Kreis Radzyn where Jews would be permitted to live.¹⁷

With the arrival of 3,000 to 4,000 Jews, more than 25 people were crowded together in a single room in the ghetto. Because of violence during the first expulsion, almost all the ghetto houses lacked window glass and doors. In late September, members of the 3rd Platoon of the 2nd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 101 renewed their anti-Jewish violence. They surrounded groups of Jewish laborers at workplaces, including about 200 forestry conscripts, and deported them (by truck and peasant cart) to the ghetto in Międzyrzec. The same unit joined by members of the Gendarmerie executed 108 Jews in Parczew by October 2. The victims were shot in small groups over several days. Many Jews purchased false identity papers, sold by either a local Polish Socialist-Party (PPS) activist or a Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir youth from Częstochowa, and fled from the ghetto.¹⁸ The fugitives mostly attempted to reach Warsaw.

Late at night, on October 7, 1942, German forces, commanded by SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Fischer, head of the Security Police in Kreis Radzyn, surrounded the ghetto and ordered its residents assembled at the square. The 2,000 to 3,000 Jews were required to kneel and hold their arms above their heads for hours on end. The Germans shot 300 to 800 dead, mostly for defying the orders. On October 8, the surviving Jews were sent to their deaths at Treblinka.¹⁹ On October 6 and 9, the expellees in Międzyrzec also were deported to Treblinka.

Three days after the expulsion, the Gendarmerie commander ordered members of the Polish auxiliary police and the fire department to search the ghetto for Jews still hiding. The 1,000 people they discovered were ordered to bury the dead, to bring the belongings of the deported to the Piwonia Street synagogue, and to repair vacated houses. Between October 9 and 16, 1942, German security forces shot 50 to 120 Jews dead, mainly for shirking work. Almost all the Jews were soon transferred to labor camps, including Suchowola, or to the ghetto in Międzyrzec. When German authorities declared Parczew a *Judenwohnbezirk* (Jewish residential area) in late October, only a 150 to 200 person cleanup crew remained in the ghetto. Its members brought Jewish property from nearby localities to the synagogue and sorted and packed it for shipment to the Reich. The ghetto, reduced in size, occupied six houses by the synagogue.²⁰

In early 1943, the Parczew Gendarmerie commander forewarned the Jews the ghetto was to be liquidated and they were to be deported the next day. Most fled to the forest rather than gather at the synagogue as ordered. Those who did appear were executed.²¹ In May, the Międzyrzec ghetto and the Suchowola camp were liquidated. Their inmates were transferred to the Majdanek concentration camp. Only a handful of Parczew deportees were sent on to other concentration camps before Majdanek was liquidated in November 1943.

More than 400 Jews from Parczew perished during the more than 18 searches the Germans conducted in the Parczew

Forest beginning in November 1942. The Pushkin group's ranks were decimated in the Easter 1943 search. The survivors mainly joined the Parczew partisans, the best-known Jewish partisan group in Distrikt Lublin. (Named for the forest, the unit was led by Jews from Włodawa and Sosnowica.)²²

Another approximately 20 Jews survived on false identity papers, including 8 of 9 people assisted by Parczew native Ludwik Golecki in Warsaw. In Parczew, Jan and Juliana Sz waj successfully sheltered 4 members of the Farbsztajn family. The Kowalski family hid 5 members of the Krelenbaum family.²³ About 100 Jews from Parczew and 25 to 40 Jews from the localities consolidated in the ghetto lived to see the Red Army liberate Parczew in July 1944.

SOURCES Published memoirs by Parczew survivors include the contributions to the yizkor book, Shelomh Zunnshin et al., eds., *Partsev: Sefer zikaron li-qedoshe Partsev veba-sevivah* (Haifa, Israel, 1977); and Benjamin Mandelkern, *Escape from the Nazis* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1988). The second account is complemented by a testimony from Marek Golecki, the son of Ludwik, available in Polish under the Parczew section of the Lublin: Pamięć Miejsca Web site, an oral history archive created by the Ośrodek “Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN” (Grodzka Gate—NN Theatre Centre), and in a truncated English translation on the “Polish Righteous” section of the Web site of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Though about the partisan movement, the relevant memoirs and documents in Zygmunt Mańkowski and Jan Naumiuk, eds., *Ruch oporu na Lubelszczyźnie*, vol. 1, *Gwardia Ludowa i Armia Ludowa na Lubelszczyźnie, 1942–1944. Źródła i materiały do dziejów ruchu oporu na Lubelszczyźnie (1939–1944)* (Lublin, 1960) nonetheless provide insight into the complex relationships between Jews in Parczew and escaped POWs (both Jewish-Polish and Soviet soldiers) before and after the ghetto's liquidation.

Secondary sources focusing on the various communities consolidated in the Parczew ghetto include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 155–156 (Wohyń), pp. 408–412 (Parczew), pp. 421–422 (Czemierniki), p. 468 (Komarówka Podlaska), pp. 477–480 (Kock); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 88–89 (Czemierniki), pp. 134–139 (Kock), pp. 141–142 (Komarówka Podlaska), pp. 211–215 (Parczew), pp. 305–306 (Wohyń); and the Polish-language entry for Parczew at the Wirtualny Sztetl, on the Web site of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which offers the earliest date (March 1941) for the ghetto's establishment. For the question of assistance by non-Jews from Parczew, see Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 243–244, pt. 2, pp. 798–799.

More general overviews of the region or of the perpetrators—including by Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 32, 41–43, 51, 79–81; David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Uni-

versity, Jerusalem, February 2003), p. 280; and Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 88–90, 95, 104–105, 107, 123–124, 133—provide conflicting accounts of the timing and direction of the second Parczew expulsion and ultimately the date for the ghetto's liquidation. Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944*, trans. Orah Blaustein (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1984), describes the challenges Jewish fugitives encountered in the Parczew Forest in a chapter surveying the accomplishments of the Pushkin group and of the Parczew partisans.

The extant archival documentation suggests no ghetto was established in Czemierniki. The documentation for Wohyń is too sparse to draw a definitive conclusion. Even more difficult to discern are the specific fates of the 300 Jewish residents from small villages west and north of Parczew, including in the Biała, Jabłoń, Milanów, Siemień, and Suchowola gmina, communities that geographically should have been among those consolidated in August 1942 in the Parczew ghetto. In September and October 1941, the head of the JSS in Siemień informed Kreis-level JSS leaders in Radzyń that the Jewish residents in the five gminy had been expelled from their homes but did not mention whether they were ordered to reside in a ghetto. Here, see USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/885, p. 66; 211/887, pp. 27–28.

Archival documentation pertaining to the World War II history of the Parczew Jewish community includes APL; AŻIH (210/539–540, 211 [134, p. 53; 135, p. 60; 142, pp. 8–9, 18–19, 25, 29; 646, pp. 47–48; 780–783; 884, p. 56; 886, pp. 3–4, 19, 32, 46–48; 887, pp. 91, 98–101; 888, pp. 9–10, 17; 890, pp. 10, 13, 17, 21–22, 34–39, 44, 46–48, 54, 71; 891, pp. 14–15, 24, 29–30, 48], 301 [103, 514, 608, 757, 1165, 2013, 2327, 2372, 2767]); FVA (HVT [# 18, 2270]); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 37/67/1–4, 73/07/Zn, 131/67/57, 141/67/1–2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH, 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH, 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6, 18/1199–1201]); VHF (e.g., # 1923, 7289, 13378, 25669, 36330, 37873, 48207); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [1824, 2019, 2080], O-33/24).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/608, testimony of Nuchem Perlman (Nuchim Perelman), pp. 1–2.
2. Ibid., 301/757, testimony of Zurech Piekarski, pp. 1–3.
3. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/539, p. 3; Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/646, pp. 47–48.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1099, p. 8; 211/780, pp. 3–20, 24–29, 34–45.
5. Ibid., 211/781, pp. 17–18, 34–35.
6. Ibid., 211/887, p. 91.
7. VHF, # 13378, testimony of Isadore Farbstein.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/783, p. 41.
9. Ibid., 211/890, p. 54; 211/783, p. 34.
10. Ibid., 211/782, pp. 30, 40; 211/886, p. 3; 211/888, pp. 9–10; 211/890, pp. 10, 34–40.
11. AŻIH, 301/2327, testimony of Nuchim Perelman, p. 4.
12. Ibid., 301/2372, testimony of Józef Perelman, pp. 1–8.
13. Ibid., p. 9.
14. Ibid., 301/608, pp. 3–4; VHF, # 13378.

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15. AŽIH, 301/2327, p. 3.
16. Ibid., 301/ 2013, testimony of Mojżesz Apelbaum, p. 11.
17. Ibid., 301/2767, testimony of Michał Himmelblau, p. 2.
18. Compare Ibid., 301/608, p. 5, with 301/2327, p. 6.
19. Ibid., 301/2767, pp. 2–3; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 6, 18/1201.
20. VHF, # 48207, testimony of Susan Weiss.
21. AŽIH, 301/608, p. 5.
22. Ibid., 301/1165, testimony of Chuna Sobol, p. 1.
23. VHF, # 37873, testimony of David Krelenbaum.

PIASKI LUTERSKIE

Pre-1939: Piaski Luterskie, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Piaski, Kreis Lublin-Land, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Piaski Luterskie, Lublin województwo, Poland

Piaski Luterskie is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) south-east of Lublin. When the Germans and Soviets invaded Poland in September 1939, Piaski had 4,165 Jews, but many fled at the time of the invasion and the brief Soviet occupation. An average of 4,000 to 5,000 Jews inhabited the Piaski ghetto during its existence.¹

The history of the Jews in Piaski and the ghetto may be subdivided into five partially overlapping phases: (1) initial arrivals of deportees and Jewish Council (Judenrat) organization; (2) open ghetto; (3) closed ghetto; (4) “transit” or collection ghetto; and (5) liquidation, establishment of the remnant ghetto and forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ).

During the first phase, from February to December 1940, Piaski Luterskie was a destination with Głusk and Bełżyce for the expulsion of Pomeranian Jews. In mid-February 1940, the German authorities removed approximately 1,000 Jews from Stettin (after 1945: Szczecin) to Lublin-Land. Although earlier studies blamed this deportation on Pomerania’s Gauleiter, Franz Schwede-Coburg, historian Götz Aly argues that it was part of the ongoing Baltic German resettlement to Stettin. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD Reinhard Heydrich initiated the deportation. In a speech in Berlin on February 29, 1940, Himmler attempted to stave off his Nazi audience’s “false hopes,” dismissing the possibility that this step was the first in the overall removal of Greater Germany’s Jews.² A smaller transport of Jews from the Pomeranian city of Schneidemühl took place in March 1940. The original Piaski Judenrat was also organized in this phase. The Judenrat’s director (Obmann) from 1940 to 1942 was Mandel Polisecki.³

In letters to relief workers, friends, and family, the Pomeranian Jews documented life in Piaski between the first and fourth phases. Among them was Frau A.G., a mother who converted to Judaism upon marrying her husband, Arthur. Her daughter, a practicing Christian, had already been imprisoned at Ravensbrück for “defilement of the race” (*Rassenschande*), then released, and had emigrated by the time Frau A.G. was deported to Piaski with her ailing husband and son Adolf. In

letters written in the spring and summer of 1940 to Margarethe Lachmund, a Quaker who arranged relief for the Stettin deportees, Frau A.G. wrote that “the circumstances here are so bitter” and complained about sharing a domicile with 10 other people.⁴ Her son was separated from the family for weeks at a time, performing forced labor.⁵ In November 1940, in an indication that Piaski was still not yet a ghetto, Bełżyce ghetto inhabitants Erich and Cläre Silbermann happily reported to Lachmund that the Stettin synagogue’s cantor, Rainowitz, then in Piaski, participated in religious services in Bełżyce.⁶

During the second phase, from December 31, 1940, to early June 1941, Piaski became an open ghetto on the order of the Kreishauptmann of Lublin-Land, Emil Ziegenmeyer.⁷ For the Jews, the change initially meant their residential confinement to the area around the synagogue, already overcrowded because of the Pomeranian deportations. Travel outside the ghetto was still possible, as evidenced by a letter from Max and Martha Bauchwitz, which mentioned that the sick originally could be bussed to Lublin for care but by May 1941 were dispatched by straw-covered wagons.⁸ At this time, an epidemic of louse-borne typhus had already broken out in Piaski. Max Bauchwitz, a dentist, alongside several Jewish doctors, treated typhus patients in the ghetto’s hospital and two medical clinics. In June 1941, Piaski numbered 4,803 Jewish inhabitants, including 852 expellees, some having come from Kraków, as well as those from Stettin.⁹

During the third phase, from June 11, 1941, to March 1942, Piaski became an enclosed ghetto. On Ziegenmeyer’s orders, the ghetto was enclosed with barbed wire, and a second closed ghetto was opened opposite the first on Lublin Street.¹⁰ Piaski’s limited water sources were found in the first ghetto near the synagogue.¹¹ The second ghetto’s inhabitants thus had to cross the street to secure water and other necessities, but the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) only permitted crossings every two hours until curfew.¹² The Piaski Judenrat supervised both parts of the ghetto. A Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) report indicated that just over 10 percent of the Jews (496) were described as skilled or unskilled workers or as professionals.¹³ In September 1941, Dr. Siegfried of the Jewish Aid Committee (Jüdisches Hilfskomitee) Lublin-Land reported that, for the 4,900 Jewish inhabitants, Piaski’s available space amounted to 5,887 square meters (63,367 square feet), or 1.1 square meters (11.8 square feet) per inhabitant, as historian Bogdan Musial has noted.¹⁴ In October 1941, a small group of Jews from Kraków was deported to Piaski. Twenty-seven of them sent a letter to the JSS headquarters in Kraków, signed “The Evacuees from Kraków to Piaski,” importuning Jewish welfare authorities to send winter clothing as soon as possible, because they had none.¹⁵ Overcrowding and chronic hunger made the ghetto vulnerable once more to epidemics. Between October 1941 and January 1942, louse-borne typhus overwhelmed Piaski’s resources. A JSS Piaski member, Szaje Lindner, repeatedly requested medication and disinfection agents from JSS Kraków for combating the epidemic.¹⁶ A list of 3 Jews from the Reich who

died in Piaski during the month of January 1942 included 2, one male and one female, who succumbed to typhus. Altogether, perhaps as many as 1,500 Jews in Piaski perished in epidemics.¹⁷

The ghetto's fourth phase lasted from the end of February to November 1942. As part of Operation Reinhard, the annihilation of Jews in the Generalgouvernement, Piaski, Izbica (nad Wieprzem), Krasnystaw, Rejowiec, and other places in Distrikt Lublin, functioned as collection points (referred to by some historians as "transit ghettos") for German, Austrian, Czech, and Slovak Jews. The head of Lublin's Population and Welfare Department (BuF), Richard Türk, ordered that Jews from the Old Reich and the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia replace the ghettos' Polish and Pomeranian Jewish populations, which were being dispatched to the Bełżec killing center. In a file note, Fritz Reuter of BuF quoted an order from SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Höfle: "Piaski will be made free of Polish Jews and become the assembly point for Jews coming from the Reich."¹⁸

The first deportation from Piaski took place shortly after March 16, 1942, probably to make room for a scheduled new influx of Jews from the Reich. Around 2,500 Polish and Stettin Jews, who had been selected as incapable of work, were marched to Trawniki, where they were held overnight in a barn at the sugar refinery together with some Jews from Biskupice. Several hundred of these people died of suffocation overnight (perhaps resulting from a gassing experiment). The next day the corpses were loaded onto a train along with the survivors, to be sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁹ Around this time, all the native Jews of Trawniki were also removed.

The wave of transports from the Reich to Piaski began on March 23, 1942, when around 1,000 Hessian Jews (from Mainz and Darmstadt) entered Piaski. According to Martha Bauchwitz, this transport arrived penniless.²⁰ Then on March 28, 1942, 985 Jews arrived from Berlin.

On April 1, 1942, 1,000 Jews arrived in Piaski from Theresienstadt. Working-age Jews from this and the March transports, such as Kurt Ticho Thomas, originally from Boskovice, Czechoslovakia, were deployed as agricultural laborers on nearby farms.²¹ The deportations from Piaski to the extermination camps via Trawniki resumed on April 6, 1942. One ghetto inhabitant, Frau E. Sch., wrote Frau Luise Lotte Hoyer-Bauchwitz on April 11, 1942, that her parents, the Bauchwitzes, "have left with many other beloved people from Piaski."²² On the same date, the German Security Police Transfer Office Piaski (Sicherheitspolizei Transferstelle Piaski) itemized property seized from Jews recently dispatched to Bełżec, including 8,300.54 złoty, 85 gold rubles, and five wedding rings, as well as 45 men's vests, two fur pelts, nine pairs of children's mittens, and other goods.²³ According to official German records, there were further transports to Piaski on April 6, when 989 Jews arrived from Munich; and on April 25, when another 1,000 arrived from Theresienstadt. However, more than 200 of the able-bodied men on each of these transports were selected in Lublin, probably for the Majdanek concentration camp.²⁴ On May 19, 1942, Ziegenmeyer re-

ported that 6,166 Jews from Piaski had been "resettled" (murdered).²⁵

The deportations necessitated the reconstitution of Piaski's Judenrat and Jewish Police. Polisecki remained Obmann, and the Judenrat had two more long-standing members, Moses Drajblat and Josef Aschmann. The nine replacements had arrived on the recent transports. They were Moritz Israel Fried, Ernst Schlösser, Siegfried Kugelman, Fritz Sängler, Hugo Railing, Kurt Hirschmann, Ernst Böhm, Walter Guttmann, and Friedrich Wilhelm Kempner.²⁶ Three members were from Hessen, two from Berlin, two from Bavaria, one from Jägerndorf (Protectorate), and one from Vienna. The occupations of the three Hessian members, Fried, Schlösser, and Kugelman, were described, respectively, as a businessman, retired official (*Amtmann i. R.*), and bank officer, suggesting that Piaski's Judenrat was probably middle class.²⁷ The age range of the new Judenrat members was from 28 to 62 (with an average age of 48.6).²⁸ The Jewish Police was also reorganized, with Stefan Reinemann replacing the deported Alfred Stapler as chief. Reinemann oversaw 30 Reich and Protectorate Jews, including 1 woman, Bela Trattner.²⁹

Fanni and Jakob Liebschütz from Allgäu, Germany, and Arnold Hindls from Brno, Czechoslovakia, described Piaski's worsening situation in the spring of 1942. In a letter to her cousin on April 13, 1942, Fanni Liebschütz recounted: "We are here since the end of March and are cleaning out the ghetto. One drowns in dirt without boots. Toilet in field and pasture; manure piles in front of the houses. Sleeping, living, and cooking facilities for 16 in an old prayer hall." But she added, hopefully: "We are all Swabians and have gallows humor. It will pass."³⁰ Hindls described the inflated food prices. Selling his wedding ring for 120 złoty, he was able to augment the community kitchen's slim provisions by trading with Polish farmers. A kilogram (2.2 pounds) of dark bread cost 12 złoty; a kilogram of white bread, 18 złoty; a kilogram of potatoes, 2 złoty; butter, 100 złoty; a liter (1 quart) of milk, 4 złoty; and one egg, 1 złoty. After spending all his money on food, another problem arose: firewood cost 2 złoty and brown coal, 6 złoty.³¹

On May 15, 1942, the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt) banned Jews in the Generalgouvernement from corresponding with relatives in the Reich or elsewhere, effectively cutting Piaski off from the world, apart from JSS Lublin-Land's cursory replies to relatives' inquiries. In June 1942, Fanni Liebschütz's mother received a detailed reply from JSS Lublin-Land, claiming that the family was well and congratulating their son, Werner, who lived with her while studying in Davos, Switzerland, on his Bar Mitzvah.³² A second reply, dated July 20, 1942, to Liebschütz's cousin, suspiciously addressed Lublin-Majdanek, was the last word the family received about them.³³

By June 1942, direct deportations of Western European and German Jews to the Bełżec and Sobibór killing centers obviated the need for collection ghettos as intermediary stations, thereby inaugurating the liquidation (fourth) phase, which lasted until November 8, 1942. By this time most of Piaski's Jews were sent to their deaths at Sobibór, but between

1,000 and 2,000 were shot in the neighboring Jewish cemetery in November 1942, after which the German authorities razed the ghetto.

Piaski's fifth and final phase, from October 1942 to March or April 1943, overlapped with its liquidation. The main deportation Aktion occurred on or around October 22, 1942, when several thousand Jews were rounded up and escorted to Trawniki by Gestapo, Gendarmerie, SS Ukrainian auxiliaries from the Trawniki training camp (SS-*Ausbildungslager*), and Polish (Blue) Police. From Trawniki they were soon deported on to the Sobibór extermination facility. Around this time, some 3,000 Jews from the Łęczna ghetto were marched to Piaski Luterskie and then from there shipped to Sobibór via Trawniki.³⁴

In October 1942, Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, designated Piaski one of just a few locations where Jews were permitted to reside in "Jewish residential districts" (remnant ghettos) in Lublin-Land, in the hopes of luring the remaining Jews from hiding for resettlement.³⁵ In late October 1942, Krüger inspected Piaski in connection with its use as a residential district.³⁶ Whether this deception worked is unclear, but starting in November 1942, a small forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ) operated at Piaski. Its inmates were removed to Trawniki in March or April of 1943.

On October 13, 1943, Kurt Ticho Thomas, who escaped from Sobibór, returned to the Piaski area and hid with the Polish farmer for whom he had worked before deportation, Stanisław Podsiadły. The Podsiadły family protected him until the Red Army's arrival in July 1944. In 1986, Yad Vashem recognized the Podsiadły family as Righteous Among the Nations.³⁷

SOURCES The most important secondary source for the Piaski Luterskie ghetto, including statistical information on the deportations to the killing centers, is Robert Kuwałek, "Die Durchgangsgghettos im Distrikt Lublin (u.a., Izbica, Piaski, Rejowiec, und Trawniki)," in Bogdan Musiał, ed., *"Aktion Reinhard": Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement, 1941–1944* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004), pp. 197–232. Additional information, including some biographical details on Ziegenmeyer and Türk, may be found in Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin, 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999). Helpful information on some Stettin deportees may be found in Jacob Peiser, *Die Geschichte der Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Stettin*, 2nd, expanded ed. (Würzburg: Holzner, 1965). Details on the Hessian transport may be found in Renate Dreesen and Christoph Jetter, eds., *Die Deportationslisten: Veröffentlichung der vollständigen Namenslisten der 1942/43 aus dem ehemaligen Volksstaat Hessen deportierten Juden* (Darmstadt: Initiative "Gedenkort Güterbahnhof Darmstadt," 2004), pp. 1–54. Background information on the town of Piaski Luterskie, some of which is contradictory, may be found in Andrzej Trzeciński, *A Guide to Jewish Lublin and Surroundings* (Warsaw and Lublin: Jewish Information and Tourist Bureau, 1991), pp. 53–54; "Piaski Luterskie," JHI Education, www.jewishinstitute.org.pl; and "Piaski Luterskie," in

Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 384–387 (a translation by Jonathan Moss is reproduced at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol7_00384.html).

Published primary sources on the Piaski ghetto include German documents in *Dokumente i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, 3 vols. (Łódź, 1946), vol. 2, pp. 194–195; and Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961). The names of the reconstituted Judenrat may be found in a document reproduced at www.death-camps.org. The provenance of this document is uncertain, but internal evidence from it is consistent with other sources. A valuable collection of letters from Pomeranian deportees in the Lublin-Land ghettos is Else Behrend-Rosenfeld and Gertrud Luckner, eds., *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski: Briefe Deportierter aus dem Distrikt Lublin 1940–1943* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1970). The published memoir of Czechoslovak deportee Arnold Hindls, *Einer kehrte zurück: Bericht eines Deportierten* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1965), has detailed information on the ghetto in the spring of 1942. Anonymous but informative reports on the situation in Piaski and the Stettin deportation are found in *Testaments to the Holocaust at the Wiener Library*, P.II.a No. 625, Anon., "Die politische Situation in Deutschland und in den Nachbarstaaten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Judenfrage," ca. 1940; and P.III.c No. 622, Anon., "Evakuierung der Juden aus Stettin," September 1, 1941.

Unpublished documentation may be found at ITS ("Namen von Personen jüdischer Religion, gekommen aus Deutschland, verstorben in der Zeit vom 1.–31.1.42 in Piaski und auch dort beerdigt," KL Lublin-Majdanek OCC 13 / 200, Ord. 12, copied from the Jewish Museum, Warsaw); the Piaski "ghetto questionnaire" may be found in USHMM, RG-15.019M, AGK-IPN, "ASG, 1945," woj. lubelskie, reel 15, p. 74. An unpublished and translated collection of letters from Piaski is USHMM, RG-02.212, Werner J. Lipton, "Toward the Abyss: Cards and Letters; Mindelheim-Lublin, 1941–1943," trans. Werner Jacob Lipton (Liebschütz). Informative reports from JSS Piaski to JSS Kraków, in German and Polish, may be found in USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, JSS, 1939–1944, reel 38, 211/651, 786–788. A photograph of HSSPF Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger inspecting Piaski may be found at USHMPA, WS # 33474. A detailed series of oral testimonies on Piaski and the aftermath is USHMM, RG-50.030*0233, Oral History Interview of Kurt (Ticho) Thomas, November 9, 1990 (interviewed by Linda Gordon Kuzmack); and USHMM, RG-50.549.02*0048, Oral History Interview of Kurt (Ticho) Thomas, June 19 and 23, 1999. Other archival sources include APL (GDL, 270, 282) and AŽIH, 211/651, p. 16.

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NOTES

1. "Kwestionariusz o obozach" (Piaski), USHMM, RG-15.019M, IPN, ASG, 1945," woj. lubelskie, reel 15, p. 74.
2. Heinrich Himmler, *Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945 und andere Ansprachen*, ed. Bradley F. Smith and Agnes F. Peterson,

intro. by Joachim C. Fest (Frankfurt am Main: Propyläen Verlag, 1974), p. 139.

3. JSS Kraków to Mandel Polisecki et al., May 2, 1941, USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, JSS, 1939–1944, reel 38, 211/786, pp. 28–30; “Der Judenrat in Piaski an Kreishauptmann Lublin-Land,” April 27, 1942, Tagebuch (Tgb.) Nr. 49/42, p. 36, reproduced at www.deathcamps.org.

4. Frau A.G. to Margarethe Lachmund, April 11, 1940, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski*, p. 82.

5. Frau A.G. to her daughter, July 20, 1940, in *ibid.*, p. 83.

6. Cläre Silbermann to Margarethe Lachmund, November 1940, in *ibid.*, p. 113.

7. Kreishauptmann Ziegenmeyer an der Chef des Amtes in Lublin, September 19, 1941, in APL, GDL, 270, p. 18, cited in Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p. 131.

8. Max and Martha Bauchwitz to Luise Lotte Hoyer-Bauchwitz, May 11, 1941, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski*, p. 59.

9. Max and Martha Bauchwitz to Luise Lotte Hoyer-Bauchwitz, May 27, 1941, in *ibid.*, pp. 60–61; AŻIH, 211/651, p. 16.

10. Ziegenmeyer an Abteilung Wirtschaft im Amt des Chefs des Distrikts Lublin-Land über Zuteilung von Materialien für den Gettobau, June 11, 1941, in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord (FGM)*, Doc. 61, pp. 126–127.

11. Hindls, *Einer kehrte zurück*, p. 17.

12. Transcript of USHMM, RG-50.030*0233, Oral History Interview of Kurt (Ticho) Thomas, November 9, 1990, p. 15.

13. JSS Piaski, “Bericht für die Zeit vom 1. Juli bis 31. Juli 1941,” in *ibid.*, Acc. 1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/787, p. 16.

14. Siegfried Besuch, September 14, 1941, APL, GDL 282, p. 565, cited in Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p. 174.

15. Die Aussiedler aus Krakau in Piaski an die JSS in Krakau, October 3, 1941, in USHMM, Acc. 1997.A.0124, reel 38, 211/787, n.p.

16. See, for example, JSS Piaski to JSS Präsidium, Krakau, in *ibid.*, reel 38, 211/787, p. 57.

17. ITS, KL Lublin-Majdanek OCC 13/200 Ord. 12, “Namen von Personen jüdischer Religion, gekommen aus Deutschland, verstorben in der Zeit vom 1.–31.1.1942 in Piaski und auch dort beerdigt,” p. 1; “Kwestionariusz o obozach” (Piaski), RG-15.019M, reel 15, p. 74.

18. Fritz Reuter, Vermerk, Lublin, March 17, 1942, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, Doc. 202, p. 269.

19. See www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007397.

20. Martha Bauchwitz to Luise Lotte Hoyer-Bauchwitz, March 25, 1942, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski*, p. 75.

21. Thomas interview transcript, p. 17.

22. Frau. E. Sch. to Luise Lotte Hoyer-Bauchwitz, April 11, 1942, in Behrend-Rosenfeld and Luckner, *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski*, p. 78.

23. Sipo Transferstelle Piaski to KdS für den Distrikt Lublin z.H. [zu Händen] von SS-Obersturmführer Worthoff, Lublin, April 11, 1942, Betr.: “Judenaktion in Piaski,” in *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, p. 194.

24. *Gedenkbuch: Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933–1945*, 2., wesentlich erweiterte Auflage (Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 2006),

vol. 4, pp. 18–19. Kuwałek, “Die Durchgangsgghettos,” p. 207, gives different dates and figures, noting the selections in Lublin.

25. Kreishauptmann in Lublin-Land, Amt für Innere Verwaltung an die Herrn Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin, Unterabteilung BuF, Betr.: “Aus- und Umsiedlung von Juden,” May 19, 1942, in Berenstein et al., *FGM*, Doc. 211, p. 277.

26. Der Judenrat in Piaski to Kreishauptmann Lublin-Land, April 27, 1942, Tgb. Nr. 49/42, p. 36.

27. The Judenrat members are listed as numbers 617, 737, and 898 on the Darmstadt transport in Dreesen and Jetter, *Die Deportationslisten*.

28. Calculation based on birthdates given in “Der Judenrat in Piaski to Kreishauptmann Lublin-Land,” April 27, 1942, Tgb. Nr. 49/42, p. 36.

29. APL, KH L-L, sygn. 139, Judenviertel in Piaski, Verzeichnis der jüdischen Polizisten im Ghetto Piaski, May 20, 1942, pp. 147, 150, as cited in Kuwałek, “Die Durchgangsgghettos,” p. 224 n.66.

30. Fanni Liebschütz to Viktor Bollag, April 13, 1942, USHMM, RG-02.212, Werner J. Lipton, “Toward the Abyss: Cards and Letters; Mindelheim-Lublin, 1941–1943,” trans. Werner Jacob Lipton (Liebschütz).

31. Hindls, *Einer kehrte zurück*, p. 23.

32. JSS, Jüdisches Hilfskomitee, L-L, to Jenny Gundelfinger, postmarked June 18, 1942, USHMM, RG-02.212, “Toward the Abyss.”

33. JSS, Jüdisches Hilfskomitee, L-L, to Viktor Bollag, July 20, 1942, in *ibid.*

34. Testimony of Mordechai Goldfarb, May 31, 1978, published in Towiah Friedman, ed., *Sobibór: Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der “Aktion Reinhard”: Eine dokumentarische Sammlung* (Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1998), n.p., which dates the Piaski Aktion on October 22, 1942, as does *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 41 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), Lfd. Nr. 833a, p. 387; AŻIH, 301/1817, testimony of Izaak Rozengarten and Hersz Zylbersztajn, p. 1, dates the Łęczna Aktion on October 25—but the two Aktions may have occurred at the same time, as Goldfarb mentions some 12,000 Jews being deported together from Trawniki.

35. Berenstein et al., *FGM*, Doc. 266, p. 342.

36. USHMMPA, WS # 33474, Courtesy of GFH.

37. Thomas interview transcript, pp. 58–65; USHMM, RG-50.549.02*0048, Oral History Interview of Kurt (Ticho) Thomas, June 19 and 23, 1999, Tape 2, Side A.

PUŁAWY

Pre-1939: Puławy (Yiddish: Polav or Pulav), town, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Puławy, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Puławy, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Puławy lies almost 48 kilometers (about 30 miles) by road northwest of Lublin. Just prior to the German invasion of Poland, on September 1, 1939, about 3,600 Jews (30 percent of the overall population) were living in Puławy.¹

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Puławy in mid-September 1939. The Jewish population immediately was confronted with violence and plunder, initially carried out by individual German soldiers. Survivor Moshe Blojstein (Blustein) recalled Polish residents often assisting German officers to identify Jews. German soldiers entered Jewish houses at night and took whatever valuables they could find. They brutally beat Jews they found on the streets. Jews taken for forced labor often were humiliated. Women, for example, were ordered to take off their clothes and use them to clean the floors in German offices. Elderly Jewish men were driven from the synagogue in their prayer shawls on Shabbat and compelled to clean toilets with their bare hands. German soldiers also tore out the beards of Jewish men.²

Henryk Adler, the chairman of the kehillah and a public school director, was named head of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). Dr. Benjamin Honigsfeld, Kleinbaum, Edelstein, and Moshe Rubinstein, the pre-war secretary of the kehillah, were among the council members. The German authorities required the Judenrat to raise large “contributions.”³

By the end of October 1939, the German administration had ordered the Jews to move to a specially designated quarter, located in a pre-war neighborhood inhabited mostly by impoverished Jews. The ghetto spanned an area comprising about 20 percent of Puławy.⁴ Its streets included Piaskowa, Polna, Gdańsk, and Niemcewicz and two courtyards. Because bombardment and shelling during the first weeks of the war had destroyed many buildings in the ghetto area, Jews were ordered to live only on the undamaged sides of Gdańsk and Piaskowa Streets.⁵

The war damage in Puławy may have been among the reasons for the early establishment of the ghetto, the first in Distrikt Lublin and among the earliest ghettos created in the Generalgouvernement. Unfortunately, scholars only can speculate about why local German authorities ordered the ghetto established so early, as no documentation has survived to explain their decision.

Because the only available information about the ghetto comes from several survivor testimonies, it also is not always possible to give the exact dates for events, including the date on which Jews were required to report to the ghetto. Generally, survivors recall posters hanging throughout Puławy in early November 1939, containing orders for the Jews to report to the ghetto. The posters explained ghettoization was required because the Jews were “a destructive element,” harmful to society. One survivor recalls the Germans issued an order on November 4, hours before the Jews began reporting to the ghetto, expropriating all Jewish-owned businesses.⁶

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. There was no sewage system. There also was no electricity in the ghetto or more generally in Puławy. (German bombardment had destroyed the power plant in the first weeks of the war.) The designated ghetto area was far too small for its nearly 4,000 inhabitants. (Fewer than 3,000 people had lived in the same neighborhood before the war.) German robbers exploited the defenseless and outlawed status of the Jews by organizing nighttime raids

on the ghetto to plunder Jewish residences in a search for jewelry and other valuables. Brutal beatings often accompanied the raids. The Jews had no recourse, even to flee outside, as the penalty imposed on Jews found violating the 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. curfew was to be shot on the spot.⁷

The Jewish population was reduced every day, as many people, especially the young, escaped to nearby villages and towns, because they believed the situation would be better in places where Jews were not yet been ordered to reside in ghettos. Many also tried to escape to Soviet-occupied territory. Such movement was still possible because the Puławy ghetto was an open ghetto, without a wall or a fence. Jews also were permitted to leave the ghetto for two hours every day.⁸ Perhaps for this reason, postwar Polish documentation notes a ghetto population of around 2,000.⁹

Puławy was the first ghetto ordered dissolved in Distrikt Lublin. Survivors almost all remember posters hanging throughout the Jewish quarter, on December 26, 1939, giving the Jews 48 hours to pack their belongings in preparation for resettlement. Because the temperatures hovered below freezing, the Jewish Council offered local German authorities a bribe to postpone the expulsion Aktion until the spring. Its members were ordered to return to the ghetto. A similar appeal from a group of Jewish women with young children also failed.¹⁰

The Jews did not get the “promised” 48 hours, as the Germans started the Aktion on the night of December 27–28, 1939. German police forces, likely from nearby Kazimierz Dolny, stormed the ghetto.¹¹ They searched Jewish homes with their dogs, ordered men from their beds onto the streets, and commanded women to pack up belongings. As survivors recalled, the expulsions were accompanied by much beating and screaming. The policemen ordered the men to stand in a row on Lublin Street, the main street in Puławy, facing the buildings with their arms up, and to sing in the freezing cold until morning. Because they had been dragged from their beds, many were dressed only in nightclothes. The German guards beat them mercilessly. SS men standing nearby photographed the beatings.¹² The policemen locked the infirmed and physically handicapped in the unheated synagogue, where they almost all froze to death.¹³

The resettlement did not begin until the next morning. At 8:00 A.M., the men held captive along Lublin Street were marched together to Opole. Along the way, some of the German guards brutally beat them. The women were given until noon to vacate Puławy.¹⁴ Most were forced to walk the 33 kilometers (20.5 miles) to Opole with their luggage, as only a few managed to hire wagons. Many infants died from exposure along the road. As many as 2,500 Puławy Jews arrived in Opole. However, many others decided to flee to nearby towns and villages, including Wąwolnica, Kazimierz Dolny, and Bełżyce. After German police forces surrounded Kazimierz early on December 29, likely to drive unregistered Jews from the town, most Puławy fugitives there were forced to flee across frozen fields to Bełżyce.¹⁵

After the expulsions, the only Jews officially permitted to live in Puławy were about 350 Jewish prisoners of at least four

Judenlager (Jewish camps) established between 1940 and 1942 for forced laborers. The prisoners cleaned streets, repaired railway tracks, worked on road construction, and hauled lumber at the pre-war state-owned sawmill. The camps were liquidated in 1943. Almost all the inmates were shot.¹⁶

From late 1942, some Puławy Jews fought as partisans, but this was long after the clearance of the Puławy ghetto.¹⁷ The precise number of Puławy survivors is not known.

SOURCES The yizkor book, Mordechai Wolf Bernstein (Bernshteyn), ed., *Yizker bukh Polav* (New York: Polaver Yizker bukh komitet, 1964), includes testimonies from several survivors. An English translation of its table of contents and of two testimonies, including the lengthy contribution by Moshe Blojstein (Blustein) about the establishment of the ghetto, are available at jewishgen.org.

Recollections from non-Jewish Poles about the war and the Jewish community of Puławy can be found in Michał Strzemiński, ed., *Nasze Puławy. Kolekcja wspomnień* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1986); and in the oral history section of Filip Jaroszyński, ed., *Historia i kultura Żydów Janowca nad Wisłą, Kazimierza Dolnego i Puław: Fenomen kulturowy miasteczka—sztetl. Materiały z sesji naukowej “V Janowieckie Spotkania Historyczne,” Janowiec nad Wisłą, 28 czerwca 2003 roku* (Janowiec nad Wisłą: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Janowca nad Wisłą, 2003), pp. 290–302.

Secondary sources include Sebastian Piątkowski, “Żydzi Janowca, Kazimierza i Puław w latach wojny i okupacji (1939–1945),” in Jaroszyński, *Historia i kultura Żydów*, pp. 199–214; and the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 480–482; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 223–225. Edward Dziadosz and Józef Marszałek, “Więzienia i obozy w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939–1944,” *Zeszyty Majdanka* 3 (1969): 117, provide coverage of the return of a small number of Jewish forced laborers to Puławy in 1940.

Documentation for the history of the Puławy Jewish community during World War II can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 301 [1512, 1513, 1812, 1815]); IPN (e.g., Ankiety); IPN-Lu (e.g., Ds [2/67/1-6, 85/67/1-3]); USHMM (RG-15.066M [IPN]; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 6, 16/812-815, and reel 15, 49/111-112]); VHF (# 4283, 5865, 5866, 6066, 7762, 21805, 22787, 38562, 45387); and YVA.

Andrea Löw and Laura Crago

NOTES

1. Mordechai W. Bernstein (Bernshteyn), “Di geshikhthe fun Yidn in Polav,” and Moshe Rubinstein, “Undzer Haymshtot Polav,” in Bernstein, *Yizker bukh Polav*, pp. 18 and 64–75, respectively.

2. Moshe Blojstein, “Khronik fun khurbn un navena’d,” in *ibid.*, pp. 318–321.

3. VHF, # 38562, testimony of Gershon Edelman; AŻIH, 301/1513, testimony of Gerszon (Gershon) Edelman, p. 1; 301/1812, testimony of Gołda Teich, p. 1.

4. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 15, 49/112, p. 1.

5. Testimony of Stanisław Zadura, in Jaroszyński, *Historia i kultura Żydów*, p. 300.

6. Blojstein, “Khronik,” pp. 321–322.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 322–324, 327.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 331–335; AŻIH, 301/1513, p. 1.

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 49/112, p. 1.

10. AŻIH, 301/1815, testimony of Eta Brifman, p. 1.

11. *Ibid.*, 301/1812, p. 1; and 301/1512, testimony of Gołda Pajek-Kupfer, p. 1.

12. *Ibid.*, 301/1512, p. 1; 301/1815, pp. 1–2; 301/1513, pp. 1–2.

13. *Ibid.*, 301/1513, p. 2.

14. *Ibid.*, 301/1512, p. 1.

15. *Ibid.*; 301/1812, pp. 1–2.

16. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/114-116, reel 6, 16/813-815.

17. M. Zeldin, “Der yidisher ontoyl in di partizanerkampf in Polaver gegnt,” in Bernstein, *Yizker bukh Polav*, pp. 372–381.

RADZYŃ PODLASKI

Pre-1939: Radzyń Podlaski, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Radzyn, Kreis center, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Radzyń Podlaski, Lublin województwo, Poland

Radzyń Podlaski is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) north of Lublin. In the 1930s, the general economic crisis was accompanied by an antisemitic boycott of Jewish trades and crafts. On the eve of World War II, about 3,000 Jews were living in Radzyń.¹

At the start of World War II, it was unclear whether the area would be under Soviet occupation, but by mid-October 1939 the Germans had taken control of Radzyń. Many of the younger Jews fled eastward. During the first weeks the Jewish population of the town was confronted with violence and plundering. Germans came to Jewish houses and, as Nuchim Perelman recalls, beat the inhabitants, ordering the women to undress and dance on the tables. They plundered valuables. The center of town was used for housing soldiers; the two great synagogues served as horse stables. As Joseph Schupack recalls:

The furnishings of the synagogues had been desecrated and demolished beforehand. Every new unit that marched into town seemed obligated to vandalize and destroy. After demanding contributions, seizing hostages and plundering Jewish stores, the German occupation troops established themselves. The German authorities tightened the screws on us Jews increasingly tighter. . . . Many Jews with beards wore bandages on their faces, pretending to be wounded already.”²



View of a street in the Radzyń Podlaski ghetto, 1942.
USHMM WS #57697, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG

On December 6, 1939, a great part of the Jewish population of Radzyń was driven from the town, but they returned the following April from the village of Sławatycze on the River Bug. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was founded, consisting of 12 members, with David Lichtenstein, a well-known and respected person in town, as chairman. The Jewish Council had to organize Jewish life in the town but was also responsible for sending Jews to different kinds of forced labor. Shimon Kleinboim, a former representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) in Poland, became responsible for matters of welfare. There were also “calm” periods, when life began to “normalize.” But increasing restrictions made Jewish life in Radzyń more difficult. The removal of Jews from the economy left most of them without any means of subsistence.³

Radzyń was the capital of Kreis Radzyn, so the Kreishauptmann resided there: from October 1939 to August 1940, this was Hennig von Winterfeld; from August 1940 to October 1941, Dr. Fritz Schmiede; and after that until July 1944, Ludwig Stitzinger. The chief of the Gestapo in Radzyń was a man named Fritz Fischer.⁴ In the building of the former municipality there was a new prison that became infamous for the murder and torture of prisoners.⁵

Although there was no sealed-off ghetto, the Jews were driven out of their houses in the better parts of town and around the marketplace, and a Jewish quarter was set up in 1940 in one of the most run-down areas, where before the war the poorest part of the Jewish population had lived. It consisted of Kozia, Szkolna, Kalen, and several smaller streets.⁶ When those Jews who had been driven out of town in December 1939 returned in the spring of 1940, some of them had lost their homes, as they were not in the designated area, as Yehoshua Ron recalls: “My father hired a peasant wagon and travelled from Sławatycze to Radzyń and back to us. He returned on a frosty and snowy evening with the unhappy news. The head of the Judenrat who had been appointed in Radzyń in the meantime was not too enthusiastic to take us back. The house we had built, so he claimed, the house we had initiated on Passover in 1939, was outside the confines of the ghetto.”⁷

As Joseph Schupack recalls: “Although Radzyń was not a fenced-in ghetto with barbed wire, hardly anyone dared to leave the Jewish section. Venturing outside always brought trouble, risks and even danger to one’s life.”⁸ The Kreishauptmann reported in September 1941 that there were no sealed-off ghettos in the whole Kreis, only Jewish quarters, but that some of the Jews were still living outside of these quarters due to the lack of living space inside. But even if there was no sealed-off Jewish quarter, in Distrikt Lublin from February 1941, Jews were no longer allowed to leave their places of residence, and from October 1941, the punishment for leaving the town without official permission was the death penalty.⁹

The process of ghettoization in Radzyń does not appear to have been completed until the spring of 1942. According to an article titled “Ghetto in Radzyń” published in the regional newspaper, *Nowy Głos Lubelski*, in mid-April 1942: “In the last weeks, a special Jewish quarter [a ghetto] was created in Radzyń into which all Jews, who still live beyond it, soon will be moved.” Among the motivations for the German authorities was the effort to reduce black market activity, which was blamed on “corrupt Jews.”¹⁰

Regarding the reaction of the local Polish population, there are hardly any documents on Radzyń itself. As Joseph Schupack recalls, there were some Poles who wanted to help, but many of them just wanted to get their hands on Jewish possessions, and therefore they offered to look after such items until the end of the occupation.¹¹

Jews had to work for the Germans. The workers met early in the morning in front of the building of the Jewish Council on Kozia Street and were escorted to their working places. The Jewish Council tried to organize this work as effectively as possible to prevent German terror. Some Jews were forced to work; others were very poor and tried to find work to have something to eat.¹² The German employment office in Radzyń assigned Jews of the entire Kreis to various workplaces; among the most important was the Water Regulation Authority (Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion) in Biała Podlaska. From the autumn of 1940, among the most important workplaces were construction sites of military airfields; the employment office

had to request Jewish workers from Lublin, as there were not enough workers in Radzyń.¹³

In Radzyń there was a group of young members of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir and other Zionist organizations who met regularly and were in contact with Jews from surrounding towns, such as Międzyrzec Podlaski. Their main task was organizing escapes, and some Jews fled from Radzyń to the surrounding forests, trying to reach a group of partisans. Some Jews from Radzyń were active in partisan groups later on. One of the people supporting these escapes was Rabbi Shmuel Shlomo Leiner. After he had been betrayed in June 1942, the Gestapo arrested him and he was executed in front of the synagogue. In his poem "The Song about the Radzyner," Yitzchak Katzenelson commemorated this event.¹⁴

In August 1942, about 6,000 Jews were living in Radzyń. In October 1942, 4,000 to 5,000 Jews were deported either directly to the extermination camp in Treblinka or to the ghetto in Międzyrzec, which functioned as a collection point, from which the transports to the extermination camps were organized. Many Jews were shot in Radzyń during the Aktions. On October 1, the Germans deported 2,000 Jews from Radzyń directly to Treblinka. The final liquidation of the Jewish quarter was carried out between October 14 and 16, when the last 2,000 or so Jews were brought to Międzyrzec, and from there, on October 27, they were deported to Treblinka and killed.¹⁵ Joseph Schupack describes one of the deportation Aktions in Radzyń:

The ones who were driven together at the collection place were encircled by the SS and the police. Older people who could not walk were shot on the spot. Screaming women were beaten with rifle butts, and some children standing in the way were shot. Only a few Jews had suitcases, blankets, or coats. Watching the moving lips of some, one knew that they were reciting their last prayer. . . . That day marked the end of the Jews of Radzyn.¹⁶

SOURCES Joseph Schupack, a survivor from Radzyń, has published his memoir, which is the most detailed source of information on Radzyń itself: Joseph Schupack, *The Dead Years* (Holocaust Library, 1986). The original version is in German: Joseph Schupack, *Tote Jahre: Eine jüdische Leidensgeschichte* (Tübingen: Katzmann, 1984). Probably the most important source for the history of the ghetto in Radzyń is the yizkor book, which includes testimonies concerning the short history of the Jews in Puławy under German occupation: Yitzhak Zigelman, ed., *Sefer Radzin: Yizkor-bukh* (Tel Aviv, 1957). There is also an article on Radzyń in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 543–547. On Kreis Radzyn there is an article by the author: "Zwischen Untergang und Selbsthilfe: Juden im Kreis Radzyn während des Zweiten Weltkrieges," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 8 (2005): 716–735.

There are testimonies of Jewish survivors from Radzyń in the archives of the Jewish Historical Institute (AŻIH) in

Warsaw. Some statistical material can be found in the records of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in the Generalgouvernement, which are also located in AŻIH. Both the testimonies and the documents of the JSS frequently deal with the Jews of the Kreis and not just in the town of Radzyń. In Yehoshua Ron's personal memoir (Yehoshua Ron, "To Survive in the Hell: Between the Two Ghettos Radzyn Podlasky, and Mezerich," USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0224) there is only scant information on Radzyń. Contemporary German documentation can be found in the State Archives in Lublin (APL), where the collection "Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin" (see also USHMM, RG-15.066M) holds some information about Jews in the region. Relevant German criminal investigations concerning Nazi crimes in Radzyń can be found in BA-L (B 162/2183-94, 4696, and 14423).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, JSS, 211/883, p. 17.
2. Ibid., 302/2327, testimony of Nuchim Perelman, p. 1; Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 14. See also Rachel Salzman-Freter, "In di ershte tsaytn fun umglik," in Zigelman, *Sefer Radzyn*, pp. 223 ff.
3. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 33; Ron, "To Survive in the Hell," pp. 3–4.
4. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 47.
5. Ibid., p. 53.
6. Ibid., p. 30.
7. Ron, "To Survive in the Hell," p. 4.
8. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 27.
9. Löw, "Untergang," pp. 723–724.
10. "Getto w Radzyniu," *Nowy Głos Lubelski*, no. 85, April 15, 1942, p. 3, quoted in Krzysztof Czubasek, *Żydzi Łukowa i okolic* (Warsaw: Danmar, 2008), p. 186.
11. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, pp. 37–39.
12. Ibid., pp. 33–35.
13. Ibid., pp. 56–57; Löw, "Untergang," pp. 721–722.
14. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 74; Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, pp. 543–547; Yitzchak Katzenelson, *Dos lid vegn Radziner* (Tel Aviv, 1964).
15. Löw, "Untergang," pp. 733–734; BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 236/60 (Erich Langer), p. 5; Schupack, *Gestohlene Jahre*, pp. 79–81.
16. Schupack, *The Dead Years*, p. 82.

REJOWIEC

Pre-1939: Rejowiec (Yiddish: Rayvitsb), town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Cholm, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: village, Lublin województwo, Poland

Rejowiec lies 52 kilometers (32 miles) east-southeast of Lublin. Its August 1939 population included about 2,600 Jews.

In the second half of September 1939, Rejowiec was initially occupied for about one week by the Red Army before these forces withdrew and the town came under German occupation. Some Jews exploited the opportunity and retreated

eastward with the Soviets. During the first 21 months of occupation until June 1941, the Germans conducted only “small-scale” *Aktionen* against the Jews. They demanded contributions, seized people for forced labor, or suddenly came into town and shot 1 or 2 Jews. Only about 10 Jews were murdered during this period. Wealthier Jews were able to pay for substitutes to conduct forced labor for them.

The Jews of Rejowiec received ration cards, but very little food could be obtained with these pieces of paper. Instead, most Jews traded with local peasants who lived in the surrounding countryside, and people did not suffer from hunger.¹ Between the end of 1939 and May 1941, more than 1,000 Jewish refugees, mostly expelled from Lublin (in March 1941) and also from Kraków reportedly arrived in Rejowiec, increasing the pressure on the local Jewish social welfare institutions. Some, however, may have moved on to other locations or were recruited for forced labor camps, as in August 1941 there were 2,345 Jews residing in Rejowiec.²

The first large-scale *Aktion* against the Jews of Rejowiec took place on April 7, 1942. A large number of German police suddenly arrived in town, creating a very tense atmosphere. After several hours, the *Judenrat* instructed all Jews to assemble at the marketplace. About 80 percent of the Jews obeyed these instructions, and the rest hid in various places of concealment. Once assembled, the Jews were surrounded by *Gendarmes*, and after separating out the *Judenrat* chairman, the remaining Jews were herded away towards the railroad station, to be deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Anyone who fell behind the column was shot. Babies were seized from their mothers and killed. Altogether about 200 of the Jews were murdered on the way, and the rest were loaded onto cattle cars. The next day, the Germans scoured the town for those in hiding. About 200 Jews were uncovered, and after being beaten, they were sent to the labor camp at Krychów, including members of the *Judenrat*. Many of these people were killed subsequently at the nearby Sobibór extermination camp. A few days later the Polish Community Council in Rejowiec spread word that all remaining Jews must register immediately, or they would be shot on sight if spotted. In response, about 140 more Jews crawled out of their hiding places. According to a report preserved in the Ringelblum Archive, these Jews were imprisoned for six days and then sent on carts to Chełm, where they were released. Other sources indicate that a number of Jews were retained in Rejowiec as needed laborers or returned after the *Aktion* from nearby labor camps, including Krychów.³

A remnant ghetto was then created in Rejowiec soon after this first *Aktion*. The ghetto consisted of two rows of houses along one of the streets on the edge of town, into which the 400 or so remaining Jews were concentrated. According to postwar testimony given to the German court in Verden, at some time in 1942, probably already in the summer, the ghetto was surrounded with barbed wire.⁴

On April 25, 1942, the *Judenrat* in the Rejowiec ghetto wrote to the aid committee in Kraków concerning around 1,800 Jews in extreme need, who had recently arrived from

Slovakia and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The first Slovak transport had arrived on April 17. The Jews were unloaded in Lublin, and the men and women were separated. All the women were sent to Rejowiec, but the men and all the luggage went to another destination. The transport from the Protectorate was segregated in Rejowiec: youths capable of work were sent to a labor camp, and only women, children, and the elderly (people incapable of work) remained behind. The *Judenrat* appealed urgently for aid in the form of food, money, bedding, and medication to assist the women and children who were suffering from starvation. Children had to sleep on the bare ground, and 1 person had died from hunger already. Tools were also needed to repair the buildings in which the Jews were accommodated.⁵ Just prior to this, around April 20, a newly constituted *Judenrat*, headed by a man named Blatt, containing both Polish Jews and some recently arrived Jews was formed, which was subordinated to Majer Frenkiel, the head of the *Kreis Judenrat* in Chełm.⁶

According to the historian Robert Kuwałek, the following transports into *Distrikt Lublin* included Jews primarily destined for Rejowiec: April 16–17, 1,040 Slovak Jews from Nitra (of whom about 200 men were selected in Lublin for the Majdanek camp); April 18, 1,000 Czech Jews from Theresienstadt (probably also subject to selection in Lublin); April 20, 1,030 Slovak Jews from Nitra; May 5, 1,000 Jews; May 23 (or 27), 1,630 Slovak Jews from Sabinov and Prešov (the men were selected out and sent to Majdanek); May 24 (or 28), 1,022 Slovak Jews from Stropkov and Bardejov; May 25, 1,000 Slovak Jews from Poprad. It is estimated that at least 5,000 Jews of these transports passed through the Rejowiec ghetto altogether.⁷

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) records do not confirm the arrival of all of these transports, nor do they mention exactly how many Jews arrived. However, the arrival of the third and fourth transports in Rejowiec are confirmed in a report dated May 8, 1942. The new leader of the JSS delegation in Rejowiec, Elżbieta Friedmann, described the terrible conditions for the Jewish deportees in Rejowiec and received 300 złoty in cash to buy medicine from the *Kreis JSS* in Chełm.⁸

The Rejowiec ghetto served for many of the Slovak and Czech Jews only as a transit ghetto, where they were held for a short time before being deported on to labor camps or one of the extermination camps.⁹ Precise information is not available, but, according to the historian Yehoshua Büchler, at the end of April already, some of the Jews of Nitra together with local Jews were sent away to labor camps, including those in Hańsk, Sawin, and Osowa (Ossowa), while others were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁰

Pola Ajzensztajn reports that the Jewish Police at this time consisted mainly of Slovak and Czech Jews. In the summer of 1942, there was a confrontation between the Jewish Police and the Polish (Blue) Police, who then denounced their Jewish counterparts to the Germans. The Jewish policemen, together with other Czech and Slovak Jews, at least 24 people in total, were then executed as alleged Communists.¹¹

According to a report of the JSS for *Kreis Cholm*, on a June 18 visit, the Jewish population of Rejowiec numbered

2,449 people, including 830 children under the age of 14 and 409 men and 1,210 women over that age. Of these people, 185 men and 223 women were working for the Water Administration Office (Wasserwirtschaftsamt), for which they received full rations and payment in cash. A public kitchen was serving 1,300 people a breakfast (of coffee) and a lunch (of soup) every day—bread was not distributed. There was a division within the Judenrat between local Polish Jews and the recently arrived Slovak members, which was further complicating the administration of the JSS branch in Rejowiec.¹²

At some time in the summer of 1942, there was at least one more major deportation Aktion. The Jews were assembled on the market square and were then marched out of town. According to Ajzensztajn, who dates the Aktion in June 1942, a high-ranking Nazi then approached the column of Jews and ordered that those in possession of red labor cards were to return to Rejowiec, as they were needed laborers.¹³ Büchler, however, cites Slovak survivors who describe similar events taking place on August 9, 1942. About 2,000 (mostly Slovak) Jews were rounded up for deportation, of which some 700 were killed in and around the town. The rest were deported to the Sobibór extermination camp by train. Of these about 100 men and 50 women were selected for the Krychów labor camp on arrival at Sobibór, while the others were gassed.¹⁴ Probably around 300 Jews remained in the Rejowiec ghetto after the Aktion.

A number of Jews from the Rejowiec ghetto worked daily at the Budny estate (aka the Ossoliński Palace), about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside the town. The estate was used by a Remonteamt (horse procurement office) of the Waffen-SS, composed of about 50 to 100 men, commanded by SS-Sturmbannführer Herbert Schönfeldt. Jews were collected every day from the ghetto and escorted to the Budny estate. Other Jews worked in Rejowiec at the distillery or on road construction. The Jews were also tasked to dismantle the synagogue.

In the fall of 1942, a female Jew named Fuhrer was shot by an SS man named Gustav Jeske, also known among the Jews as the “commandant of the Ghetto.” Jeske shot her for leaving the ghetto to obtain food by barter for her sick sister. Jeske was often responsible for overseeing the daily convoy of Jewish workers from the ghetto to the Budny estate. He was succeeded in this position by another SS man, Ostapeter.¹⁵ In the period from the summer of 1942 until the spring of 1943, a number of Jews who had escaped from the Chełm ghetto and other places made their way to the collection ghetto in Rejowiec. The Jews in Rejowiec were scared to let them in, as Jeske sometimes combed the ghetto, looking for strangers to kill.¹⁶ In November 1942, the local JSS officials reported that there were 290 Jews in Rejowiec working at various German labor sites and another 385 were assigned to forced labor camps (presumably outside the town).¹⁷

In the spring of 1943, most of the remaining Jews were working at the Budny estate. At this time, the SS surrounded the Jews and informed them that they would be taken to the Trawniki labor camp. Instead, however, they were rounded

up and sent to the Majdanek concentration camp. The men were separated from the women on the way.¹⁸

In 1972, Gustav Jeske was tried by a German court in Verden for the alleged shooting of two Jews in Rejowiec in 1942. He was acquitted due to insufficient evidence.

Three Czech Jews—Gerda Piesenová (later Steinerová), Lucie Pollaková, and Zuzana Perelesová—are known to have survived from the April 1942 Theresienstadt deportation to Rejowiec.¹⁹

SOURCES Secondary sources regarding the fate of the Jews in Rejowiec during World War II include Gad Zaklikowski, ed., *Rayvitsers in Medinas Isroel* (Tel Aviv, 1958)—a translation by M. Porat is available via jewishgen.org; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 548–550; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 229–231; David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003); Yehoshua Büchler, “The Deportation of Slovakian Jews to the Lublin District of Poland in 1942,” *HGS* 6:2 (1991): 151–166; and Robert Kuwałek, “Die Durchgangsghettos im Distrikt Lublin (u.a. Izbica, Piaski, Rejowiec und Trawniki),” in Bogdan Musial, ed., *“Aktion Reinhard”: Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement, 1941–1944* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004), pp. 197–232.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Rejowiec Jewish community during the war includes AŻIH (e.g., 210/593; 211/294, 898–900; 301/809, 1885, 3622; Ring I/29 [414], I/317 [34], I/811 [769], II/102 [225]); BA-L (B 162/14475); IPN; MA (D.1, 1266, 1288); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH, Ring]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); VHF (e.g., # 12282, 18709, 25879); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Israel Shpayzman, “The Destruction,” trans. M. Porat, from Zaklikowski, *Rayvitsers in Medinas Isroel*, pp. 205–208.

2. AŻIH, 210/593; and 211/899, p. 39, Sprawozdanie, August 31, 1941.

3. Ibid., Ring I/317 [34], as cited in Joseph Kermish, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor!: Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 117–118; AŻIH, 301/1885, testimony of Pola Ajzensztajn, 1946; VHF, # 25879, testimony of Simon Dobner (born 1919), 1997.

4. AŻIH, 301/1885; 211/293, p. 61, notes of a telephone conversation on April 23, 1942; BA-L, B 162/14475 (LG-Ver, 2 Ks 2/68, verdict against Gustav Jeske, December 21, 1972), pp. 3, 17–19.

5. AŻIH, 211/900, pp. 23–25, Judenrat Rejowiec to JSS Kraków, April 25, 1942.

6. Ibid., 211/294, p. 19, Kreishauptmann Cholm, Bescheinigung, April 20, 1942.

7. Kuwałek, “Die Durchgangsghettos,” pp. 208, 216, 232; Büchler, “The Deportation of Slovakian Jews,” p. 156.

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8. AŻIH, 211/294, p. 9, JSS Kreis Cholm report, May 8, 1942.
9. BA-L, B 162/14475, p. 3.
10. Büchler, "The Deportation of Slovakian Jews," p. 158, citing MA, D.1, 1266.
11. Ibid.; AŻIH, 301/1885.
12. AŻIH, 211/294, pp. 49–50, JSS Kreis Cholm to JSS Delegatur in Rejowiec, June 28, 1942.
13. Ibid., 301/1885.
14. Büchler, "The Deportation of Slovakian Jews," p. 158.
15. BA-L, B 162/14475, pp. 8–16.
16. AŻIH, 301/3622, testimony of Chana Falkiewicz, pp. 1–2; VHF, # 12282, testimony of Nettie Adelsberg (born 1925), 1996.
17. AŻIH, 211/900, p. 74, Sprawozdanie, November 4, 1942.
18. Ibid., 301/1885; BA-L, B 162/14475, p. 8.
19. Database of the Terezín Initiative Institute.

ROSSOSZ

Pre-1939: Rossosz, village, Włodawa powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Rossosch, Kreis Biala Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Rossosz, village, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Rossosz lies approximately 23.5 kilometers (14.6 miles) south of Biała Podlaska and almost 95 kilometers (59 miles) by road northeast of Lublin. In 1939, 302 Jews resided there.¹

In September 1939, the first month of the war, Red Army soldiers briefly occupied Rossosz. As a result of the September 28 German-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Demarcation, Soviet forces in the region, including in Rossosz, began evacuating behind the Bug River. On October 7, the last troops crossed the bridge in Sławatycze. In early November, German representatives from the office of the Landkommissariat in Wisznice arrived in Rossosz to establish a local collaborationist civilian administration. The same men returned several days later to register Jewish families. At the end of the registration assembly, the Germans ordered the Holy Ark and Torah in the Bet Midrash desecrated and then destroyed the building. Following the violence, some Jews fled to Soviet-occupied Poland.

In November 1939, German authorities ordered the Rossosz Jews to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Szmul Teperman, its chair, soon moved to Biała Podlaska but regularly traveled to Rossosz to fulfill his obligations. However, in December 1941, Hubert Kühl, the newly appointed Biała Kreishauptmann, ordered the death penalty imposed on Jews found outside their places of registration. Stranded in Biała Podlaska, Teperman resigned.²

By then, about 150 Jews had arrived in Rossosz. Most newcomers were March 1941 deportees from Kraków or voluntary refugees with pre-war ties to Rossosz. By May, 466 Jews, including about 150 expellees, resided in Rossosz.³

In January 1942, I. Rubinsztejn and Menachym Wajntraub, local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) officials, informed

the charity's leaders in Kraków about the existence of a Jewish quarter (*dzielnica żydowska*) in Rossosz. Since the men were responding to an inquiry about the possibilities of using rural villages to train Jews in agriculture, they did not include the date on which the ghetto was established but instead described physical conditions in the ghetto. They reported that the ghetto encompassed 45 pre-war Jewish houses, which were grouped together and straddled the main roadway leading from Biała Podlaska, via Łomazy in the north, and through Rossosz to Wisznice in the south.⁴ As with almost all ghettos in Kreis Biala, the Rossosz ghetto was not fenced. However, the Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto without official permission.⁵

Because Rossosz did not appear on a list of ghettos Kühl submitted in October 1941 to Richard Türk, the head of the Population and Welfare Department (BuF) for Distrikt Lublin, its establishment may have been an unreported local initiative of Wisznice Landkommissar Werner. Believing Jews threatened the security of the vast territory he administered, Werner had instituted a number of anti-Jewish policies without Kühl's knowledge, such as, in January 1942, ordering 287 Jews from six other villages without ghettos consolidated in the Wisznice and Sławatycze ghettos.⁶

The establishment of the Rossosz ghetto ironically enabled native residents to return to their primary pre-war occupations as farmers raising vegetables and potatoes in fenced plots behind their houses. The gardens were some 120 meters (about 394 feet) long by 12 to 20 meters (39 to 66 feet) wide.⁷ Though arable land was included in the spring of 1940 confiscation of Jewish-owned property in Distrikt Lublin, local officials in a specific locality almost always permitted Jews to cultivate pre-war Jewish-owned land located within ghettos even after the designated Kreishauptmann had rejected an identical request, as had occurred in Radzyń.⁸

During the summer of 1941, some 60 young people, between 16 and 24 years old, officially left the Rossosz ghetto to work at nearby farms as paid laborers, mainly as plowmen and herders.⁹ From the summer of 1941, 30 Jews were sent to labor camps organized by the Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion (Water Regulation Authority) in Romaszki and Rossosz (at the school building) on the Muława River.¹⁰ After the Rossosz camp closed for the season in October, four ghetto residents were ordered to report to an unspecified labor camp located beyond the pre-war Rossosz gmina.¹¹

Because most refugees had no source of livelihood, the JSS established a community kitchen in late December 1941, to provide 130 of the most impoverished Jews a daily meal for the nominal cost of 10 groszy. Directed by Wigdor "Wolf" Lejzerzon, the kitchen expanded its operations by mid-February 1942 to serve daily meals to 200 people, including some pre-war residents. Two allotments of potatoes in the winter of 1941–1942, totaling 1,800 kilograms (3,968 pounds), which Kühl allowed the Rossosz JSS to purchase from cheaper government stores, were sufficient to prepare meals through late February. For the remainder of the winter, the kitchen depended on the benevolence of local Jews for its supplies.¹²

Unsanitary conditions from overcrowding in the ghetto were exacerbated by Landkommissar Werner's June 1941 decision to suspend soap rations to Jews.¹³ In 1941, 52 Jews in Rossosz contracted typhoid (enteric) fever; 68 developed typhus. A second typhus outbreak in January 1942 infected 35 people by March.¹⁴

On March 3, 1942, Werner ordered the confiscation of records and correspondence of the Jewish Council and the JSS in Rossosz.¹⁵ On April 23 and 25, representatives from the Wisznice Arbeitsamt, accompanied by Gendarmes from the Wisznice and Sławatycze posts, arrived to order all male Jews between 15 and 60 years old immediately transferred to labor camps located near Terespol.¹⁶ The expellees likely were sent to one of the two Luftwaffe camps just established for airport expansion projects in Małaszewicze Duże and Kobylany and to a Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion camp located in Terespol.

The deportation left just 10 adult men in the Rossosz ghetto and reduced its overall population to about 200.¹⁷ On May 13, Kreis-level JSS leaders appealed to Kühl to release Wajntraub, Lejzerzon, and 18-year-old Kisiel Żelazo, three Rossosz JSS officials swept up in the labor camp expulsion.¹⁸ By early June, the men had returned to Rossosz.

On June 13, 1942, almost all the remaining Jews in Rossosz were expelled to the ghetto in Łomazy. The expulsion was part of an area-wide deportation overseen by Gendarmes from the Wisznice and Sławatycze posts and ordered by the Landkommissar of Wisznice. A telegram, sent on June 14 by the Łomazy JSS delegation to leaders of the charity in Kraków, indicates that expellees from Rossosz, Sławatycze, and the joined communities of Podedwórze and Opole (aka Podedwórze-Opole) had arrived almost simultaneously in Łomazy.¹⁹ On August 17 or 18, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 ordered the Jews in Łomazy, including the Rossosz, Podedwórze-Opole, and Sławatycze deportees, to assemble at the school yard. Marched from there to several collection points closer to the Hały Woods, the Jews were executed in small groups in two predug mass graves by Ukrainian SS auxiliaries and the policemen.²⁰

In early July, a small number of Jews left behind in Rossosz's remnant ghetto appear to have been threatened with consolidation into a larger ghetto if they failed to abide by a directive Kühl had issued in March 1942 for Jewish communities to establish pharmacies, isolation facilities, and infirmaries to treat those sick with infectious diseases. The JSS leadership appointed Żelazo the head of a pharmacy and then pleaded with JSS officials in Kraków to send a list of medicines, warning "unfortunate consequences" would befall the Jews if they could not establish medical-care facilities in Rossosz. On July 17, a JSS official in Kraków explained he could not legally send medicines before receiving proof of Żelazo's pharmacy qualifications.²¹

The Rossosz ghetto was liquidated between September 26 and 29, 1942, when its inmates were transferred to the ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski. Postwar Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation for Ro-

ssosz indicates Gendarmes from the Wisznice post oversaw the expulsion. The documentation describes Gendarmes Giering (Gering), Messal, and Pudel shooting dead five Jews, including Moszko Gimelfarb (Gimerfarb) and his son Szulim, in the field behind the Gimelfarb house, also subsequently the victims' burial place.²² Members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 undoubtedly played an important role in the larger four-day expulsion Aktion, during which all Jews still in the Kreis, but not confined to labor camps, were marched to the Terespol-to-Międzyrzec road and escorted from there to the collection ghetto in Międzyrzec.²³

On October 6 and 9, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 cleared the Międzyrzec ghetto. The policemen marched the ghetto inmates, including the Rossosz deportees, to the railway station and forced them onto railway cars destined for the Treblinka extermination facility. In February 1944, the SS executed the surviving prisoners at the Małaszewicze camp, including hundreds of Czech and Slovak Jews subsequently imprisoned there. In May, the SS shot the approximately 850 inmates of the Kobylany camp. The latter victims were murdered in two mass graves located by the Terespol-to-Międzyrzec road in Kobylany.²⁴

There are no known survivors of the Rossosz ghetto.

SOURCES Almost all secondary sources mentioning the Rossosz Jewish community during World War II appear to base their accounts on the absence of an entry for a ghetto in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), and therefore conclude no ghetto existed in Rossosz. Here, see among others the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 547–548; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 232–233.

The two-page description of Jewish life in Rossosz, including the mention of the open ghetto, which served as the basis for the community's inclusion here, is located at USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/906, p. 57 (one leaf). Coverage of some of the more important issues raised in the entry is elucidated more clearly in the second JSS file for the Jewish community of Piszczac, 211/806, pp. 7, 21, and p. 48, respectively, for Kreishauptmann Kühl's March 1942 orders on medical facilities and on the Jewish labor camp in Małaszewicze, provisioned by the Piszczac Jewish community.

Kühl's discovery of Werner's January 1942 transfer of Jews to Wisznice and Sławatycze and a stenographic record of the Kreishauptmann's September 26, 1942, telephone directive naming the Międzyrzec ghetto as the collection ghetto for Jews still remaining in Kreis Biała Podlaska and describing the deportation route appears in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHwP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 5–7, 57–58, respectively.

Additional archival documentation pertaining to the Rossosz Jewish community during World War II can be found in APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/598, 211 [201, p. 87; 206,

pp. 38–38a, 63–65, 70, 75; 207, pp. 7, 48–49; 208, pp. 17, 67, 78–81; 209, pp. 2, 5–6, 47; 665, p. 52; 906]; IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 284/432–433); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 4 (12/27–28, 32, 47–48) and reel 15 (49/7–8)]); and YVA.

Documentation is insufficient to determine if ghettos existed for several communities mentioned in the entry. Because no Jews from Podedwórze-Opole are believed to have survived under the German occupation, knowledge of Jewish life there comes mainly from JSS records. The documentation indicates the 14 extended Jewish families (126 people) in Podedwórze-Opole were overwhelmed by the arrival in March 1941 of 530 to 600 Jewish deportees. The local Jews accommodated as many as 65 expellees in their houses and still other deportees in their barns and cowsheds. However, the Podedwórze-Opole JSS correspondence, which notes the Jewish population had fallen to 383 by October 1941, never mentions the existence or absence of a ghetto. Here, see, for example, USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/134, pp. 46, 48, 211/811, with the Łomazy deportation covered in 211/209, pp. 34, 37, 45, 49, 51, 53, but no precise figure of expellees provided.

In Terespol, another community in which no Jews are believed to have survived under the German occupation, an April 1940 list of Jewish inhabitants indicates that as about 1,500 Jews departed voluntarily for Soviet-occupied Poland or were forced across the border in a January 1940 Aktion in which 29 perished, the 289 Jews remaining in Terespol were concentrated together in a few houses located close to each other but on a handful of noncontiguous streets. Here, see USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/687, pp. 1–10, and p. 22, for the April 1942 JSS ghetto questionnaire, mistakenly placed in the same file, which reports that neither an open nor a closed ghetto existed in Terespol. The JSS file for Terespol, at USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/1028, p. 66, suggests 78 Terespol Jews were transferred to labor camps in August, a month before the community was sent to the Międzyrzec collection ghetto.

Laura Crago

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/906, p. 2.
2. Ibid., pp. 48–49, 55, 64.
3. Ibid., 211/906, p. 2.
4. Ibid., p. 57.
5. Ibid.
6. Kermisz, *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 4.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/906, p. 57.
8. Ibid., 211/890, p. 62.
9. Ibid., 211/906, p. 57.
10. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/7–8.
11. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/906, pp. 8, 17, 21, 39.
12. Ibid., pp. 51, 60, 63; and 211/207, p. 42.
13. Ibid., 211/906, p. 8.
14. Ibid., p. 62.
15. Ibid., 211/208, p. 17.
16. Ibid., 211/906, p. 67.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 69; 211/208, p. 78; 211/209, pp. 2, 5–6.
19. Ibid., 211/665, p. 52.

20. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 4, 12/32.

21. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/906, pp. 71–75.

22. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 4, 12/47.

23. Kermisz, *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 57–58.

24. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/4–5.

RYKI

Pre-1939: Ryki (Yiddish: Riki), village, Garwolin powiat, Warsaw województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Pularwy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: town, Ryki powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Ryki lies 64 kilometers (40 miles) northwest of Lublin, on the main railway line to Warsaw. Its pre-war 1939 population of 4,500 included 3,000 Jews.

On September 10 and 12, 1939, Luftwaffe bombardment killed 500 Jews, destroyed 169 Jewish-owned houses, and left 169 Jewish families (869 people) homeless. Jews fleeing greater devastation in Kurów and Garwolin nonetheless settled in Ryki.¹

Upon occupying Ryki on September 17, 1939, the Wehrmacht established a small military garrison (Stadtkommandantur).² Captain Falke, its commander, imposed forced labor quotas on the Jews. Some 400 men were marched to Dęblin to unload armaments from Polish military warehouses. Others cleared rubble in Ryki. Several Jews perished during German searches for valuables; Jewish shops and homes were vandalized. On Yom Kippur (September 23), German soldiers humiliated Jews in the synagogue. Some Poles robbed Jews at night, despite a curfew from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.³

After the military's departure, a Sonderdienst unit, composed of ethnic Germans and some Ukrainians, and a unit of Polish (Blue) Police, recruited mainly from local pre-war Polish policemen, exercised authority in Ryki. Both were subordinated to the Gendarmerie post in Dęblin. Landwirtschaftskommissar Wagner, supervisor of agricultural estates around Ryki, also implemented anti-Jewish policies, initially demanding the Jews furnish his new residence, a palace in Ułęż.⁴

In January 1940, authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a 10-member Jewish police force.⁵ Shmuel Gutwajder, the first council chair, ameliorated the plight of Ryki Jews who had to report to labor camps. That summer, he negotiated a reduction from 200 to 45 men in an SS-imposed quota for the labor camp in Bełżec. On an official visit there, he secured the Ryki prisoners' release.⁶ Gutwajder died of a heart attack in early May 1942. Mojsze Wajsfisz succeeded him.

Survivors date the Ryki ghetto's establishment to early 1941, with January or February the most frequently cited months.⁷ Barbara Kwiatkowska, a historian of Ryki, believes the ghetto was established in March. The order probably came about because of the decision to settle 889 Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) from Stalag II B Hammerstein in Ryki; nearly half of them arrived in March.⁸ The quartering of Hungarian troops

in Ryki, in preparation for the German invasion of the Soviet Union, also may have played a role.

The ghetto was located in the most devastated part of Ryki: the old Jewish neighborhood surrounding the main square. Its borders stretched from 11 Listopad Street to before the Buks Reservoir and included Kanał, Kapitulna, and Łuków Streets. Initially, it was not fenced. However, Jews were forbidden, on penalty of death, from leaving its borders without permission or being on its streets after curfew. Several were shot for violating the orders.⁹

By the spring of 1941, about 370 Jews left the ghetto daily to fulfill forced labor quotas: 100 for projects organized by the Ryki administration, 90 for agricultural labor on Wagner's estate, 30 at the train station to load timber for a private German lumber company, and 150 for Organisation Todt (OT) projects. Another 300 to 500 men were interned weekly in local labor camps: 200 to 300 at a camp established by the Schalinger Company just outside Ryki; and 100 to 200 from late June 1941 at a Wehrmacht camp organized at an armaments depot in Stawy. Another 100 men were rotated monthly through an SS camp established in Janiszów (pre-war Janów Lubelski powiat), on the Wisła River, for flood-control projects.¹⁰ Because of the labor camp drafts, the ghetto population in late September 1941 stood at 2,920.¹¹

Gendarmes from Dęblin and Gestapo officials from Puławy entered the ghetto to terrorize and rob the Jewish population. Accompanied by the Gendarmes, Wagner ordered the Jewish Council to surrender contributions and oversaw the executions of Jews for refusing to turn over goods, including leather. Two *shochtim* were executed for practicing kosher slaughter.¹²

The extensive fire damage and the ghetto's small size required about 40 families to live together in each of its habitable structures. The resulting poor sanitation led to a typhus epidemic in April 1941. The Judenrat ordered the Bet Midrash transformed into a 24-bed medical clinic (officially a quarantine facility), directed by Dr. Rafał Kestenbaum. At least 50 people perished.¹³ In August, a trachoma outbreak reached epidemic proportions.¹⁴

Quarantine orders prevented the resettlement of additional refugees in the ghetto. From May 1941, the Ryki Jewish Council was required to pay to transport newly arrived refugees to other towns and villages.¹⁵

Tighter quarantine procedures likely included fencing the ghetto. On July 28, 1941, Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) leaders in Ryki reported that because of the epidemic, officials temporarily had "close[d] the Jewish quarter a few weeks prior" and were now threatening to close it off permanently.¹⁶ The barbed-wire fence, a quarantine measure, was erected around the three sides of the ghetto bordering the non-Jewish residential area. The side of the ghetto bordering the reservoir initially was not fenced. The ghetto's gate was guarded externally by members of the Sonderdienst.

In an unsuccessful bid to suspend the closure orders, the JSS and Judenrat stopped food assistance to the indigent in August and September 1941 and instead channeled its charitable resources into purchasing medicines. The Judenrat ap-

pealed to wealthier Jews to purchase talons, which poorer Jews could exchange for a bowl of soup and a small piece of bread at one of the private restaurants in the ghetto.¹⁷ The aid was too little; survivors all remember hunger as an endemic problem of ghetto life.

From early 1942, the poor material conditions and rumors of the community's impending evacuation provoked many to flee to the ghetto in Żelechów. To secure the fugitives' return, the Sonderdienst began taking their family members as hostages.¹⁸ One survivor suspects the new Jewish Council chair was arrested and executed on May 6, 1942, for sending his family to Żelechów. Others believe he was killed to secure the community's compliance to the impending ghetto liquidation orders.¹⁹

The next day, on May 7, 1942, at 5:00 A.M., Gendarmes from Dęblin, representatives from the Puławy Kreishauptmann's office, including Bartel, head of its criminal division, and Wagner arrived to oversee the liquidation of the ghetto. Jakow Mandelbaum remembers Obersturmführer Grosser, the head of the Puławy Gestapo, joining Bartel and Wagner to supervise the expulsion of the Ryki Jewish community. Symcha Wajnberg also recalled substantial SD participation. Local police forces—including the Sonderdienst and Polish (Blue) Police—assisted in clearing the ghetto.²⁰

The Germans ordered the Jews to assemble on the market square and then, on pain of death, to surrender their watches, rings, and gold and silver items. Some were beaten or shot for refusing to comply.²¹ About 30 to 70 men had to remain behind to work for Schalinger. After the elderly and small children were loaded onto peasant wagons, the remaining Jews were ordered into marching formation behind the wagons. During the 13-kilometer (8-mile) trip to Dęblin, about 150 stragglers (80 men, 50 women, and 20 children) were shot dead.

At the train station, Arbeitsamt officials from Dęblin held back another 200 mostly young, male Jews for labor at a local Luftwaffe camp, located at the airport. The rest of the Ryki Jewish community, some 1,500 to 2,466 people, were ordered onto trains destined for the Sobibór extermination camp. Some Ryki Jews assigned to Stawy, but not interned there, had evaded the deportation, because they had left for work before the Germans arrived to liquidate the ghetto. On May 8, in Stawy, the SS retained a group of men for labor and sent the remaining Jews to their deaths at Sobibór.²² In late May 1942, the 30 to 60 Jews working for Schalinger were transferred to the Stawy camp. Upon the liquidation of the Żelechów ghetto in September 1942, some Ryki Jews fled to Dęblin and entered the camps there.

On July 22, 1944, the day the Red Army liberated Lublin, the Jewish inmates of the Luftwaffe camp in Dęblin, including a number of former Stawy inmates consolidated there, were evacuated to labor camps in Częstochowa. Some 50 to 70 Ryki Jews survived the war.

SOURCES Some APL documentation has appeared in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen*

während des zweiten Weltkrieges (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 438.

Published survivor testimonies can be found in the yizkor book, Shimon Kants, ed., *Yisker-bukh tsum fareybikn dem ondenk fun der khorev-gevorner yidisber kebile Ryki* (Israel: Irgun Yotz'e Ryki, 1973). The Jakob Handshtok contribution appears in English translation as Jakov Handshtok, "In the Tracks of the Jewish Life That Disappeared," in Jack Kugelmass and Jonathan Boyarin, eds., *From a Ruined Garden: The Memorial Books of Polish Jewry*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press and USHMM, 1998), pp. 262–266. An almost complete Polish translation of the Holocaust sections of the yizkor book, by Andrzej Cieśla, is available at jewishgen.org. Based on an earlier Czech translation by Judith Dunayevsky and Michael Dunayevsky, it also served as the basis for the English-language translation of the B. Brankacz (or Bronkacz) yizkor book contribution on JewishGen. Interviews with Ryki survivor Szlomo Judensznajder (Solly Irving) appear in Martin Gilbert, *The Boys: Triumph over Adversity* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1996).

Secondary accounts include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 550–553, in English and Polish translations on JewishGen, with a second English translation in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 233–236; and Barbara Kwiatkowska et al., eds., *Historia—kultura—tradycje: Żydzi w Rykach* (Ryki: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Ryk, 2006), pp. 31–37, with an English translation available at the Wirtualny Sztetl, on the Web site of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, www.sztetl.org.pl.

The Jewish POWs resettled in Ryki and Biała Podlaska from Stalag II B Hammerstein are discussed by Janina Kiełboń in *Migracje ludności w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939–1944* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1995) and "Deportacja Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939–1943)," in Dariusz Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 161–175, with the number of Jewish prisoners drawn from German documentation at APL; *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945. Województwo lubelskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP and IPN, 1985), pp. 218–221, outlines the scope of anti-Jewish violence during the expulsion to Dęblin. Though Tatiana Berenstein reports more than 2,000 Slovak Jews arrived in the Ryki ghetto on May 15, 1942, in "Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 79, postwar German documentation, cited by Kiełboń above, and survivors' testimonies note the 2,008 expellees, from Prešov, arrived in two transports on May 13–14 in Dęblin and were transferred to labor camps in Dęblin and Stawy. Here, see, among others, AŻIH, 301/1443, testimony of Maria Abramowicz-Rozencweig, p. 2, and the testimonies from Ryki survivors, cited in the notes below.

Documentation about the fate of the Ryki Jewish community during World War II can be found in the following archives: APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., 210/608, 211/916, 301/1298); BA-L (B 162/5939); IPN; IPN-Lu (e.g., 57/09/Zn); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154

[AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 12, 41/284]); VHF (# 1434, 3910, 23790, 30406, 43083); and YVA. Contemporary press coverage appears in "Ryki (powiat puławski)," *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 4, 1941, no. 10, p. 7, and in the May 29, 1942, edition of the publication known as the *Bulletin* (Polish *Biuletyn*) of Oneg Shabat, with this particular edition, titled *Di megile fun payn un oysrotung*, available at AŻIH and USHMM, on C-D, in Ring I/1062/1 (1381).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), AJDC, 210/608, pp. 1, 3, 7–8, 20–27.
2. BA-L, B162/5939, p. 847 (deposition, Rafał Kestenbaum).
3. Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, pp. 411–412, 436 (testimonies, respectively, Jakow Mandelbaum, B. Brankacz).
4. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 847–849, 835–836, 875–876 (depositions, Kestenbaum, Jakow Mandelbaum, Jeremiahu Handshtok, respectively).
5. *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 4, 1941, p. 7.
6. Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, pp. 413–414 (Mandelbaum).
7. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 891 (deposition, Symcha Wajnberg), 847, 836.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), ŻSS, 211/916, p. 13.
9. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 836, 891.
10. See, among others, all testimonies from Ryki survivors at BA-L, B 162/5939; Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, pp. 419–422, 414–415 (testimonies, Jakob Handshtok and Mandelbaum, respectively); *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 4, 1941; USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/916, pp. 1–6; AŻIH, 301/1298, testimony of Hersz Suchodolski, p. 1.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/916, p. 57.
12. Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, p. 438 (Brankacz); BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 848–849, 876, 831–832 (deposition, Dow Blizinski).
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/916, pp. 23–24, 28–32, 37–38.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–52.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 75.
18. Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, pp. 430–431 (Mosze Openhajm testimony).
19. Compare in *ibid.*, pp. 438–439, 415 (Brankacz and Mandelbaum, respectively).
20. BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 837, 892–893.
21. Kants, *Yisker-bukh Ryki*, p. 416 (Mandelbaum).
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 434–435 (testimony, B. Lajtman); BA-L, B 162/5939, pp. 838–839 (Mandelbaum).

SŁAWATYCZE

Pre-1939: Sławatycze (Yiddish: Slavatitch), town, Włodawa powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Sławatycze, Kreis Biała Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Sławatycze, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Sławatycze, now located on the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus, lies on the Bug River, some 111 kilometers (69 miles) by road northeast of Lublin. In August 1939, some 1,600 Jews resided there.¹

The Germans occupied Sławatycze on September 21–22, 1939, but soon abandoned it to Soviet occupation. Soviet forces arrived before September 25. With the demarcation, on September 28, of the Soviet-occupation zone as east of the Bug River, the Red Army began evacuating troops through Sławatycze, leaving the settlement last, on October 7. Many Jews followed the soldiers. On October 5–9, a Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Sławatycze.

German authorities established a local Polish collaborationist administration. It was subordinated to the Landkommissariat of Wisznice, led, from at least late 1941, by a German surnamed Klemmer. German Gendarmerie and Border Police posts were established. The Gendarmerie post was subordinated to its sister post in Wisznice. A Sonderdienst force, composed mainly of local Ukrainians, and a unit of auxiliary Polish (Blue) Police assisted the Gendarmes. In November 1939, the Sławatycze Jews were ordered to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat). On December 1, the Jews were required to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David.

Jewish refugees, hoping to cross into Soviet-occupied territory, flooded Sławatycze initially. In November 1939, the town also served as a place of resettlement for Jewish expellees from Lubartów and Radzyń Podlaski, towns in which the only authorized Jewish residents were craftsmen and their families. By February 1940, 1,168 Jewish newcomers had arrived in Sławatycze. They included 457 Radzyń expellees, 185 Lubartów deportees, expellees from Puławy, and some 500 unregistered refugees.²

In February 1940, a German unit executed 41 to 50 Jews, including 3 Radzyń expellees. Radzyń native Yehoshua Rosenkrantz believes the victims were killed because the Border Police suspected them of smuggling goods and people across the Bug River. Henry Gitelman, a Sławatycze native, reported that the executions targeted the most prominent Sławatycze Jews, including his grandfather and uncle.³

The killings and the Radzyn Kreishauptmann's spring 1940 decision to permit expellees to return home resulted in the refugees' mass departure. By April 1940, only 192 remained. In May 1941, some 50 Jewish deportees from Kraków (expelled first to Terespol and Kodeń) were resettled in Sławatycze. By the end of 1941, the Jewish population stood at 1,326.⁴

Sources give differing dates for the establishment of the ghetto in Sławatycze. Survivor Chaim Lerer asserts the Germans established a ghetto a few months after occupying Sławatycze.⁵ Henoch Lisak (Henryk Piekarski) recalls that by the summer of 1941 most Jews already were living on one or two streets located along the Bug River.⁶ However, the residential concentration and orders from November and December imposing the death penalty on Jews found without permission outside their places of registration were insufficient reason for Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann Herbert Kühl to include Sławatycze on a list of ghettos he compiled in

December. Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) researchers, led by Czesław Pilichowski, report the ghetto was created in January 1942. They likely chose the date because Wisznice Landkommissar Klemmer that month ordered about 150 Jews from nearby Hanna, Dołhobrody, and Holeszów villages expelled to Sławatycze.⁷ Klemmer, moreover, explained to Kühl that he had ordered the expulsions to Sławatycze (and Wisznice) in part because his experience with a closed ghetto in Wisznice had demonstrated that Jews worked more efficiently when confined to a Jewish quarter.⁸ Others believe the ghetto was established in mid-June 1942.

Overcrowding posed problems from 1941 on, as 14 or 15 people lived in a single house, with most sleeping 4 or 5 per bed.⁹ Lisak, a summer 1941 arrival from the Warsaw ghetto, mentioned that the tile maker with whom he lived held a concession to produce and sell finished goods but found his work impeded by weather conditions at the river bank and directives limiting Jews' access to heating fuel and raw materials. A Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) report, from July 1941, notes 24 tailors and shoemakers held such concessions. Another 215 Jews were conscripted for forced labor.¹⁰ Because of food shortages, Lisak found work as an agricultural laborer in a nearby village. On a Sunday visit, he learned a local ethnic German had falsely denounced a large group of Jews, including the tile maker and his wife for stealing. The Jews were executed, perhaps behind the public school, where Arië Flaksberg remembers the police shooting 45 to 50 Jews in November or December 1941.

Flaksberg describes an SS officer, an ethnic German from Poznań, arriving on May 3 or 4, 1942, to order young men immediately interned at a nearby labor camp. Among the conscripts were his two older brothers. JSS records indicate the labor camp roundups, which began in Sławatycze in late April and continued through mid-May, enveloped even the organization's officers, individuals officially exempt from forced labor conscription.¹¹

In June 1942, an Aktion reduced the size of the Jewish community. Scholars associated with the museum established after the war on the site of the Sobibór extermination camp maintain that German records document the arrival that month of a transport of some 1,000 Sławatycze Jews. The deportation probably occurred between June 11 and 14, the dates on which JSS leaders reported a "resettlement" Aktion had impacted the entire Kreis, including the town of Biała Podlaska proper, from whence, on June 11, more than 3,000 Jews went to Sobibór.¹²

Two prominent Polish-Jewish historians reject the claim of a Sobibór deportation. The first, Tatiana Berenstein, examined JSS records and concluded a small group of Sławatycze Jews was expelled to Łomazy on June 13, 1942. A June 14 telegram from Łomazy records JSS leaders requesting immediate assistance for deportees (about 650 in number) who just arrived from Sławatycze, Rossosz, and Podedwórze-Opole which indicates some part of the community was expelled there.¹³ The second historian, Sławatycze native Michał Grynberg, after interviewing Jewish survivors and Polish-Christian eyewitnesses,

concluded the June Aktion had devolved into a mass killing, as local Polish and Ukrainian police held the Jews captive at the market square, stripped them of valuables, selected victims for execution, and offered, for enormous sums, to release those slated for death. The Germans overseeing the Aktion killed hundreds of victims at the Jewish cemetery. Hundreds more were shot dead fleeing the roundup or during the three-day search for those in hiding. Some 600 to 1,000 Jews perished during the violence.

A remnant ghetto was established on Pielwaki [sic] Street for those held back from execution. The unfenced ghetto was heavily guarded day and night. Because the three interpretations of the June Aktion at present are mutually exclusive, the overall ghetto population is difficult to ascertain. It stood somewhere between 300 and 1,200.

On August 17 or 18, 1942, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 shot almost all the 2,187 Jewish inhabitants of Łomazy, including the Sławatycze expellees.

On September 26, 1942, Kühl informed civilian authorities that all Jews in Kreis Biała Podlaska not interned in labor camps would be brought to the ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski some time between September 25 and 29.¹⁴ Grynberg and Krzysztof Gruszkowski describe the local Polish (Blue) Police overseeing the Sławatycze expulsion. Gendarmes from the Sławatycze and Wisznice posts, and members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, temporarily stationed in Wisznice, and a number of other nearby localities to provide manpower during the expulsions, likely played some role. At the market square, the main assembly point, women and children were ordered onto peasant carts. Likely to reduce escape attempts along the 77-kilometer (48-mile) route, the men were compelled to walk barefoot to Międzyrzec. Those who fell behind along the way were shot dead. Once in Międzyrzec, the surviving Jews were imprisoned at the synagogue. On October 6–9, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, SS Ukrainian auxiliaries from Trawniki, and members of the SS office in Radzyń marched the prisoners to the railway station and forced them onto wagons destined for the Treblinka extermination camp. The deportees were gassed on arrival.

Though many Jews evaded deportation, most fugitives were rounded up and executed in the months following the ghetto's liquidation. Twelve-year-old Philip Garen is the only person from a group of forest fugitives to have survived German-ordered searches of the forest and the denunciations of the local population. A few local Poles assisted the fugitives. Lisak, working outside the ghetto at the time of the expulsion, was sheltered first by his Polish employers and then by the Artecki family in Piszczac. Just outside of Sławatycze, Anna and Dominik Parczewski sheltered Wewe (Wewel) Grynszpan (Greenspan) and his son Chaim-Joszke (later, Henry). Marianna and Józef Krzymowski, from Liszna, hid Chaja Szumacher. Lerer fled east and made his way to Soviet forces.

Less than 10 former residents of the Sławatycze ghetto survived the war. Counted among them is Wewe Grynszpan, whom unknown Polish assailants murdered in Sławatycze less than a year after the July 1944 liberation.

SOURCES Secondary sources with coverage of the history of the Sławatycze Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 355–356; its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 256–257; Michał Grynberg, *Sławatycze, Domu mój: O życiu i zagładzie Żydów w Sławatyczach: Losy autora* (Warsaw: KiW, 2000), which is part history and part memoir and serves as the basis for Krzysztof Gruszkowski, “Sławatycki okręg bóżniczy,” on the Sławatycze homepage on the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by the Museum of Polish Jews, and Krzysztof Bielawski, “Sławatycze,” on the Cmentarze Żydowskie w Polsce (Jewish cemeteries in Poland) Web site, at www.kir.kuty.xip.pl/slawatycze.htm. At present, the last source is the only widely available English-language summary of Grynberg's work.

Also important for understanding historians' interpretations and the context of events in Sławatycze are Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 456; Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 40, 59; and Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

A number of memoirs are available from survivors, including Henry Gitelman, “Drenched in the Dew of Childhood, a Shtetl Called Sławatycze,” available on the Sławatycze homepage of the Wirtualny Sztetl; Michał Grynberg testimony, in Marian Turski, ed., *Losy żydowskie: Świadectwo żywych*, vol. 1 (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Stowarzyszenia Żydów Komбатantów i Poszkodowanych w II Wojnie Światowej, 1996), pp. 231–235; “Henoch Rafael Lisak,” in Wiktoria Śliwowska, ed., *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak*, trans. Julian Bussgang and Fay Bussgang (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 99–104; and the reminiscences in speeches given during the 2008 rededication of the Sławatycze Jewish cemetery, available in English on the Sławatycze Landsmanschaft Web site, www.slawatycze.org. Gitelman is the author of an unpublished yizkor book, “The Personal Memoirs of Descendants of Sławatycze,” and is completing an English translation of Grynberg's book. Coverage of the first months of the German occupation is provided in the accounts of survivors Yehoshua Rosencrantz and Sarah Bashe Voyazsher (Wojazer) in the Radzyń yizkor book, Yitshak Zigelman, *Sefer Radzin* (Tel Aviv: Va'ad yots'e Radzin (Podlaski) be-Yisrael, 1957), pp. 227–244 and 245–248, respectively. The book's Holocaust sections are available in English translation on jewishgen.org.

Published German documentation can be found in Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHwP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 5–7, 57–58.

Archival documentation for the Jewish community of Sławatycze includes APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/637; 211 [204, pp. 8, 32–33; 205, p. 19; 206, pp. 4, 38, 38a; 207, p. 51; 208, pp. 11, 78, 80–81; 209, pp. 3, 5–6, 37, 64; 665, p. 52], 301 [2327]); FVA

(HVT-1638); IPN-Lu (i.e., 362/67/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); VHF (e.g., # 3894, 3924, 20493, 33524, 46024); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/970, p. 58.
2. AŻIH, 301/2327, testimony of Nachum Perelman (Perlman), p. 2; USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/637, pp. 2, 8, 33.
3. Zigelman, *Sefer Radzin*, pp. 231–232; Gitelman, “Drenched,” p. 38.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/970, pp. 31, 33, 61.
5. VHF, # 3924, testimony of Chaim Lerer.
6. Ibid., # 20493, testimony of Henryk Piekarski.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/970, p. 69.
8. Kermisz, *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 5–7.
9. VHF, # 33524, testimony of Arië Flaksberg.
10. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/970, p. 44.
11. Ibid., 211/208, pp. 78, 80–81; 211/209, pp. 3, 5–6.
12. Ibid., 211/209, p. 17.
13. Ibid., 211/665, p. 52.
14. Kermisz, *Dokumenty*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 57–58.

SZCZEBRZESZYN

Pre-1939: Szczebreszyn (Yiddish: Shebreshin), town, Zamość powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: initially Kreis Zamosc then Kreis Bilgoraj, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Zamość powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Szczebreszyn lies 85 kilometers (53 miles) south-southeast of Lublin. In August 1939, its 7,496 inhabitants included about 3,200 Jews.

German forces occupied Szczebreszyn from September 13–26, 1939, before relinquishing it to Soviet occupation. After a border renegotiation returned Szczebreszyn to Germany's sphere of influence, 500 to 800 Jews joined the October 5–6 Soviet military evacuation. On October 8, the Germans reoccupied Szczebreszyn.

On October 14, 1939, Major von Bassewitz-Behr, military commander of Szczebreszyn for 10 days, appointed a local collaborationist administration. He named 60 Poles members of an auxiliary police force (Hilfspolizei). A civilian Gendarmerie post was established shortly before Szczebreszyn's transfer on March 16, 1940, from Kreis Zamosc to Kreis Bilgoraj.

On November 15, 1939, German soldiers torched the synagogue and set Jewish residences afire. Blamed for the arson attacks, the Jews were fined 20,000 złoty.

A council of Jewish elders, established during the fires, was transformed into a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in April 1940. Cudyk Mejler became its chair. The Jewish Council raised “contributions” demanded by the authorities and organized forced labor conscription. From the spring of 1940, it ordered more than 500 men to labor camps, including some 300 to Bełżec in mid-August.



Luftwaffe troops publicly humiliate a group of elderly, religious Jews in Szczebreszyn, n.d.

USHMM WS #18828, COURTESY OF IPN

Some 300 local Jews displaced by war devastation in Fram-pol (149 people), Biłgoraj, and Janów (Lubelski) moved to Szczebreszyn. In December 1939, 210 expellees arrived from Włocławek (180) and Łódź (30). On January 15, 1940, 126 Włocławek men, imprisoned in Zamość, were expelled to Szczebreszyn. By September, 2,800 Jews, including 400 refugees and deportees, were residing in Szczebreszyn.¹

From late August 1940, a ghetto gradually emerged in the so-called Zatylny neighborhood. It began at the rear cellar apartments of the buildings fronting the market square on Zamość Street and stretched back to Targowa Street and the Wieprz River.

The need to house 1,000 Polish-Christian Warthegau deportees from Gostynin expelled to Szczebreszyn in late July 1940 likely sparked the first consolidation of Jews in the future ghetto. On August 22, Jews were expelled from front-facing apartments on Zamość Street. On August 29, Jewish businesses were auctioned. As Mejler explained to American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) officials in Warsaw in September, while most Jewish men were interned in labor camps, authorities had expropriated their businesses, ordered their families to move to residences on rear streets, and permitted the new Polish business owners to take over the evicted Jews' homes.²

Halina Witting, a Polish-Christian expellee from Poznań, recalls the ghetto was established after she arrived in Szczebreszyn in the winter of 1940–1941. The Kawerszbok family, required to report to the ghetto, offered Witting their fabric store, 1 of 35 Jewish shops still open, in exchange for promises of material assistance.³ The timing suggests preparations for the German invasion of the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941), and the garrisoning of Luftwaffe troops in Szczebreszyn on April 3 may have contributed to the ghetto's formation. The Polish physician Zygmunt Klukowski, director of the Szczebreszyn hospital, first used the word ghetto (*dzielnicza żydowska*) in his diary on July 8, noting a German airman had shot dead a 21-year-old Jewish woman in the ghetto. Before Witting's arrest (for underground activities)

in the summer of 1941, a wall was erected on one side of the ghetto.

Required in September 1941 to report on ghettos in Kreis Bilgoraj, Kreishauptmann Werner Ansel excluded Szczepieszyn from the list. Survivor Dworja Flajszer mentions a small number of Jews continued to live outside the ghetto mainly on Zielona Street and in a few buildings fronting the square by the church.⁴ These Jews included families of medical personnel (such as dentists Natan Bronsztein and his wife) and some of the 109 Jewish craftsmen permitted to operate 94 workshops to provide services to the non-Jewish population.⁵

From October 1940, several hundred Jews labored for the Luftwaffe at airfield construction sites in Klemensów and Mokre, earning 3 to 4 złoty a day. Determined to finish the projects, the Luftwaffe from May 1941 conscripted daily from the Szczepieszyn, Sułów, and Radechnica gminy some 4,000 Jews (and Christians) at Klemensów. During the summer, Szczepieszyn Jews were interned at a Water Regulation Authority (Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion) camp in Bortatycze.

Barracks were erected in the ghetto for the homeless. Poor sanitation contributed to typhus epidemics in October 1941 and January 1942. Permitted to leave the ghetto during the day, the Jews had relatively ready access to food.⁶ From October 1941, when Jews throughout the Generalgouvernement were subject to the death penalty for leaving their places of residence, villagers arrived to barter with the Jews.

Witting remembered the Jews permitting Poles wanted by German authorities to hide in ghetto bunkers. By the spring of 1942, Klukowski noted Poles cultivated relationships with Jews mainly for material gain. On March 25, he reported villagers came to Szczepieszyn to sell food specifically to Jews, because the restrictions on Jewish movement meant they would pay exorbitant prices. In April, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization provided a daily meal to 340 impoverished at a community kitchen.⁷

Anti-Jewish violence intensified from late December 1941. By February 18, 1942, Jews had been killed for refusing to surrender furs, leaving town, not wearing armbands, and smuggling livestock into the ghetto. On April 8, paid informants (probably Polish railway men) confirmed rumors circulating from March 26 that Jews from Lublin and Izbica (nad Wieprzem) had been gassed at the Bełżec extermination facility.⁸

Shortly thereafter, a more formal ghetto was established on Targowa Street.⁹ It probably was created around April 12, 1942, the day Klukowski noted local antisemites descended on Szczepieszyn in anticipation of a deportation. When none materialized, they plundered abandoned Jewish residences.

On April 22, 1942, the Jewish Council organized an eight-member Jewish police force probably to meet increased labor camp conscription quotas. On April 24, just 63 of 350 conscripts reported for a Wasserwirtschaftsinspektion camp in Kulików. With the quota still unmet, the Gestapo on May 7 ordered 13 prominent Jews arrested. On May 8, Bronsztein, his father, and 5 other prisoners were shot dead fleeing a transport carrying them to Zwierzyniec for execution. That afternoon, the Gestapo gave the Jewish Council one hour to

locate 100 Kulików conscripts. Before the deadline had passed, the Gestapo and Gendarmes began rounding up and shooting about 100 Jews. The next morning, 60 Kulików conscripts reported. The Gestapo required the Jews to pay 2,000 złoty and 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of coffee for the ammunition used in the massacre.¹⁰

On June 22, 1942, the Gestapo marched conscripts to a labor camp at the Klemensów airfield and then returned to arrest 53 additional Jews. On June 23, Gendarmes shot 20 to 26 of the oldest prisoners at a vacant lot on Frampol Street.¹¹

In early August 1942, the Jewish Council was required to submit a list of 2,000 people for deportation supposedly to Reichskommissariat Ukraine. From 1:00 A.M., on August 8, the Gestapo, Gendarmes, Sonderdienst (ethnic German and Ukrainian police), Polish (Blue) Police, and Jewish Police began arresting the Jews on the list and imprisoning them at the trading hall on the square. Most evaded arrest; German police shot 13 others. At 8:00 P.M., 280 deportees were marched to the train station, locked into wagons with 170 Jews from Zwierzyniec, and sent the next day to Bełżec.

To root out fugitives, the Gestapo prohibited Christians from harboring Jews or selling them food. As the police rounded up and shot Jewish fugitives, the Jews officially retained for labor soon hovered on starvation's brink.¹² On September 29, 1942, 400 Jews from the Radechnica gmina (mainly from Radechnica and Gorajec villages) were expelled to Szczepieszyn.

On October 21, 1942, from 6:00 A.M., SS, Ukrainian SS auxiliaries, Gendarmes, Sonderdienst, and Polish police began expelling Jews from the ghetto. Ordered to search for fugitives, Jewish Council member Hersz Gercel Hochbaum committed suicide. Some 500 Jews were killed during the Aktion. Mayor Andreas Kraus reported 934 Szczepieszyn Jews, imprisoned overnight at the Alwa (Waligóra) factory in Brody Małe, were sent (together with Zwierzyniec deportees) to Bełżec on October 22.¹³

Over the next two weeks, 1,000 Szczepieszyn Jews, all fugitives from the deportation, were hunted down by police and Polish civilian volunteers, such as Jan and Władysław Małysz. Most were shot at the cemetery by Gendarmes, including Gendarme Sering (Syring), and Polish auxiliary policemen, including (Stanisław) Hajduczak (Germanized, Haik) and Jan, Tadeusz, and Michał Gołębiowski.¹⁴ Gestapo assistant Stanisław Majewski (a Pole from Biłgoraj), Szczepieszyn Gendarmerie commander Freimeier (Frymer), and Polish police commander Marunowski oversaw the executions.¹⁵

Sering, sentenced to death by a postwar Polish court, was hanged in Zamość in 1945.¹⁶ The aforementioned Polish policemen (except Majewski) and civilians also were tried: the latter, for signing the German nationality list and taking actions, including murder, harmful to Polish citizens, the former, for extricating Jews from hiding places.

Released from Warsaw's Pawiak prison in the summer of 1942, Witting settled in Otwock. There, she and her husband sheltered Maria, Aleksandra, and Ryszard Spielrein. In 1987,

Yad Vashem recognized the couple as Righteous Among the Nations.

SOURCES Secondary sources covering the history of the Szczebrzeszyn Jewish community during the Holocaust include the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 577–580, available in an English translation by Morris Gradel at jewishgen.org.

The yizkor book, Dov Shuval, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Shebreshin* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Shebreshin be-Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1984), available in an English translation by Jacob Salomon Berger as *The Szczebrzeszyn Memorial Book* (Mahwah, NJ: Jacob Salomon Berger, 2005), contains testimonies from survivors. Correspondence between Fryd and Ester Fiszel, from Szczebrzeszyn, and Moszek Wulf, in the Warsaw ghetto, found after the war in the Ringelblum Archive, now at AŻIH, Ring, I/545, appears in a Polish translation in Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, vol. 1, *Listy o zagładzie* (Warsaw: ŻIH and PWN, 1997), pp. 89–96.

The diary of Zygmunt Klukowski has appeared in various forms, with the passages pertaining to Jews extracted and first published in Yiddish translation in *Bleter Far Geschichte* 45:4 (1951) and subsequently in the yizkor book. A Polish-language equivalent, “Niedola i zagłada Żydów ze Szczebrzeszyna (Kartki z pamiętnika z okresu okupacji),” *BŻIH*, nos. 19–20 (1956): 207–241, preceded the publication of the full chronicle, *Dziennik z lat okupacji zamojszczyzny 1939–1944* (Lublin: Lubelska Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1958), which also has appeared under the title *Zamojszczyzna*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: Karta, 2007). The diary is available in English as *Diary from the Years of Occupation 1939–44*, trans. George Klukowski (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), but the translation at times is uneven.

Of the Lublin-area Jewish communities mentioned in the entry but not covered elsewhere in this volume, little is known about the specific World War II experiences of Jews from the villages of Radechnica and Gorajec. Klukowski provides the most information for Gorajec, and when seen from the larger local context, it may suggest a ghetto existed there. In a June 3, 1941, diary entry, he notes the SS unleashed a pogrom on the Christian feast of Pentecost (Whitsun), during which 3 Jews were killed. On December 31, 1941, he mentions Jews were expelled from their homes, which were turned over to (Christian) deportees, presumably to some of the at least 2,240 Warthegau expellees resettled in the Szczebrzeszyn area. Though a pogrom that same day in Zwierzyniec and evictions in Szczebrzeszyn, probably at around the same time, gave rise to ghettos in both localities, Klukowski does not say whether almost identical actions culminated in the creation of a ghetto in Gorajec. He does report on January 27, 1942, that the Gorajec Jews were forbidden to move 10 meters (33 feet) beyond their residences, a point worth noting because the movement restrictions were the stiffest known to have been imposed on any Jewish community in Distrikt Lublin. Survivor Hayim Gorkah, born in Gorajec, does not mention a ghetto existing there in his testimony at VHF, # 33370.

Documents pertaining to the Szczebrzeszyn, Gorajec, and Radechnica Jewish communities can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/672, 211 [e.g., 219, pp. 7,

10, 18; 220, pp. 1, 58, 76–77, 81; 221, pp. 20, 32, 47, 58, 64; 222, pp. 1, 11, 20, 37–38, 44, 53–54; 224, pp. 1, 28–30, 54, 55; 1000, pp. 1–4], 301/5503, Ring I/545); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAL 121-124, SOZ [6, 50]); IPN-Lu (e.g., 142/68); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG], reel # 6 [19/1331-1332]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring]); VHF (e.g., # 32877, 33370, 48035, 48383); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [3082, 3052]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/672, pp. 1–12, 12–18, 24, 27, 41, 61.
2. Ibid., p. 40.
3. VHF, # 32877, testimony of Halina Witting.
4. Dworja Flajszer, “Szczebrzeszyn,” in *Szczebrzeszyn*, p. 151.
5. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/222, p. 44.
6. Ibid., 211/221, p. 47.
7. Ibid., 211/224, p. 28.
8. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, pp. 238, 243, 248, 251–256.
9. AŻIH, 301/5503, testimony of Zofia Skoczek, p. 2.
10. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, pp. 257, 259–260; Itcheh Shtemmer, “Between Life and Death,” in *Szczebrzeszyn*, p. 91.
11. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, pp. 270–271; Flajszer, “Szczebrzeszyn,” p. 153.
12. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, pp. 277–279, 285–288; Flajszer, “Observations on Klukowski,” in *Szczebrzeszyn*, pp. 147–148.
13. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, p. 294.
14. IPN, SOZ 59.
15. IPN, SAL 121-124; AŻIH, 301/5503, p. 3.
16. Klukowski, *Dziennik*, pp. 292–293.

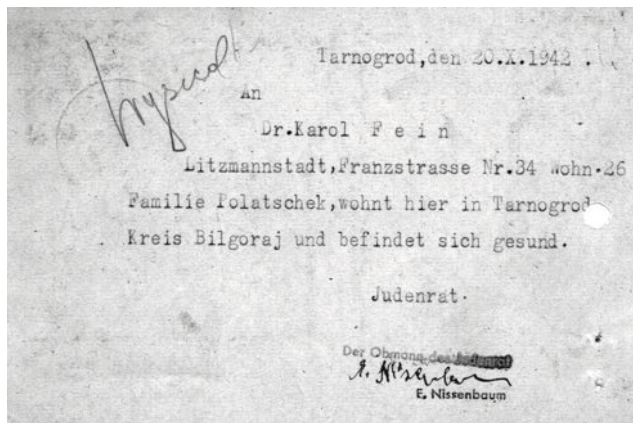
TARNOGRÓD

Pre-1939: Tarnogród, town, Biłgoraj powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Tarnograd, Kreis Bilgoraj, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tarnogród, Biłgoraj powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Tarnogród lies 105 kilometers (65 miles) south of Lublin. In August 1939, its 5,016 residents included 2,515 Jews.

Upon occupying Tarnogród on September 15, 1939, a Wehrmacht unit set the local administration (gmina) building on fire, blamed the Jews for recent combat losses, and threw 16 Jewish hostages into the blaze. Some 35 Jewish-owned structures were incinerated.¹ About 10 days later, the Germans ceded Tarnogród to advancing Soviet forces. After September 28 German-Soviet border negotiations returned the settlement to German occupation, approximately 400 Jews joined the Red Army on October 5 in evacuating behind the Bug River. Shortly thereafter, the Germans reoccupied Tarnogród.

The Germans appointed a local collaborationist administration. Polish and Ukrainian police forces were recruited. From April 1941 to mid-October 1943, a German detachment of Gendarmerie was stationed in Tarnogród. Lieutenant Michael (Karl) Gerhard was the post commander. The jurisdiction



Postcard from the Obmann of the Tarnogród Judenrat, E. Nissenbaum, to Dr. Karol Fein, Litzmannstadt, October 20, 1942. The note reads: "The Polatschek family lives here in Tarnogród, Biłgoraj District, and is healthy."

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of the Gendarmes extended approximately 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) beyond Tarnogród.

On November 23, 1939, the Jews were required to wear armbands with a Star of David. In late December, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. Hersz Blutman became its chair.

In December 1939, 371 expellees arrived from Łódź and Kalisz. In April 1940, just 166 of these expellees remained. By the summer of 1941, additional December 1939 expellees, from Włocławek and Kalisz, brought the total number of Warthegau deportees to 250. Local Jews displaced by war devastation arrived, including by April 1940 some 327 burned out of residences in Biłgoraj, 99 in Frampol, and 61 in Janów Lubelski. In June 1941, the local Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization reported 2,730 Jews were living in Tarnogród.²

In the winter of 1940–1941, the Jews, including children, were ordered to clear snow from roads. From the early spring of 1941, Jewish men repaved the road from Tarnogród to Różaniec. Gravestones (*matzevot*) from the cemetery were used for the project. In August, 98 Jews were interned at a labor camp, probably at the Luftwaffe camp near Biłgoraj, some 21 kilometers (13 miles) away. Others worked in agricultural and forestry labor on a nearby estate under Forestry Service administration.³ Many children worked as farm help for local Poles and Ukrainians. That fall, Wehrmacht troops mobilized Jews to bring in the harvest and to gather hay. Because the settlement had sustained relatively little war devastation, the initial 300-gram (10.6-ounce) daily bread ration was three times greater than elsewhere, and agricultural labor provided access to additional food, Boruch (Bronisław) Fabrykant, the head of the JSS in Kreis Biłgoraj, named Tarnogród in July 1941 the second-most livable place for Jews in the Kreis.⁴

In September 1941, Werner Ansel, the Biłgoraj Kreishauptmann, excluded Tarnogród from a list of ghettos he submitted to authorities in Lublin. In October 1941, Hans Frank imposed the death penalty on Jews throughout the Generalgou-

vernement found without permission outside their designated places of residence.

On October 16, 1941, young shepherds, both Christians and Jews, accidentally ignited a large stockpile of hay. The Gestapo blamed the fire on 12 Jewish shepherds, ordered the Jews to pay a 40,000-złoty fine, and seized 15 adult hostages, including several Jewish Council members. On October 18, the community surrendered the sum, but the Gestapo never released the hostages.⁵ The Germans replaced the entire Jewish Council. Syna Gruer succeeded Blutman as chairman. By October 1942, E. Nissenbaum had succeeded Gruer.

After a late June 1941 typhus epidemic, German authorities ordered a medical clinic established. They appointed Dr. R. Polatschek, a Viennese physician expelled in March 1941 to Modliborzyce, its director. In October, during another epidemic, Polatschek, by then also a Jewish Council member, organized a 5-person sanitation force to help contain the disease.⁶ In late December, the JSS established a community kitchen to serve the impoverished. When 600 people qualified for the program, the JSS limited the daily meal to 250 elderly and children.⁷

On March 22, 1942, Kreishauptmann Ansel ordered the 57 most impoverished Jewish families (221 people) in Biłgoraj evicted to Tarnogród. Security Police, a Sonderdienst (ethnic German police) unit, and members of the Biłgoraj Jewish sanitation force oversaw the expulsion. The Biłgoraj JSS provisioned the deportees and paid for Poles to transport them on carts. Though the JSS provided an additional 1,000 złoty in assistance, 4 expellees had perished by April 5 from diseases related to starvation.⁸

Some sources report the Tarnogród ghetto was established in May. JSS leaders in Biłgoraj, in reports about the expellees, never mentioned its existence. Documentation from other parts of southern Kreis Biłgoraj, specifically from Krzeszów, indicates that Jews, still needed for agricultural labor, continued to live outside of ghettos. However, by April 1942, restrictions on nonworking Jews leaving Tarnogród, additional fines, the absence of paid winter work, and the arrival of the Biłgoraj deportees had transformed the Jewish community into the most impoverished in the Kreis.⁹

In May or June 1942, at 1:00 A.M., members of the provincial Gestapo office in Biłgoraj arrived to order Lieutenant Gerhard and his men to help pull male Jews from their homes. At 5:00 A.M., the Security Police and the Gendarmes shot 40 to 49 of the captives in pits at the Roman Catholic cemetery.¹⁰

In early August 1942, the Judenrat was ordered to prepare two lists: the first of 1,500 Jews, supposedly for deportation to a labor camp in Reichskommissariat Ukraine, the second, of those exempted from expulsion, including craftsmen, Jewish Council members, and those with certificates of employment. On August 9, members of the first and second platoon of the 3rd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 67 expelled the Jews on the deportation list. The expellees were transported to Biłgoraj on peasant carts. From there, they were joined to a large group of Biłgoraj Jews and taken to the railway station in Zwierzyniec. Forced onto cattle wagons,

the Jews were sent to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination camp.¹¹

In Tarnogród, a ghetto was created to contain the approximately 1,000 Jews retained for labor and to consolidate the Jews living in as many as 50 different villages under the jurisdiction of the Gendarmerie post. The existing documentation does not indicate precisely where the Jews lived. It notes only that from September 1942 Jews were ordered to the ghetto from the following gminy: Wola Różaniecka, Księżpol, Łukowa, Babice (including Obsza, Olchowiec, and Zamch villages), Potok (Górny), and Biszczka.¹² (Though some of the gminy no longer exist, each was named for a village within it.) The 50 Jewish families living in 7 different villages in the pre-war Kuryłówka gmina probably also were ordered to the ghetto.¹³ Whether Jews from the Dzików Stary gmina were consolidated in the ghetto is unknown. Some 500 to 800 Jews were covered by the expulsion order, bringing the total ghetto population to around 1,800.

The ghetto consisted of the area surrounding the main market square between Luchów, Różaniec, and Rynek Streets. The ghetto was not fenced, but the movement of Jews was restricted to the square.¹⁴

The Jews experienced overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions, food shortages, and a high death rate. Gendarmes Wittmark and Franz Hilsche particularly were noted for terrorizing the ghetto residents. Wittmark reportedly boasted of daily killing a Jew to work up an appetite for breakfast.¹⁵

On November 2, 1942, Gendarmes, SS stationed in Biłgoraj, and members of the 3rd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 67 arrived before 7:30 A.M. to liquidate the ghetto. The expulsion turned bloody after a Jew, pulled from hiding, attacked a German. Hundreds of corpses piled up on the streets and in the fields.¹⁶ Members of Reserve Police Battalion 67 and Gendarmes, including allegedly Reinhold Witt, shot another 300 Jews on the march to Biłgoraj. The victims were among 500 to 1,000 Jews believed killed during the ghetto liquidation.¹⁷ On November 3, the surviving Jews were marched from Biłgoraj to the railway station in Zwierzyniec and sent from there to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination facility.

Some local Christians, including the Hałas family, sheltered a handful of fugitives from the deportation. Others helped Jews procure false identity papers and to volunteer as Poles for forced labor in the Reich.¹⁸ A few fugitives subsequently joined the partisans.

At a postwar trial in Hannover, Witt was found not guilty of participating in the November 1942 deportation of 1,000 Tarnogród Jews to Bełżec. The legal proceedings of Gerhard were suspended. Little is known about the case against the commander of the Potok (Górny) Polish auxiliary police force, investigated and tried in Zamość for crimes related to the liquidation of the larger Tarnogród Jewish community.¹⁹

SOURCES Secondary sources providing coverage of the destruction of the Jewish community of Tarnogród during World War II include the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot*.

Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 250–253.

Published memoirs from survivors include Mala Kacenberg, *Alone in the Forest* (New York: C.I.S. Publishers, 1995); and Joseph Schorer and Sheldon Schorer, *A Dream Fulfilled: Return to Tarnograd* (Israel: Joseph Schorer, 1989), originally published in Hebrew, which contains several valuable eyewitness accounts, most notably the transcript of the taped interview with the local Polish Christian Józef Szunert. Additional accounts by survivors presumably can be found in the yizkor book edited by Shimon Kanc, available in Hebrew as *Sefer Tarnograd: Le-zikbron ha-kehillah ha-Yehudit she-nebrevah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Tarnograd yeha-sevivah be-Yisrael, be-Artsot ha-berit uve-Angliyah, 1965) and in Yiddish as *Yizker-bukh: Nokh der borev-gevorener yidisheh kehile Tarnograd* (Tel Aviv: Tarnogroder Landslayt in Yisrael, 1966), neither of which is available online at the Dorot Division, New York Public Library, or in the USHMM collections.

Published contemporary documentation includes an April 1942 German memorandum about the expulsion (the previous month) of the Biłgoraj impoverished to Tarnogród, in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 271; and Tatiana Berenstein, “Tarnogród,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 6, 1942, no. 16, p. 2.

The verdicts of the West German trials of Michael Gerhard and Reinhold Witt can be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 42 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), respectively, Lfd. Nr. 844 and Lfd. Nr. 845.

Additional documentation can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 211 [219, pp. 7, 9, 14, 18; 221, pp. 12, 47, 64; 222, pp. 7–8, 11, 19, 27, 29; 223, p. 44; 224, pp. 7, 11–12, 15, 22–23, 28, 30, 40, 49, 55, 57], 301 [5542, 5504]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/14192); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOZ 99); IPN-Lu (e.g., 4/71/Bi/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.2005.121.1; Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 5, 12/81-83, 85, 145, 157]); VHF (e.g., # 5987, 10269, 24479, 29403, 47568, 50876); and YVA (e.g., O-16 /4616, 5504).

Of the Distrikt Lublin Jewish communities mentioned in the entry but not covered elsewhere in this volume, the evidence is insufficient to determine whether similar remnant/collection ghettos were established in either Frampol or Krzeszów. Frampol was almost entirely obliterated by Luftwaffe bombardment on September 13, 1939. Because only one Jewish-owned house was left standing, its approximately 538 Jews were dispersed across the gmina, with fewer than 100 renting rooms from Roman Catholics (presumably Poles) in Frampol and the remaining Jews living similarly in seven other villages in the gmina. See, among others, USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/331, pp. 17–18, and Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/220, p. 60; 211/221, p. 47. It is unknown whether a collection ghetto, similar to the Tarnogród ghetto, was established for the Jews in and around Frampol on the eve of their expulsion on November 2, 1942, to the Bełżec extermination camp.

In Krzeszów, a community numbering 434 Jews in July 1942 (and not subject to an earlier expulsion), JSS officials reported that the consolidation orders were issued shortly before September 25, 1942, and that by then some 208 Jews had arrived from nearby localities. The authors of the report did

not mention whether a ghetto was established. Here, see AŻIH, 211/625, p. 43. Jewish survivors, almost all fugitives from the earlier liquidation of other communities, also did not subsequently recall either consolidations or a ghetto in Krzeszów. See, for example, VHF, # 50640, testimony of Meyer Zinn.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/5504, testimony of Franciszek Hulaś and Leon Rak, p. 1.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/684, pp. 33–36, 40, 55, 92.
3. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1016, p. 3; 211/224, p. 30.
4. Ibid., 211/221, p. 47.
5. Ibid., 211/222, pp. 7–8, 19, 27; Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/684, p. 59.
6. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/221, p. 12; 211/222, pp. 11, 29.
7. “Tarnogród,” *Gazeta Żydowska*, February 6, 1942, no. 16, p. 2.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/224, pp. 11–12, 15, 30.
9. Ibid., 211/224, p. 29; *JuNS-V*, vol. 42, Lfd. Nr. 845, p. 474, argues that the Jews of Tarnogród were forced to move together into an open Jewish quarter (*Judenwohnviertel*) at some time between September 1940 and the summer of 1942.
10. BA-L, B 162/14192, pp. 53–56, 58, 60; AŻIH, 301/5504, p. 3.
11. BA-L, B 162/14192, pp. 16, 39–40.
12. AŻIH, 301/5504, p. 2.
13. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/220, pp. 3–4.
14. AŻIH, 301/5504, p. 2.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., pp. 3–4; Józef Szunert deposition, in Schorer and Schorer, *A Dream*, pp. 242–248.
17. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), 12/145, 147; AŻIH, 301/5504, pp. 4–5.
18. AŻIH, 301/5504, pp. 5–6.
19. IPN, SOZ 99, pp. 1–395.

TOMASZÓW LUBELSKI

Pre-1939: Tomaszów Lubelski (Yiddish: Tomashov Lubelsk), town, Tomaszów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Tomaszow, Kreis Zamosc, Distrikt Lublin, General-gouvernement; post-1998: Tomaszów Lubelski, Lublin województwo, Poland

Tomaszów Lubelski is located 123 kilometers (76 miles) south-east of Lublin. In 1931, its 10,403 inhabitants included 5,669 Jews. By August 1939, 6,000 to 7,000 Jews were residing in Tomaszów, then a town of around 13,000.

On September 7 and 9, 1939, more than 200 Jews perished in fires from a Luftwaffe bombardment. A Wehrmacht unit occupied Tomaszów on September 13. The soldiers incinerated another part of the town to drive out Polish soldiers hiding there. Some 500 Jewish-owned residences were destroyed. The German military commander ordered a large group of Jewish men rounded up. He held them responsible for German com-

bat casualties; some were killed immediately and others were marched (together with as many as 20,000 Polish combatants) to a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp near Sieniawa.¹

In Tomaszów, German soldiers subjected the Jews to humiliations before ceding the town on September 25 to advancing Soviet forces. After the September 28 German-Soviet border renegotiation returned Tomaszów to German occupation, the war devastation and earlier German violence prompted 4,000 to 5,000 Jews to join the Red Army's October 8 evacuation to Rawa Ruska. Others moved to less devastated German-occupied localities, including Komarów and Zamość, and to many smaller places, such as Majdan Górny, Rachanie, Woźuczyn, Michałów, and Jarczów.

On reoccupying Tomaszów, the Germans ordered the Jews to wear armbands with the Star of David. By early 1940, civilian authorities had appointed a Jewish Council (*Judenrat*), chaired by Szyja Fiszelson. A Jewish police force was never established. In October 1940, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization estimated that 1,000 to 2,000 Jews were residing in Tomaszów.²

In 1940, the Germans destroyed the fire-devastated synagogue, imposed the first of several contributions, and expropriated Jewish-owned businesses. Jews were conscripted for forced labor, including clearing war damage, building border fortifications, and improving the road to Bełżec, located 8.1 kilometers (5 miles) south-southeast of Tomaszów. Survivor Chana Wajsleder-Szpicrajzen reports that the conscripts used *matzevot* (gravestones) from the cemetery for the last project. A number of Jews were employed by the municipal administration. Some tailors and shoemakers worked for the Gestapo, which opened a branch office in Tomaszów. The Jewish Council assigned foster parents for the youngest orphaned by war devastation. Older orphans, aged 12 to 14, lived together in several vacated residences.³

As thousands of Jews from Distrikt Lublin, Radom, and Warsaw were sent in the spring and summer of 1940 to the Bełżec forced labor camp to build the Eastern Rampart of the Otto Line, the Germans required the Tomaszów Jewish Council to care for inmates sick with infectious diseases. The council picked up some 20 to 30 prisoners daily in a horse-drawn wagon. The majority died. The council buried them at the Jewish cemetery.

The October 1940 population count occurred as the surviving Bełżec inmates were returning home, via the Tomaszów railway station. It therefore notes 9,306 Jews present in the town. Some former Bełżec inmates, mainly from Warsaw, remained in Tomaszów. However, by March 1941, no more than 215 Jewish refugees resided there. Some refugees, moreover, were Warthegau deportees from Włocławek, Łódź, and Koło transported to Zamość and Izbica (nad Wieprzem) in December 1939. In February 1941, Fiszelson reported 1,400 Jews residing in Tomaszów.⁴ The 100 to 200 remaining newcomers probably were returnees from the Soviet-occupied territories.

On a certain Saturday, probably in the early spring of 1941, several different German police units arrived to arrest the

Jewish (and Christian) mentally and physically handicapped. After imprisoning the Jewish arrestees in a basement, the Germans rounded up 10 Jews and ordered them to flood the cellar until the victims drowned.⁵

In September 1941, Helmuth Weißenmaier, the Zamosc Kreishauptmann, excluded Tomaszów from a list of ghettos he was required to submit to Distrikt-level authorities. In November, Hans Frank imposed the death penalty on Jews in the Generalgouvernement found without permission outside the borders of their designated places of registration. Wajsleder-Szpicażen notes that at the time of Frank's orders a ghetto had yet to be established in Tomaszów. The survivor further indicates that no ghetto existed through mid-May 1942, the month Matuszkiewicz, a notorious Gestapo informant, began proceedings to expropriate her home. Matuszkiewicz's murder stopped the expropriation. After a Polish neighbor informed police that Wajsleder-Szpicażen had pleaded with Matuszkiewicz on the day he was killed not to evict her family, she was imprisoned on suspicion of murder.⁶

On February 25, 1942, in preparation for the first large-scale gassings of Jews at the Bełżec killing center, 700 to 817 Tomaszów Jews were evacuated to Cieszanów.⁷ Officially, all Jews older than 32 and their dependent family members were removed from Tomaszów. The transfer probably aimed to reduce the Jewish population along the main railway line into Bełżec. The Gestapo frequently searched for fugitives from the Cieszanów deportation. Unregistered Jews found during the searches were shot.⁸

The Jews in Tomaszów realized immediately that the Germans were killing Jews at Bełżec.⁹ Mieczysław (Mendel) Garfinkel, the Zamość Jewish Council chair, recalled that in March 1942 Jewish officials in Tomaszów (and several other nearby places) had informed him that the Germans murdered the 10,000 to 20,000 Jews daily arriving at Bełżec, including 18,000 Lublin deportees sent there between March 17 and 28.¹⁰

In May 1942, Fiszelson was executed by the Gestapo for refusing to submit a list of prospective Tomaszów deportees. Aba Bergenbaum became the Jewish Council chair. On May 22, Gestapo from branch offices in Tomaszów and Zamość ordered the Jews assembled on the square. As local Polish auxiliary policemen guarded the Jews, the Germans killed the lame, sick, and elderly. Some 200 young men and women were retained for labor. The remaining Jews were loaded onto trucks, transported to Bełżec, and gassed on arrival.

The Jews retained for labor in Tomaszów were ordered to reside in an unfenced, open ghetto. The ghetto included Piekarska Street and probably the part of neighboring Lwów Street, which paralleled Piekarska and ran north around the square where it became Zamość Street, some of which also was within the ghetto's boundaries.

Some ghetto inhabitants worked for the Gestapo or for the Gendarmerie. Others left the ghetto to labor and live on the largest farms and estates of German colonists, including in Werachanie. In Tomaszów, conscripts cleared the houses of the recently deported, bringing furniture, clothing, and bed-

ding to a large, fenced square. Peasants were forbidden to enter the ghetto to offer food for barter.¹¹

In mid-August 1942, the Polish auxiliary police transferred to Tomaszów the permanent Jewish residents of Bełżec, not imprisoned at the camp. The deportees were held at the Tomaszów prison. According to Janusz Peter, a Polish-Christian resident of Bełżec and director of the Tomaszów hospital, a few dozen of the Bełżec prisoners escaped from jail.¹² In late September, in anticipation of an impending expulsion, the Gestapo promised to stop killing unregistered Jews, ordered all fugitives to report to the ghetto, and designated for the new arrivals six vacant houses on Piekarska Street.¹³

On October 27, 1942, Gendarmes and the Polish auxiliary police liquidated the Tomaszów ghetto. Some 100 Jews were shot either for fleeing or for evading the roundup.¹⁴ Walter Panzer, the Tomaszów Landrat, personally pursued Bergenbaum, hidden in the basement of the magistrate's office, and shot him.¹⁵ The agricultural laborers were executed in Werachanie that same day.¹⁶ The Jews on the square were transported to the Bełżec killing center. The Bełżec Jews incarcerated at the Tomaszów prison also were transferred to the extermination camp.¹⁷ The Jews were gassed on arrival.

Most fugitives were killed in the months following the ghetto's liquidation, some by local residents. The victims included Shava Kempinsky-Krieger's husband and three children killed by "six gentile hooligans."¹⁸ Sholom Licht's yizkor book summary mentions the deaths, at Polish hands, of partisans Szymon Goldsztajn and Meir Kalachmacher (Korenwerce). Provided false identity papers by Bazyli Chmielewski and sent to live with an acquaintance in Skarżysko-Kamienna, Klara Post worked as a Polish laborer at the Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) factory to supply partisans with the ammunition manufactured there.

Chmielewski assisted another 11 Jews in Rawa Ruska and Tomaszów, including Dawid, Abram, and Abisz Post. Elżbieta Ważna, incarcerated for illegal butchering, befriended Wajsleder-Szpicażen in prison, abetted her escape, and provided her shelter. The Czechoński family hid seven-year-old Szlomo Gorzyczański, a Łódź deportee, whose father had been born in Tomaszów. Three Eizensztejn family members lived outside the ghetto on false identity papers. One, an engineer, was killed shortly after Tomaszów's liberation on July 21, 1944.¹⁹

Fewer than 15 Tomaszów ghetto residents survived the war.

SOURCES Secondary works covering the World War II history of the Tomaszów Lubelski Jewish community include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 237–241, with an English translation available at jewishgen.org; and the accounts, available in English translation, on the Tomaszów Lubelski homepage at the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich.

Testimonies from survivors, including from a number who survived in and around Rawa Ruska, can be found in the yizkor book *Tomashover Lub[elsk] yizker bukh* (Brooklyn, NY:

Tomashover Relief Committee, 1965), which has been translated into Hebrew and English, with the latter prepared and published by Jacob Solomon Berger as *The Tomaszów-Lubelski Memorial Book* (Mahwah, NJ, 2008). Testimonies from Bazyli Chmielewski and Szlomo Gorzyczkański are available in Polish and English translation at Światło w ciemności. Sprawiedliwi Wśród Narodów Świata, a Web site sponsored by Ośrodek Brama Grodzka—Teatr NN in Lublin.

Additional primary documentation is located in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/689; 211 [141, pp. 86–87, 95; 142, pp. 1–3, 12–13, 26, 45; 1143, pp. 2–4; 1147, pp. 6, 8, 10–11; 1148, pp. 6–7, 38, 46, 50; 1149, pp. 27–28; 1150, pp. 11, 36; 1151, pp. 34, 65, 68; 1152, pp. 8, 14–15, 20]; IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 36/67/1–2, 275/67/1–2); VHF; USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6, 18/1165–1168]; RG-15.084M [Relacje]; RG-50.488*0015); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2098, 2969).

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NOTES

1. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, pp. 362–371 (Asher Herbstman testimony).
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH, JSS), 211/1147, p. 8.
3. AŻIH, 301/4139, testimony of Chana Wajsleder-Szpicrajzen, p. 1.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1150, p. 11; Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH, AJDC), 210/689, pp. 1, 5.
5. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, p. 375 (Shmuel Ehrlich testimony).
6. AŻIH, 301/4139, p. 5.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1152, p. 20; 211/141, pp. 86–87; 211/142, pp. 1–3, 12–13, 26, 45; 211/143, pp. 2–4.
8. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, pp. 376–380 (Sheva Kempinsky [Kempińska]-Krieger testimony).
9. AŻIH, 301/4139, p. 3.
10. Ibid., 302/122, testimony of Mieczysław Garfinkel, pp. 34–35.
11. Ibid., 301/4139, pp. 2–3.
12. Ibid., 302/221, testimony of Janusz Peter, p. 33.
13. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, p. 377.
14. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), 18/1167–1168.
15. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, pp. 450–451 (Maria Kopiecka deposition).
16. AŻIH, 301/4139, p. 5.
17. Ibid., 302/221, p. 33.
18. *Tomaszów-Lubelski*, p. 378.
19. AŻIH, 302/221, p. 33; 301/4149, p. 3.

TYSZOWCE

Pre-1939: Tyszowce (Yiddish: Tishivits), town, Tomaszów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Zamosc, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Tomaszów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Tyszowce is located 125 kilometers (78 miles) southeast of Lublin. In 1939, its 7,548 inhabitants included 3,311 Jews.

Luftwaffe bombardment on September 12–13, 1939, sparked fires that destroyed about 60 percent of Tyszowce. The Germans occupied the town on September 17 but eight days later

ceded it to Soviet forces. The extensive fire damage and Tyszowce's anticipated return to German occupation, the result of the September 28 German-Soviet border renegotiation, prompted some 2,000 Jews to join the Red Army's October 8 evacuation behind the Bug River.

Upon reoccupying Tyszowce days later, the Germans appointed a Polish collaborationist administration, initially headed by Józef Zarębski, the pre-war *wójt* (mayor). A Polish auxiliary police force also was appointed. Little is known of its activities. A Gendarmerie post was established. Ernst Schulz, assigned there shortly before Christmas 1940, was named the post's commander in June 1941. Between 1942 and 1943, Robert Golka also was assigned to the post.¹

By February 1940, Zarębski had appointed Zylo (Zelig) Cukier head of a Jewish Council. Cukier also led the Tyszowce branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization.² A Jewish police force was recruited. It was commanded by Meier Szek, a restaurateur and co-owner (with a local Polish-Christian) of the pre-war cinema.

Jews burned out of their homes were permitted to rent rooms from local Poles. (Whether they could rent from the town's numerous ethnic Ukrainians is unknown.) Survivor Berko Finger (Berisz or Tsvi Fingier) complained that the Poles charged inflated rents. However, he and others acknowledge Zarębski ameliorated some of the German authorities' anti-Jewish decrees, for example, by refusing to ban the Jewish community from access to cheaper food rations and municipal funding. They believe these efforts were why Zarębski and Józef Piprowski, the gmina secretary, were sent to the Dachau concentration camp in May 1940.³

In the spring of 1940, hundreds of Tyszowce Jews joined the thousands of Jews from throughout the Generalgouvernement interned at the Bełżec forced labor camp and its 10 or more subcamps to build the Eastern Rampart of the so-called Otto Line, the 140-kilometer-long (87-mile-long) trench the Germans ordered constructed between the Bug and San Rivers. The Tyszowce Jews were interned at the subcamp located closest to Lubycza Królewska (at that time in Soviet-occupied territory). Another 120 Tyszowce Jews were imprisoned at a labor camp established in Zamość for water melioration work.⁴ Others were interned at a second water drainage camp, established in the spring of 1940 in Mikulin, which from late June 1941 became a camp for Soviet prisoners of war (POWs).⁵ A smaller number of Jews left Tyszowce to live and labor on an estate in Miętkie, the wartime property of a German named Reimack.⁶

In the spring of 1940, German authorities ordered the Jewish Council in Lublin to finance a forced labor camp in Tyszowce. The camp was located at a large burned-out mill on the outskirts of southeast Tyszowce, opposite the school on Kościelna Street. Its initial 600 inmates, mainly from Lublin, Otwock, and Warsaw, worked on road construction and drainage projects designed to regulate the Huczwa River.⁷ After the prisoners were returned home in the fall of 1940, the Tyszowce inmates in Zamość were transferred to the camp. The camp closed in the fall of 1941.⁸

As some former camp inmates opted to remain and many voluntary refugees escaping ghettoization in Warsaw arrived, the Jewish population increased. By November 1940, more than 2,000 Jews resided in Tyszowce.⁹

In 1941, Cukier informed American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) officials that the Jewish Council the previous year had devoted half its 19,000 złoty in financial resources to providing food, shoes, and other welfare assistance to local Jews interned at labor camps.¹⁰ Finger recalls the JSS organized a kitchen in Tyszowce to feed the most impoverished. Because Cukier and his associates sold the kitchen's flour allotments and retained the profits, the kitchen distributed only a watery soup made from a few cabbage leaves.¹¹ Unfortunately, no JSS files have survived for Tyszowce, making it impossible to confirm or deny Finger's claims.

At midnight on May 22 or 24, 1942, German Gendarmes, led by Schulz, informed the Jewish Council that the Jews were to be expelled that day. Security Police and SS Ukrainian auxiliaries soon arrived to oversee the Aktion. They may have brought from Komarów a Jewish police unit, composed of Czech Jews.¹² Some 800 to 1,000 Tyszowce Jews were transported by peasant cart to a railway loading dock in Zamość, from where they were sent by train to the Sobibór extermination camp. Another 200 Jews, considered too old or feeble to make the trip or who refused to comply with orders to assemble on the square, were shot on the spot. Included among the victims were all the members of the Jewish Council.¹³ Several hundred Jews evaded expulsion. Another 500 were retained for labor in Tyszowce.

A remnant ghetto was established for the Jews held back from expulsion. It was located in a few homes by the river, probably near the site of the former labor camp. The ghetto was an unfenced, open ghetto. However, its inmates were permitted to walk only a few yards beyond the houses in which they lived.¹⁴

The ghetto residents included a few dozen Czech Jews and probably some German Jews, mainly from Dortmund and its environs. The Protectorate and Reich Jews, who had arrived in Zamość on April 30 and May 2–3, 1942, were among some 700 newcomers transferred from May 2 to Komarów, located some 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) from Tyszowce.¹⁵ It is unknown when, precisely, the expellees arrived in Tyszowce.

Immediately after the expulsion, a new Jewish Council was appointed. It was led by Markus Fischleiber, a German Jew.¹⁶ Within a few hours, Jews who had evaded deportation were permitted to report to the newly established ghetto. Fischleiber required that the fugitives pay an exorbitant fee to legitimize their residence. Some days later, the SS raided the ghetto and shot some 47 to 60 still unregistered ghetto residents.¹⁷

Between 10 and 14 people lived in each of the rooms in the ghetto. The overcrowding increased incidents of illness, including typhus.¹⁸

At around the time of the October 16, 1942, liquidation of the Zamość ghetto, Gendarmes and SS, probably auxiliaries from Rachanie, also liquidated the Tyszowce ghetto. They mobilized local Poles and Ukrainians to help round up Jews

attempting to flee.¹⁹ About 100 Jews were shot. Fischleiber, his mother, and sister committed suicide. Another 480 Jews evaded expulsion by hiding in bunkers in forests near Miętkie (in the so-called Mikucki Woods). A Christian eyewitness reports that most of the 500 Jews assembled on the square were expelled. Likely consolidated in Komarów, the expellees were marched together with Jews from Komarów to the ghetto in Izbica (nad Wieprzem), where, on October 19, they were sent to their deaths at Bełżec and Sobibór. However, postwar Polish Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) documentation also suggests that a part of the Tyszowce Jews may have been shot nearby. It notes that between June 16, 1942, and the end of 1943, Gendarmes, commanded by Schulz, and members of a Rachanie-based Schutzpolizei unit, led by SS surnamed Olaszewski and Rogalski, shot some 1,000 Jews from Tyszowce and nearby villages.²⁰

Most Tyszowce fugitives perished during German searches of the forests, expelled (by what Finger recalls as Soviet, but may have been Ukrainian) partisan groups operating there or denounced by the local population.²¹ By April 1943, only 15 of the 480 forest fugitives were still alive. A group of the survivors, including Finger, escaped to Hrubieszów, where Jewish inmates at the forced labor camp hid them until October. Fearing Security Police soon would liquidate the camp, Finger and his companions escaped to Kraśnik and entered the concentration camp in Budzyń. Another 8 fugitives, including 6 members of the Szakmajer family, Ester Singer, and her child, perished in 1944 after the neighbors of Jakub Kopytko, their aid giver, informed Gendarmes of the Jews' hiding place. Kopytko's wife died several weeks later. When Kopytko evaded arrest, frustrated Gendarmes ordered his neighbors to dismantle all the structures on his property.²²

A handful of Tyszowce ghetto residents survived the war. Among them was Jeszajahu Sztengiel, murdered a month after the Red Army's liberation of Tyszowce in July 1944.²³

Schulz, tried in 1964 in Ellwangen (Jagst), West Germany, for the shooting deaths of 12 Jews in Komarów, received a life sentence.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the history of the Tyszowce Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 244–247, an English translation of which can be found at jewishgen.org. A similar entry, available on the Tyszowce homepage of the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by the Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich (Museum of the History of Polish Jews), also incorporates Polish-Christian eyewitness testimonies from Robert Horbaczewski, *W blasku świateł: Opowieści tyszowieckie* (Lublin: EL-Press, 2005). The yizkor book *Pinkas Tishivits* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Tishivits be-Yisrael, 1970) includes memoirs from survivors. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 575, pp. 217–247, describes the investigation and trial of Ernst Schulz.

Additional documentation can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 210/695, 211 [1147, pp. 8, 11; 1148, pp. 9, 41–42, 50; 1149, p. 27; 1150, p. 11; 1151, pp. 34, 40, 51; 1152, pp. 24, 50], 301 [2535A, 2926, 2985, 4333, 5836]); FVA (HVT-1963); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOZ [76, 85], SSKL 225); IPN-Lu (e.g., 111/67, 1-2, 346/67/1-2); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 15 (49/185-187), reel 6 (18/1089, 1172)]); RG-50.120*0111); VHF (e.g., 3400, 9322, 13951, 19229, 25544, 32094, 36193); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2780).

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NOTES

1. IPN, SOZ 76, pp. 1–286.
2. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/1148, p. 9.
3. AŻIH, 301/2985, testimony of Berko Finger, pp. 1–2. See also 301/5836, p. 1.
4. Ibid., 301/2985, p. 1.
5. Ibid., 301/5836, p. 2; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), 49/185.
6. AŻIH, 301/2535a, testimony of Jakub Cukier, p. 1.
7. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1147, p. 8.
8. Ibid., RG-15.019M, 49/187.
9. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1147, p. 11.
10. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/695, p. 4.
11. AŻIH, 301/2985, p. 1.
12. Ibid., 301/5836, testimony of Augustyn Dudziński, p. 2.
13. Ibid., 301/2535a, p. 1.
14. Ibid., 301/2985, p. 2.
15. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1152, p. 34.
16. Ibid., p. 50.
17. AŻIH, 301/2985, p. 2.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 301/5836, p. 3.
20. USHMM, RG-15.019M, 18/1172.
21. IPN, SSKL 143, pp. 1–42; SOZ 85, pp. 1–614.
22. AŻIH, 301/5836, p. 2; 301/2926, testimony of Jakub Kopytko, p. 1.
23. Ibid., 301/5836, p. 1.

UCHANIE

Pre-1939: Uchanie (Yiddish: Uchan), town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Hrubieszow, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lublin województwo, Poland

Uchanie is located about 88 kilometers (55 miles) southeast of Lublin. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 1,010. On the eve of war in August 1939, between 1,450 and 1,700 Jews were residing in Uchanie.

After the September 1939 campaign, in early October, the Germans consolidated their occupation of Uchanie, following the withdrawal of the Red Army from the region.

By early in 1940, the German authorities had established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Uchanie, which had to supply a quota of forced laborers each day. Some of the Jews worked in agriculture, and others worked for German military units or other German offices in the region. In addition, the Judenrat

had to meet repeated German demands for specific amounts of silver, gold, and other valuables.

Evidence for the existence of an open ghetto in Uchanie comes mainly from survivor testimony. For example, the family of Czesława Serafin, together with four other Jewish families, was living in the village of Staszic Kolonia, a few kilometers to the south of Uchanie, during the winter of 1939–1940. In April 1940, they received an order from the sołtys (village head) that they had to move to Uchanie. In Uchanie, Serafin's family moved in with their uncle; they were unable to find another apartment, because all the Jews from the neighboring villages had also been ordered to move to Uchanie.¹

Czesława Serafin notes that the local peasants, when they made their prescribed deliveries to the Germans in Uchanie, also risked bringing in some additional food products (e.g., bread, milk, potatoes, kasha, and eggs), which they traded with the Jews in exchange for possessions, such as shoes, sheets, and clothing. Czesława and her husband, because of their good contacts, supplied all their relatives (more than 20 people) with food, mainly from her village of Staszic Kolonia.

According to Czesława, in January 1941, the Germans issued an order that the Jews in Uchanie had to move from their houses on the main streets to just three other streets: Cerkiewna, Cmentarna, and the *Rynek* (main square). This in effect established a Jewish residential area (or open ghetto) in Uchanie.²

This testimony is corroborated by Rubin Shafran, a native of Uchanie, who recalls that in 1941 the Germans brought in the Jews from the surrounding small towns and villages and created a ghetto in Uchanie. The ghetto was not enclosed—there was no barbed-wire fence—but the Jews lived in overcrowded conditions, with three or four families to each apartment. The Jews were only permitted to leave the ghetto to go to work.³

In June 1941, there were 1,253 Jews residing in Uchanie. Just prior to the German invasion of the Soviet Union, a number of Jews were conscripted to work for the Wehrmacht forces concentrated along the nearby border to the Soviet Union.

In late November 1941, around 100 Jewish expellees from Kraków arrived in Uchanie. These impoverished Jews received some meager financial support over the ensuing months from the headquarters of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Kraków.⁴ In January 1942, there were 1,290 Jews in the town. In March or April 1942, several hundred men (aged 25 to 45 years old) were sent to the Jewish forced labor camp in Trawniki.⁵

In May 1942, around 680 Jews from the village of Horodło arrived in Uchanie. Their arrival is noted in the JSS records, but no reference is made as to where they had come from. At this time there was no community kitchen, but some cash was distributed to the new arrivals as welfare support.⁶ The account in the Horodło yizkor book, however, confirms that the Jews of that village and several surrounding places, including Strzyżów, were transferred to Uchanie around this time, where they were held in a sheep pen with very little to eat for some two weeks before most were deported to the railway station at

Miączyn, 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Grabowiec.⁷ Also at some time in May 1942, a group of about 300 young women and 100 men reportedly were sent to the Majdanek concentration camp.⁸

The JSS report for May 1942 states that there were 1,950 Jews in Uchanie. Of the 575 Jews requesting assistance, 420 were receiving it. The same report indicates that 43 Jews had died during that month but does not state the cause.⁹ At the end of May or in early June 1942, German forces assisted by the local auxiliary police rounded up more than 40 Jews in Uchanie and shot them. The Jews were buried in a mass grave between the Jewish and Polish cemeteries in Uchanie. Sara Mostysser, who recalls arriving in the Uchanie ghetto from Strzyżów in May 1942, is among those who described this incident. She claims that the expulsion of the Jews took place only about two weeks after her arrival in Uchanie.¹⁰

German forces deported the Jews from Uchanie just before or on June 10, 1942. According to JSS records, 1,650 Jews were taken in wagons and on foot to the railroad station at Miączyn.¹¹ Just prior to the roundup, signs were posted all over the ghetto informing the Jews that they would be deported. They were permitted to take with them only 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of personal belongings.¹² Some of the Jews were shot by the guards during the transport to Miączyn.¹³

At the Miączyn station, the Jews were placed in an area surrounded with barbed wire, where a selection was conducted. A number of able-bodied Jews from the Uchanie ghetto were sent to a forced labor camp at Staw (about 30 kilometers [19 miles] from Uchanie), and another 350 or so remained in Uchanie (or were sent back there) as needed laborers or to clear out the ghetto area. From Miączyn, the remaining Jews were sent by train to the extermination camp in Sobibór.

The Jews that returned to Uchanie remained there until October 1942. At the end of August, the number of Jews registered there was 382. At this time the local JSS branch reported that it was still sending food and clothing to support the Jews who had been transferred to the forced labor camp at Staw. According to testimony given in West German criminal investigations, a number of Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Uchanie by members of the Gestapo from Hrubieszów on their regular visits between June and October 1942. Among the victims were a woman and her child who had broken the curfew and about 30 elderly Jews who were shot as a group. Four days before the remaining Jews were transferred to the ghetto in Hrubieszów in October 1942, the grandfather of Jewish survivor Benito Mehl was also shot. The ghetto in Hrubieszów was liquidated in turn on October 22, 1942.¹⁴

Rubin Shafran managed to escape from Uchanie before the transfer to Hrubieszów and found refuge on a Polish farm. Czesława Serafin learned later that her aunt and two cousins (Pesia Goldfarb, Sura Rajchman, and Stel Lerner) had escaped from the deportation transport to Miączyn and hid for about a year, mostly in the forest. However, subsequently they were caught by the SS and shot in the Jewish cemetery in Uchanie.¹⁵ There were only a few survivors from the Uchanie ghetto.

SOURCES Publications concerning the fate of the Jewish population of Uchanie during the Holocaust include “Uchanie,” in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), p. 44—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; see also Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), p. 107 (Horodło) and p. 290 (Uchanie); Yosef Hayim Zavidovitch, ed., *Di kehileh fun Horodla: Yizker-bukh nokh di kdoysim fun Horodla (Poyln) un di kdoysim fun di noente derfer* (Tel Aviv: Va’ ad yots’e Horodlah be-Yisrael, 1966); and Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 65–66.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (210/696 [AJDC]; 211/140, 1051 [JSS]; 301/5779 [Relacje]); BA-L (B 162/4329); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AJDC]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]); and VHF (# 9561, 13068, 25227).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/5779, testimony of Czesława Serafin.
2. Ibid. Serafin does not say that there was a ghetto, only that the Jews could live only on these three streets.
3. VHF, # 25227, testimony of Rubin Shafran (born 1927), 1997.
4. AŻIH, 211/140, p. 38; 211/1051, pp. 2, 5, 7, 11, 15.
5. Ibid., 301/5779.
6. Ibid., 211/1051, p. 19, report of JSS Uchanie, May 12, 1942.
7. Zavidovitch, *Di kehileh fun Horodla*, pp. 185–186; see also Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, *District Lublin*, p. 107.
8. AŻIH, 301/5779. This may, however, be a mistaken reference to the transfer of Jews to the labor camp at Staw, as it is not mentioned in other sources.
9. Ibid., 211/1051, pp. 19, 22, 24.
10. VHF, # 25227; # 13068, testimony of Sara Mostysser (born 1924), 1996; AŻIH, 301/5779.
11. AŻIH, 211/1051, p. 26.
12. VHF, # 25227. Shafran dates the expulsion on June 8.
13. BA-L, B 162/4329 (208 AR-Z 91/61), Closing report of Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 369/62, in the case against Max Stöbner (crime location: Hrubieszów), April 15, 1965, p. 117.
14. Ibid., pp. 149–150, 298.
15. AŻIH, 301/5779.

URZĘDÓW

Pre-1939: Urzędów, village, Janów Lubelski powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Urzędów, Kreis Janów Lubelski, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Urzędów, Kraśnik powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Urzędów lies 55 kilometers (34 miles) southwest of Lublin. In August 1939, almost 250 of the gmina’s 326 Jewish inhabitants resided in Urzędów. The remaining Jews lived in smaller villages.

VOLUME II: PART A

A Wehrmacht unit occupied the gmina on September 15, 1939. By October 10, a German civil administration had been established for Kreis Janów Lubelski, including Urzędów.

In late December 1939, the Urzędów Jews were ordered to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Moszek Rychtenberg. A Kraśnik native commanded a 10-member Jewish police force. Manis Szajnbrun, an Urzędów confectioner named deputy police commander, used brutality to requisition gold, silver, bicycles, and other items demanded by the German authorities.¹ A December decree required Jewish Council representatives throughout the Kreis to sell white armbands with a blue Star of David for 2 złoty and for adult Jews to wear them by January 5, 1940.

The arrival of 40 newcomers, mainly December 1939 expellees from Łódź and voluntary refugees from Warsaw, increased the Jewish population to 402 by April 1941. The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch, led by Moszek Wajngarten, rented rooms in Polish-Christians' homes for 9 impoverished refugee families (37 people). On May 4, Jewish expellees arrived from Wąwolnica. Most originally were from Janów Lubelski and Puławy, plus some Viennese Jews, deported to Opole in February. Additional expellees arrived from Lublin the next day. On May 28, 60 Jewish refugees (including deportees) were residing in the gmina.²

The expropriation of businesses, escalating food prices with the massing of troops in Distrikt Lublin in the spring of 1941 in preparation for Germany's June invasion of the Soviet Union, and a decree confining Jews to their places of residence (from March 1 to July 1) rapidly impoverished the community. In July, the JSS asked wealthier Jews to prepare daily meals for 156 (of 220) impoverished Jews. The wealthy included 10 craftsmen permitted to operate workshops and nine business licensees, such as Jewish Council member Hersz Ajdelsztejn and Viennese refugee Dr. Laschke. Ajdelsztejn opened a bakery; Laschke established a dental practice.³

By August 1941, 40 Jews reported daily for forced labor in Urzędów; 71 others worked on unfinished construction projects at two pre-war building sites straddling the road between Urzędów and Kraśnik. The construction laborers initially worked at a residential building site (from 1954, Kraśnik Fabryczny), planned by the pre-war Polish government to house employees of its new ammunition factory in Dąbrowa-Bór. From July 1941, they also built foresters' barracks and stables near the woods at Dąbrowa. When, in the summer of 1942, Odilo Globocnik, the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Distrikt Lublin, decided to establish the Budzyń forced labor camp there, these structures became part of the camp. From the late summer of 1941, Urzędów labor crews, supervised by Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) from the Lipowa 7 camp in Lublin, retrofitted the ammunition factory for the Heinkel Company (Heinkel Werke), which in early 1942 established an aircraft repair facility (Heinkel Flugzeugwerke). Some Urzędów Jews worked at the facility.⁴

The need for an immediately accessible labor pool probably led Hans Lenk, the Janów Lubelski Kreishauptmann, from August of 1941, to order Jews from villages in the Urzędów

gmina concentrated into a ghetto. On September 4, Wajngarten noted: "The location for the ghetto [*dzielnica żydowska*] already has been chosen; the state of housing is so wretched, it is impossible to imagine."⁵ The ghetto was unfenced. On May 14, 1942, Maks Kaminer, the JSS chief for Kreis Janów Lubelski, noted that no closed ghettos existed in the Kreis.⁶

Whether all 143 Jewish residents of Bęczyn, Boby, Ewunin, Moniaki, Ostrów (pre-war Janów Lubelski powiat), Popkowiec, and Zadworze reported to the ghetto on October 1, 1941, as ordered is unknown.⁷ Wajngarten always had included them in gmina population figures. The Urzędów Jewish population peaked in late October. However, the increase came after the JSS extended aid to the 146 Jews in the Dzierzkowice gmina (the location of the construction projects), including meals for the Lipowa 7 POWs at Heinkel. To impress on JSS leaders the organization's new responsibilities, Wajngarten included the Dzierzkowice Jews within the Urzędów population and thus noted an expanded Jewish population for the pre-war Urzędów gmina of 466 and of 549 for October 1941. A Jewish Council, led by Hersz Fogiel, continued to represent the Dzierzkowice Jews through at least late November.⁸

Most ghetto inmates arrived with few personal belongings. Inadequate clothing and housing, primitive conditions at the work sites, and November 1941 orders forbidding Jews in the Generalgouvernement from leaving the area of their places of residence without permission increased incidences of frostbite, typhus, and hunger-related illnesses. Cold and hunger claimed the lives of 6 Urzędów Jews in November. Another 18 were patients at Jewish hospitals in Lublin, Janów Lubelski, and Kwiatkowiec. Two Jews sent to Lublin arrived with such severe cases of frostbite that they died of complications from gangrene.⁹

From mid-October 1941, the JSS raised funds from nonghettoized Jews in Urzędów to buy materials to transform one ghetto residence into a winterized, heated shelter.¹⁰ Because Hans Frank, by December, had ordered the death penalty imposed on Jews found violating the proscriptions on movement, JSS leaders seized an opportunity created by Kreishauptmann Lenk's October extension of potato and kasha rations to nonworking Jews to establish a community kitchen. It opened on January 1, 1942. However, after Lenk suspended rations to nonworking Jews (and Poles) in February, the JSS, forced onto the free market, could afford to feed only 30 people daily.¹¹ To provide the impoverished access to food, the Jewish Council in April arranged agricultural employment on a nearby estate for some 70 to 100 children, women, elderly, and unemployed.¹²

The Jewish Council likely believed the labor, which began on around April 15, 1942, might shield the community from a selective deportation, as had occurred in Kraśnik three days before, during which 2,040 mostly elderly, children, and unemployed were sent to Bełżec. Helen (Ajdelsztejn-) Erlich recalls that the Lipowa 7 POWs, regular guests at her house, informed the Jewish Council that the Germans were killing Jews at Bełżec. As a result, Ajdelsztejn's father purchased false

identity papers for her and arranged in October for the POWs to smuggle her to Lublin to find work.¹³

With the extension of Operation Reinhard into Kreis Janów, the Arbeitsamt (labor office) in Lublin increased labor camp quotas to retain “useful” Jews. On May 25, 1942, it ordered 30 Urzędów Jews to a water irrigation camp in Janiszów (Janów Lubelski powiat). Upon the establishment in Kraśnik of the town’s first closed labor camp (the artisans’ or synagogue camp) that same week, some 12 Urzędów Jews were among 180 craftsmen (mainly carpenters) ordered interned there. The inmates initially completed construction projects and built furniture for the Schmitt & Junke firm, which held the contract to erect an office building and to refurbish other offices needed for the Kreis administration’s planned move to Kraśnik. Another 35 Urzędów Jews were sent that month to more distant labor camps.¹⁴

In mid-October, likely on October 14, 1942, the German authorities ordered the Jews to assemble the next morning on the square. A large number failed to appear. Because survivors’ accounts diverge, the two SS men at the square probably ordered the Heinkel workers and construction laborers to report with their families to the recently completed Budzyń camp and the remaining Jews to the ghetto in Kraśnik.¹⁵ The following day, the SS marched the Urzędów Jews in Kraśnik (together with Jews ordered there from other nearby communities) to the railway station and forced them onto trains destined for Bełżec. The Jews were all gassed on arrival.

One or two days later at Budzyń, the SS retained the Urzędów construction laborers, the Heinkel workers, and a number of others, including young women, as camp inmates. The prisoners’ families were ordered to sleep in a group of barracks, designated a “special camp.” Several days later, the SS marched the inmates’ families to the Kraśnik railway station and sent them to their deaths at Bełżec.¹⁶ Within a few weeks, the women inmates were ordered onto trucks, driven to the Kraśnik railway station, and also sent to Bełżec.¹⁷

Most fugitives were killed in the months immediately following the deportations.¹⁸ Only a few found shelter with the local Polish population or survived on false identity papers as forced laborers in the Reich.¹⁹ More than half of the approximately 15 Urzędów Jews who survived the war under the German occupation had been inmates of Budzyń—or of camps, such as Janiszów, whose prisoners subsequently were sent to Budzyń—or of the Kraśnik artisans’ camp. None appear ever to have lived in the Urzędów ghetto.

SOURCES Secondary sources providing coverage of the Urzędów Jewish community during World War II include the relevant entries in Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 42–44; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 290–292. The Urzędów homepage on the Wirtualny Sztetl, a Web site sponsored by the Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich, contains

a secondary account, available in English translation, and a large bibliography of Polish-language works.

Published eyewitness accounts, available only from Polish Christians, include in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 118–126, excerpts from AŻIH, 302/277, testimony of Kazimierz Cieśllicki; and “Wspomnienia Aleksandra Marciniaka,” *Głos Ziemi Urzędowskiej—Czasopismo Towarzystwa Ziemi Urzędowskiej* (Urzędów, 2003), a series of letters written by Aleksander Marciniak, a wartime deportee from Poznań. The second account is most accessible in its complete form on the Web site of the Urzędów gmina, at www.urzedow.pl. A transcription of the specific letter in which Marciniak recalls Dr. Laschke and postal carrier Jusek Weinman can be found at the Wirtualny Sztetl. The published accounts are better considered together with the oral testimonies of Jewish survivors Helen (Ajdelstzejn-) Erlich and Gary Flumenbaum, at VHF, respectively, # 11358 and # 1861, as the authors’ memories considerably diverge, particularly when it comes to Laschke and the Ajdelstzejn family.

Unfortunately, none of the above works discuss the ghetto, for which coverage, outside of this entry, so far is known to exist only in archival documentation, specifically in the second JSS files for Urzędów, located at AŻIH, 211/1064. Additional documentation for the Urzędów Jewish community can be found in the following archives: APL; APL-Kraśnik; AŻIH (e.g., 210/701; 211 [140, pp. 64–66, 71; 141, pp. 31, 33, 34; 142, pp. 21, 46; 460, pp. 23–24, 31; 462, pp. 7–8; 1063; 1065]; 301 [426, 4348, 4403]); IPN (e.g., SOL 65, 107-108); IPN-Lu (e.g., 357/67/1-3); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 302/277, testimony of Kazimierz Cieśllicki, pp. 11, 20–21.
2. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 211/1063, pp. 8, 11, 13, 19–20, 26.
3. Ibid., 211/1064, pp. 17–18, 20; VHF, # 11358, testimony of Helen (Ajdelstzejn-) Erlich.
4. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/1064, p. 29; VHF, # 1861, testimony of Gary Flumenbaum; # 11358.
5. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/1064, p. 32.
6. Ibid., 211/462, p. 34.
7. Ibid., 211/1064, p. 37.
8. Ibid., 211/1064, pp. 56–57; 211/460, p. 23; 211/461, p. 49; VHF, # 11358.
9. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/1064, pp. 58–59.
10. Ibid., 211/1064, p. 51.
11. Ibid., 211/1065, pp. 5–6, 27–28, 38.
12. Ibid., pp. 32–33.
13. VHF, # 11358.
14. USHMM, Acc.1999.A.0154, 211/1065, pp. 37, 41; 211/462, p. 41.
15. Compare VHF, # 1861, and AŻIH, 301/4403, testimony of Icek Mandelbaum, p. 1.
16. VHF, # 1861.
17. AŻIH, 301/4403, p. 1.
18. Ibid., 302/277, pp. 23–29.
19. Ibid., 301/436, testimony of Sydzia Konis, pp. 1–8.

WĄWOLNICA

Pre-1939: Wąwolnica (Yiddish: Vonvolitz), village, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Wawolnica, Kreis Pulawy, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wąwolnica, Puławy powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Wąwolnica lies 35 kilometers (22 miles) northwest of Lublin. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, almost 900 Jews resided there.¹

A Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied Wąwolnica from September 15, 1939. A small contingent of Austrian soldiers left behind to establish a local German civilian administration did not humiliate the Jews or conscript them for labor. The new mayor, Anton Müller, a writer and local ethnic German, initially permitted the Jews to carry on their pre-war occupations and to observe the Sabbath. Few German troops arrived to harass the Jews, perhaps because of Wąwolnica's location, atop a steep hill, a distance away from the highway connecting Warsaw to Lublin.²

Because it was considered a relative "safe haven" for Jews, Wąwolnica became flooded with Jewish refugees. Among the 800 Jewish refugees residing in Wąwolnica in January 1940 were hundreds of Jews from war-devastated Kurów.³

The relative peace ended in 1940 when the local administration in January created registration requirements for Jews and forbade them from engaging in trade. Before March, the Jews were ordered to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Naftalia Rozenperl.⁴ On a Sabbath that year, a group of Germans stormed the synagogue to beat and humiliate the Jews they found there. In early spring, another group of soldiers searched Jewish homes for valuables. A third contingent of Germans entered Wąwolnica on a summer night to conscript Jews for local forced labor assignments. The Germans compelled the conscripts to run sprints up and down the Wąwolnica hill.⁵

In the early spring of 1940, the local administration reordered residential patterns in Wąwolnica by expelling Jews from Christian-owned residences. Whether the Jews were required to mark their houses is unknown. Survivor Helen Kotlar, a refugee from Kurów, only recalls the *shochet* among those expelled from his residence, which was ordered returned to its non-Jewish owner.⁶

A more formal 2-square-kilometer (494-acre) Jewish quarter was subsequently established in Wąwolnica. The sources differ on the date of its creation. The Polish official responsible for completing the postwar Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) questionnaire on camps and ghettos reported that the Wąwolnica ghetto was established in April but erred in reporting the year as 1942. (By then, almost all of the 2,000 Jews listed as inmates of the ghetto already had been sent to their deaths.) A Polish researcher at the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) later claimed the ghetto was created in February 1942.⁷

Local officials imposed new anti-Jewish decrees from the early spring of 1941, probably to pressure local refugees to

return home. On March 15, they suspended all food rations to Jews.⁸ (Prior to the announcement, every adult Jew in Wąwolnica had been allotted 120 grams [4.2 ounces] of bread daily, 200 grams [7 ounces] of sugar monthly, and 200 kilograms [about 441 pounds] of potatoes yearly.) In April, all the remaining Kurów refugees were expelled.⁹

The Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) and the Judenrat established a communal kitchen to provide a daily meal to every Jewish inhabitant of Wąwolnica. In July, 1,200 people paid for the dinners, 60 received subsidized meals, and another 440, the most indigent, were provided free meals. In July, the sugar ration was restored. On August 31, officials announced a 100-gram (3.5-ounce) daily bread ration.¹⁰

By then, the poor sanitary conditions bred by overcrowding and the absence of food had contributed to the outbreak of a typhus epidemic. On May 31, 1941, 525 Jews (40 percent) were ill. Quarantine procedures, mandated by German authorities in Puławy for Jews sick with typhus, may have given rise to the existence of a de facto Jewish quarter, or ghetto, as they required sick Jews be separated from the non-Jewish population in a designated building or cluster of residences.¹¹ However, the evidence is too sparse to say for certain why some local Poles believed a ghetto existed in Wąwolnica by April.

From June until September 1, 1941, 280 Wąwolnica Jews were interned in labor camps located in the pre-war Wąwolnica gmina, mostly at a brick-making concern in Łopatki and at a camp established for agricultural labor in Błonice. Some 70 others were sent to camps outside the pre-war gmina, mostly in Puławy. During this same period, the Judenrat was required to provide an additional 200 Jews daily for forced labor in Wąwolnica. About 25 craftsmen labored at a shoemaking workshop established in the ghetto.¹²

On March 22 or 24, 1942, an SS unit stormed the Wąwolnica ghetto, rounded up 120 Jews, including several Judenrat members, and executed them at the Jewish cemetery. According to the *Pinkas ha-kehilot* entry for Wąwolnica, the Jews were murdered in reprisal for the killing, probably by the Polish underground, of a local ethnic German employed in the Wąwolnica civil administration. However, reports in the Underground Archives of the Warsaw Ghetto note the Jews were killed during a "resettlement" Aktion.¹³ Unfortunately, German sources, which report 80 Jews were shot in Wąwolnica on March 24, do not indicate the reason for the shootings.¹⁴

Generally, scholars who maintain that the March 1942 killings were unrelated to the expulsion of the Jews believe an SS unit returned to Wąwolnica on March 29, 1942, to liquidate the ghetto. The Germans, joined by Ukrainian auxiliaries, expelled the entire Jewish community—some 2,000 people—to the ghetto in Opole, located 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Wąwolnica. A March 29 letter, from Mosze Goldbaum, an expellee to the Opole ghetto from Kazimierz Dolny, appears to corroborate this version of events in stating that "all of Wąwolnica today was chased to Opole."¹⁵ On either March 30 or 31, the Wąwolnica Jews were marched from Opole (via Wąwolnica) to the Nałęczów railway station

and ordered onto trains destined for the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁶

Others maintain the killings were part of a two-stage liquidation of the Wąwolnica ghetto. In this version of events, on March 24, 1942, the day of the executions, the SS expelled those Jews—about 1,450 people—whom they deemed unfit for labor. The expellees were placed on peasant carts and transported directly to the railway station in Nałęczów, located 5.8 kilometers (3.6 miles) east of Wąwolnica. There, they were forced onto trains and sent to Bełżec. On March 29, the SS returned to Wąwolnica to march the approximately 800 Jews predesignated for labor to the Opole ghetto. From there, the expellees were sent to the Poniatowa labor camp. Unfortunately, the existing German documentation, a March 30 memo about the ongoing *Juden Umsiedlungsaktion* (Jewish Resettlement Action), does not corroborate either version of events completely, as it notes only that 1,950 Jews from Wąwolnica and Opole had already been resettled via the Nałęczów railway station.¹⁷

A small number of Jews—perhaps 40 to 50 people—were held back from the deportations for a remnant ghetto in Wąwolnica. Tatiana Berenstein maintains the ghetto was liquidated in May 1942, when its inmates were sent outside of Wąwolnica for seasonal labor, including to the brickworks in Łopatki and for agricultural labor in Buchałowice. In October 1943, as part of the larger Aktion to murder almost all the surviving Jews in Distrikt Lublin, a small SS contingent from Lublin shot the laborers in front of mass graves located just outside the villages where they worked. Documentation for Łopatki, for instance, describes the October 1943 execution of 14 Jews who had been brought from Wąwolnica five months earlier for labor at the brickworks. Similar documentation for Buchałowice provides the location of the mass grave of 16 to 30 Wąwolnica Jews executed in the forest, just outside the village.¹⁸

Documentation for the village of Rogałów suggests some Jews may have remained in the Wąwolnica ghetto until October 1943. It describes the SS bringing nine Jews that month from Wąwolnica to Rogałów and executing them there as part of the liquidation of the remaining Jews in Distrikt Lublin.¹⁹

The precise number of Wąwolnica survivors is unknown. Although some adults did survive the war, only the youngest later recorded testimonies detailing their wartime experiences. Barbara Hofman was under a year old when her father Abraham left her on the doorstep of Maria Połkowska on Christmas Eve 1942.²⁰ The parents of eight-year-old Hela Szternblic instructed her to find shelter with their Polish friends, Wiktor and Pelagia Dobraczyński. Also counted among Wąwolnica survivors are Danuta Winnik and her son, Eugeniusz, refugees from Warsaw, aided by Józef Gorajek, a priest at St. Wojciech Church in Wąwolnica.

SOURCES Some documentation has appeared in publications such as Rutka Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawskiego*, vol. 1, *Listy o Zagładzie*

(Warsaw: PWN, 1997), pp. 136–141 (AŻIH, Ring [943] I/587/b, photostatic copy, Yiddish orig., Yiddish transcription, Polish trans.); Joseph Kermesh, ed., *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor! Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” (“Oneg Shabbath”)* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 116–120 (AŻIH, Ring [23] I/259, English trans.); and Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1957), pp. 282–283 (APL, 498/0/273, Vermerk to Türk, March 30, 1942, German transcription and Polish trans.). The latter document also appears in the German-language edition of the same collection, Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961).

Because Helen Kotlar initially sought refuge in Wąwolnica, her testimony, “Un dokh bin ikh geblibn lebn,” in the Kurów yizkor book, Moisheh Grosman, ed., *Yizker-bukh Koriv. Sefer yizkor, matsevet-zikaron le-ayaratenu Koriv* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Koriv be-Yisrael, 1955), touches on Jewish life in Wąwolnica during the first months of the war. It has been translated and published in English as *We Lived in a Grave* (New York: Shengold, 1980).

Most secondary works maintain the Wąwolnica ghetto was established in February 1942, likely because it is the date cited in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 558. The IPN research presented for Wąwolnica in *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945. Województwo lubelskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHWP and IPN, 1985), pp. 256–257, is confusing and at points contradictory.

Secondary accounts suggesting a single-stage ghetto liquidation include David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2003), p. 272; Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 165–167; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 291–294. Tatiana Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” *BŻIH*, no. 21 (1957): 78, however, outlines a two-stage liquidation and a remnant ghetto.

Also helpful are Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pp. 176–177, 246, 630–631; Bob Pool, “Holocaust Hero—Jews Honor Polish Priest for Saving Lives in World War II,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1988; and Ewa Czerwińska, “Mój sprawiedliwy wujek z Wąwolnicy,” *Kurier Lubelski*, March 11, 2006.

Archival sources documenting the history of the Wąwolnica Jewish community during World War II include AAN (e.g., Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraju, 202/II-29, pp. 17–19 (Ring [38] I/1220 [complete]); APL (e.g., 498 [273]); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, Ring [23] I/259, [24] I/262, [38] I/1220); 210/707; 211/1089); IPN (Ankiety [e.g., ASG]); IPN-Lu (e.g., Ds-2/67/1-6); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH] 211/1089;

Acc. 1999.A.0154 [AŻIH] 210/707; RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 6, 16/838, 840, 845, and reel 15, 49/120]; VHF (# 41853); and YVA (e.g., O-53/82 [APL 498]).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), ŻSS, 211/1089, pp. 8, 12.
2. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 16–18.
3. USHMM, Acc. 1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), AJDC, 210/707, p. 8.
4. Ibid., pp. 8, 47.
5. Kotlar, *We Lived in a Grave*, pp. 19–21, 24.
6. Ibid., pp. 22–24.
7. Compare USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 15, 49/120, p. 1; with Pilichowski et al., *Obozy*, p. 558.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1089, pp. 8, 10.
9. Ibid., pp. 2, 6.
10. Ibid., pp. 9, 12, 14, 17, 18.
11. Ibid., p. 8.
12. Ibid., pp. 12, 17, 23–24.
13. Ibid., RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring [24] I/262, [38.] I/1220, [23] I/259, respectively, *Wiadomości*, April 3 and 12, 1942, and *Mitteilungen*, May 5–6, 1942.
14. APL, 498 (Urząd Okręgu Lubelskiego [Amt des Distrikts Lublin—Landamt]), 0/273 (Judenaussiedlung, 1941–1942), p. 47, as cited in *Rejestr miejsc. Województwo lubelskie*, p. 256, for 80 victims.
15. USHMM, RG-15.079M, [943] Ring I/587, Mosze Goldbaum to Josel Goldbaum, March 29, 1942.
16. Latest expulsion date from Silberklang, “The Holocaust,” p. 271.
17. APL, 498/0/273, Vermerk to Türk, March 30, 1942.
18. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 6, 16/838, 16/840.
19. Ibid., 16/845.
20. VHF, # 41853, testimony of Barbara Jenkins.

WISZNICE

Pre-1939: Wisznice (Yiddish: Visbnitza), village, Włodawa powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Wischnitze, Kreis Biala Podlaska, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Wisznice, Biała Podlaska powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Wisznice lies on the Zielawa River, almost 89 kilometers (55 miles) northeast of Lublin. Some 1,100 Jews resided there on the eve of World War II.¹

The Germans occupied Wisznice on September 21–22, 1939, but immediately abandoned it to Soviet occupation. Red Army forces, which arrived on September 25, left on October 6, in the larger Soviet evacuation behind the Bug River. As many as 269 Wisznice Jews followed them.² A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Wisznice on October 7–8. The soldiers cut off the beards of older Jews and rounded up younger Jews for forced labor. On October 11, the soldiers departed Wisznice. Two days later, a sapper unit arrived to repair the bridge over the Zielawa. In November 1939, the German civil administra-



A group of Jews poses in front of the Wisznice ghetto entrance, 1942. The sign above the gate, written in German and Polish, reads, “Jewish quarter, non-Jews forbidden entry.” In the lower righthand corner, a legible portion of the placard attached to the sign reads, “Spotted Typhus.” USHMM WS #03839, COURTESY OF ELIEZER AND JENELLY ROSENBERG

tion ordered Jewish Councils (Judenräte) established in Kreis Biala Podlaska. By early 1940, Jews throughout the Kreis were required to wear white armbands.

In Wisznice, Jan Michalczyk, a local Pole, was appointed sołtys. In early summer, the Germans designated Wisznice for future Ukrainian resettlement and invited several ethnic Ukrainians (pre-war Polish citizens) to form a municipal council under Mayor (wójt) Teodor Bahdaj. German authorities elevated Wisznice to an administrative center within Kreis Biala Podlaska, by establishing a Landkommissariat (Rural Administration) and an Arbeitsamt (labor office) there. Wisznice Landkommissar Klemmer’s administration covered the parts of the pre-war Włodawa powiat incorporated into Kreis Biala Podlaska and included localities with significant Jewish populations such as Podedwórze-Opole, Rossosz, and Sławatycze. To police the territory, Gendarmerie posts were established in Wisznice and Sławatycze. Leutnant Buchholtz, the first commander of the Wisznice post, subsequently was replaced by Leutnant Schruck (Sruk). Gendarmes assigned to Wisznice included men surnamed Gering, Messal, and Pudiel. A Sonderdienst force, composed mainly of local Ukrainians, and a unit of auxiliary Polish (Blue) Police assisted the Gendarmes.

In November 1940, Bahdaj and the town council ordered the Jews confined to an enclosed ghetto. The ghetto was located about 100 meters (328 feet) north of the market square on 2 hectares (about 5 acres) of land between what now are Kościelna, Fabryczna, and Polna Streets.³ Among the earliest ghettos and the first enclosed ghetto established in Distrikt Lublin, the Wisznice ghetto was surrounded by a 2-meter-wide (6.6-foot-wide) ditch and a barbed-wire fence. A sign above the fence’s only gate forbade non-Jews entrance to the Jewish quarter. Jews with resources evaded ghettoization by moving from Wisznice. About 70 of the most impoverished families (466 to 500 people) reported to the ghetto. They resided in 22 to 26 mostly one-room houses.⁴



Six members of the Jewish Council pose on a snow-covered street in the Wisznice ghetto, 1942.

USHMM WS #03842, COURTESY OF ELIEZER AND JENELLY ROSENBERG

To oversee the ghetto's day-to-day administration, the Gendarmerie commander appointed a local Ukrainian "commissar" of the ghetto. The commissar replaced the Jewish Council with a three-person Jewish ghetto administration and established a Jewish police force.⁵

When 925 to 970 expellees from Mława arrived in Wisznice in mid-December 1940, local authorities released the Wisznice Jews from the ghetto and designated it instead for the new arrivals. The native Jews were confined to an open ghetto of 20 mostly two-room houses, situated in a Jewish neighborhood just beyond the enclosed ghetto's fence.⁶ Because the houses there had sustained extensive devastation while the Jews were imprisoned in the enclosed ghetto, most lacked doors and window glass.⁷

Naftali Birnhack, a member of the Kraków city Jewish Assistance Committee sent by Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) leaders in late December 1940 to visit refugees resettled in 15 localities in Distrikt Lublin, was most appalled by the plight of the Mława deportees in the enclosed Wisznice ghetto. He reported that they lacked the most primitive of utensils, bedding, and furniture. Those who could not be accommodated in ghetto housing slept directly on the ground in 35 earthen pits. Birnhack accused the Jewish ghetto administration of colluding with the ghetto's Ukrainian commissar to redirect relief earmarked for the refugees to native Jews and to torment the Mława expellees. He noted some 350 refugees had fled persecution in the ghetto. The 550 remaining inmates were mainly children (two thirds of the ghetto population) and elderly, left as hostages by family members unable to pay the Jewish authorities for "permission" to leave the ghetto. The Jewish ghetto administration required 350 underage children (girls younger than 14 and boys younger than 12) and the elderly to fulfill the forced labor obligations of their absent family members. Birnhack secured promises from the German Arbeitsamt director and the non-Jewish ghetto commissar to end the practice. They also "unofficially" agreed to permit the JSS to transfer children, the sick, and the elderly from the ghetto.⁸

Likely because the Wisznice JSS reported the "obligation" to assist the refugees was "too great," as most native Jews were freezing, had nothing to eat, and were ineligible for assistance, Birnhack asked the Sławatycze Jewish community to fill the void. By February 1940, the Sławatycze Jews had purchased and paid to transport to the ghetto some 2,100 kilograms (4,630 pounds) of potatoes, 640 kilograms (1,411 pounds) of bread, 436 kilograms (961 pounds) of kasha, 227 used pots, pans, and kitchen utensils, and 300 pieces of donated clothing.⁹ Birnhack organized in Parczew three JSS relief committees to aid the refugees in Wisznice. The Parczew JSS received American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and JSS funding to establish a community kitchen in the ghetto. It daily served a free meal to all 500 Mława refugees.¹⁰

Kreis-level JSS leaders visited the refugees on January 22, 1941, but mainly attempted to obtain permission from the Biała Podlaska Kreishauptmann for a release from the ghetto of the children, women, and elderly among the Mława refugees. JSS leaders in Biała Podlaska and Parczew indicated that the Kreishauptmann supported a proposal to transfer children and women from the ghetto, but the existing documentation does not indicate whether he officially permitted their departure. In mid-January 1941, the Wisznice ghetto commissar met with Kreis-level JSS leaders in Biała Podlaska to establish the terms of the inmate release.¹¹ Though the JSS never acknowledged an agreement, 150 inmates left the ghetto in February 1941.¹²

On February 14, 1941, hundreds more deportees from Kraków were resettled into the enclosed Wisznice ghetto.¹³ The Gendarmes began imposing death sentences on Jews in the two Wisznice ghettos. Three native Jews were executed in February 1941, likely for being found outside the open ghetto's borders without permission. In April, the Gendarmes executed another eight Jews from the enclosed ghetto for not reporting for forced labor.¹⁴ That month, the most corrupt JSS members resigned, enabling JSS leaders to restore funding directly to Wisznice.

Typhus epidemics in June and July 1941 and again in October infected at least 400 people and claimed more than 20 lives.¹⁵ Between May and October, 168 to 172 Jews were interned at labor camps. All but 16 were imprisoned at camps located in the pre-war Wisznice gmina, including at a camp established in Horodyszcze (pre-war Wisznice gmina, Włodawa powiat) to dig water retention and irrigation ditches for flood-control projects. The remaining Jews were required to perform forced labor, including street cleaning and building barracks for German policemen, SS, and soldiers sometimes billeted in Wisznice. How these obligations were shared between Jews in the open and enclosed ghettos is not known.

On January 28, 1942, Landkommissar Klemmer ordered 138 Jewish residents from nearby villages, including Rozwadówka, Motwica, and Czepotka, to consolidate in the enclosed ghetto. Accompanied to Wisznice by local Gendarmes, the expellees arrived naked and barefoot. Twenty died the next day.¹⁶ In April, the Wisznice ghetto populations crested at 1,020, including 463 refugees and about 120 local expellees

in the enclosed ghetto. In September 1942, 10 Jews were shot dead in two executions in the neighboring Wisznice colony. At least 4 of the victims were killed for escaping from the ghetto.¹⁷

The Germans liquidated the two ghettos in Wisznice in late September 1942. German security forces, including the Gendarmes and members of the 2nd Platoon of Reserve Police Battalion 101, stationed in Wisznice since late July, marched almost all the Jews some 51 kilometers (32 miles) to the ghetto in Międzyrzec Podlaski. Because of the distance, the deportees likely spent the night in Komarówka Podlaska. On October 6 and 9, members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 cleared the Międzyrzec ghetto, sending its inmates, including as many as 1,000 Wisznice deportees, to be gassed at the Treblinka extermination camp.

The 20 to 120 Jews retained for labor in Wisznice were held in a remnant ghetto, just a single house located just beyond the enclosed ghetto's gates.¹⁸ Mostly craftsmen, the inmates provided services to the German authorities. In November 1942, the Gendarmes and a small SS detachment liquidated the ghetto. The 108 inmates were executed, some in a mass grave near the Zielawa River in Dubica Górna and others at the Jewish cemetery in Wisznice.¹⁹

No inhabitants of the Wisznice ghettos are believed to have survived the war.

SOURCES Secondary sources touching on the history and destruction of the Wisznice Jewish community during World War II include Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 174–176; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 298–300. IPN research into the German executions of Jews in and around Wisznice is summarized by Kazimierz Leszczyński, “Eksterminacja ludności na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945,” *Biuletyn GKBZHWP* (Warsaw) 9 (1957): 223, 245.

The Web site of the Wisznice gmina, located at www.wisznice.pl, contains a local history section, titled “Dzieje Wisznice,” with the World War II coverage found under the “II wojna światowa w Wisznicach” (World War II in Wisznice) and “Pamiętniki” (Memoirs) links. The latter includes, under “Pamiętnik z II wojny światowej” (Memoir from World War II), a chronicle of the first and last days of the war written by the then-17-year-old Marian Romanowicz. The former contains an outline of the German administration in Wisznice, a brief history of the ghetto, and a link to a gallery of 17 photographs documenting the ghetto and Jewish life in and around Wisznice. Many of the same photographs appear on the Yad Vashem Web site. They also are available at USHMM, RG-05.006*01. The USHMM documentation includes captions for the photographs and a list, compiled in the fall of 1940 on the orders of sołtys Jan Michalczyk, of the names of the 834 Wisznice Jews slated to enter the ghetto. Józef Kermisz, ed., *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, *Akcje i wysiedlenia* (Łódź: CŻKHWP, 1946), pt. 1, pp. 5–7, contains an exchange between the Wisznice Jewish ghetto administration and the Jewish Affairs Officer in the

Kreis Biala Podlaska BuF about the conditions under which Jews from nearby villages were consolidated in the ghetto and the responses of the Wisznice Landkommissar and the Biala Podlaska Kreishauptmann to Jewish authorities' claims the deportees were mistreated.

Documentation pertaining to the Wisznice ghetto can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (210/721, 211 [132, pp. 45–47; 133, p. 36; 201, pp. 87, 91–92, 98, 100–101; 202, pp. 3–7, 13, 19–21, 23, 26, 27, 35–36, 42, 47–48, 52, 60, 66, 69; 203, pp. 19, 25, 43, 61; 204, pp. 31, 58; 205, p. 41; 206, pp. 38–38a, 79; 207, pp. 11, 42, 51, 90; 208, pp. 11, 44, 66, 72, 79; 646, p. 48; 970, pp. 1–24; 1099], 301/4417); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Lu (e.g., 124/67/1-2, 126/67/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-05.006*01; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6 (18/1223-1225, 1233-1235, 1241), reel 15 (49/199)]); VHF; and YVA. The JSS materials mainly document the assistance rendered to Mława deportees in the Wisznice ghetto during what likely was the largest grassroots effort by Jews in Distrikt Lublin to assist deportees. Though the VHF index lists testimonies from survivors of the Wisznice ghetto, in fact they are almost all from survivors of Nowy Wiśnicz.

Laura Crago

NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/1099, p. 13.
2. Ibid., RG-05.006*01, pp. 1–11.
3. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 15, 49/199.
4. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154 (AŻIH), 210/721, pp. 20–21.
5. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/646, p. 48.
6. Ibid., 211/1099, p. 21.
7. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/721, pp. 20–21.
8. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/646, p. 48.
9. Ibid., 211/970, pp. 1–24.
10. Ibid., 211/780, pp. 3–20, 24–28, 34–38, 43–50, 65–72.
11. Ibid., pp. 18–19; 211/202, pp. 13, 20, 23, 211/970, p. 12.
12. Ibid., Acc.1999.A.0154, 210/721, p. 27.
13. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/202, p. 69.
14. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 6, 18/1241, 18/1233.
15. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1099, pp. 7, 21; 211/205, p. 41.
16. Ibid., 211/207, p. 51.
17. Ibid., RG-15.019M, reel 6, 18/1234-1235.
18. AŻIH, 301/4417, testimony of Icchak Frydman, pp. 1–2.
19. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 6, 18/1225, reel 15, 49/199.

WŁODAWA

Pre-1939: Włodawa, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Włodawa, Kreis Cholm, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Włodawa, Lublin województwo, Poland

Włodawa is situated on the current Polish border with Belarus, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) northeast of Lublin. On the eve of World War II, there were 5,650 Jews living in the town.

After heavy bombing at the start of the war, German forces occupied Włodawa in mid-September 1939. Soon German

security forces rounded up hundreds of Jewish men and herded them into the Great Synagogue, threatening to burn it down. However, the men were released the next day in exchange for a selected group of hostages, who were also released after a beating, as the German forces suddenly retreated.¹ The Red Army then occupied Włodawa for a few days before withdrawing again behind the Bug River in accordance with the revised terms of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. This brief interlude gave some Jews the opportunity to flee into the Soviet-occupied zone.

The Germans reoccupied the town in October, setting up a civil administration several weeks later. With the establishment of the Generalgouvernement, the town lay within Kreis Cholm, Distrikt Lublin. The Kreishauptmänner were Werner Kalmus (October 1939 to February 1940), Gerhard Hager (May 1940 to July 1941), Hans Augustin (September 1941 to March 1942), Dr. Werner Ansel (April 1942 to November 1942), Claus Harms (December 1942 to May 1944), and once more Werner Ansel (July 1944). By 1941 a Landkommissariat (local outpost) of the Kreishauptmannschaft had been established in Włodawa.² Furthermore, there was a Grenzpolizei-posten (Border Police post), which was subordinated to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Lublin. From late 1939, the Włodawa Border Police post was headed by SS-Untersturmführer Nitschke; his deputy from January 15, 1942, was SS-Oberscharführer Schönborn. They were responsible for the town and its surroundings, up to the village of Sobibór 11 kilometers (7 miles) to the south.³

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established by the German authorities in October 1939. Members of the committee were Szyja Somer (president), Abram Kahan (vice president), Szyja Lichtenberg, Rabbi Mendel Morgenstern (only for a short period), Mejr Borensztejn, Jankiel Richtman, Ignacy Bransztäter, Dr. Springer, Hersz Buchbinder, Hersz Bober, and Antoni Gruber.⁴ The Judenrat and its small Jewish police force were responsible not only for collecting money but also

for providing German officials with jewelry, leather boots, furs, and other luxury items, which of course were available only on the black market.⁵

The Germans immediately instituted a series of economic measures against the Jews. In the spring of 1940, all Jewish stores were expropriated or placed under trusteeship. Thus, the Nazis rapidly proceeded with the elimination of the Jews from economic life. The Jews were also subjected to extortion: in October 1939, the community had to raise a “contribution” of 50,000 złoty within 24 hours.⁶ Early in 1942, the Kreishauptmann demanded 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of gold from the Włodawa Judenrat to avert a planned “resettlement Aktion.” The Jews collected the required gold, apparently delaying the Aktion by several months.⁷

At some point early in the occupation, possibly in late 1939, the Jews were removed from some of the main streets in the town and were given only 10 minutes to leave. Jewish survivor Sara Umelinsky recalls that her family had to move in with another family in a district that became the “Jewish quarter,” but she does not call it a ghetto. Other survivors also mention the existence of a Jewish quarter but do not give any details.⁸ However, in a report from May 1942, the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) branch in Włodawa replied negatively to a questionnaire asking whether a Jewish residential area (*dzielnica żydowska*) existed in the town.⁹ The survivor accounts in the yizkor book do not mention the existence of a ghetto in Włodawa until the fall of 1942.

Several waves of Jewish deportees were sent to Włodawa, which is described in at least one account as a “Judenstadt” or collection point for Jews.¹⁰ In December 1939, several hundred Jews deported from Kalisz arrived in Włodawa, where the local community had to provide them with assistance. In mid-March 1942, another train with 785 Jews (515 female and 270 male, including 283 children) arrived from Mielec in Distrikt Krakau, where the local Jewish population had been completely resettled.¹¹ A further transport saw Jews from Vienna arriving at the Bug River. The train had left Aspang station near Vienna on April 27, 1942, with 1,000 men, women, and children. Only 3 of them are known to have survived the Holocaust.¹²

The Nazi administration had a strong interest in the workforce of the local population and thus established an Arbeitsamt (labor office) soon after the conquest of Włodawa, under the supervision of Gutsche and Gröh. The office was also in charge of the Jews—or, rather, handed the responsibility for supplying workers on to the Judenrat, where Brettmehl was responsible.¹³ The Jewish Council also had to pay meager salaries and distribute food rations among the Jewish workers. Moreover, with the money received from “hiring” out ghetto inhabitants to interested companies, the council was able to organize food for the ghetto inhabitants.¹⁴ Possible jobs besides cleaning and housekeeping for Germans existed mainly at the many formerly Jewish handicraft businesses and stores, which could not easily be operated without their former owners and employees.

The largest employer in town was the German company Rohde, which conducted drainage projects for the Wasser-



Three young Jews pose at a sawmill near the Włodawa ghetto, May 20, 1942. Pictured from left to right are Ester Rajs, Isaac Ejer, and Jacob Rajs. Ester perished at Sobibór; Isaac and Jacob were resistance fighters who were killed in Adampol.

USHMM WS #07784, COURTESY OF RACHEL EJBER BIRNBAUM

wirtschaftsamt (Water Administration Office) Chełm;¹⁵ the local executive was Bernhard Falkenberg. First, he employed 180 Jews, but by 1942 their number had increased to some 1,500. They still lived in the Jewish section of town and walked to the work site southwest of Włodawa in the morning.¹⁶ At the site, Falkenberg was known for his generosity in providing food for the Jews and especially for protecting them against abuses. The labor camp had many more Jews than were really needed for the workload there. Thus, Falkenberg was honored as a Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem in 1969 for his humane treatment of the Jews working for him.¹⁷

Between May 18 and 23, 1942, Kreishauptmann Werner Ansel ordered the first anti-Jewish Aktion in Włodawa.¹⁸ About 1,300 Jews who were unable to work were forced by the German police and Ukrainian auxiliaries to assemble by the Kino Zachęta (cinema) at gunpoint. Then they were escorted to the railroad station and deported to the nearby Sobibór extermination camp, which had been erected with the assistance of 150 Jews from Włodawa.¹⁹ During the deportation Aktion, the Germans and their collaborators staged a massacre in the town, which claimed an even larger number of Jewish victims. Roughly one week later, some of the survivors wrote a coded letter to the “Oneg Shabbat” archive in Warsaw filled with biblical allusions regarding the recent deportation.²⁰

A further deportation Aktion in the summer of 1942 targeted children aged between 10 and 14. With severe violence, several hundred children were separated from their parents and transported to Sobibór. To calm them down, Rabbi Mendel Morgenstern accompanied them and went to his death with the children.²¹

In late October 1942, the Germans conducted another large-scale Aktion against the Jews of Włodawa. About a week before the Aktion, Nitschke ordered that the Jews from the surrounding villages, including Hańsk and Suchawa, and some from nearby work camps (including many malnourished German-speaking Jews) be brought to Włodawa. The town became so full that many Jews were sleeping outside in the rain. Then early in the morning of October 24, members of the SD, the Gendarmerie, Schutzpolizei, and mostly non-German auxiliaries from the Trawniki camp started arresting the Jews. They were collected in the sports stadium and then taken to the station. Only about 500 workers were exempted and allowed to remain, most of them working for Falkenberg; more than 7,000 Jews were transported to Sobibór and gassed there on arrival. At this time, more than 2,000 Jews from Chełm were marched to Sobibór via Włodawa.²²

At the end of October, the German authorities announced that Włodawa would be one of the few remaining towns in Distrikt Lublin where Jews would be permitted to reside in a “Jewish residential area” (*Judenwohnbezirk*). However, the purpose of this announcement was mainly to lure Jews back out of hiding.²³ A remnant ghetto was created in Włodawa, which consisted of only two streets, Wrykowska and Jatkowska. It was directly next to a new camp that had been established to hold the more than 500 remaining Jews with work permits (craftsmen). Both camps were surrounded by

high barbed-wire fences. The ghetto gradually filled up with hundreds of Jews who emerged from hiding. In one or two further Aktions at the end of October or early November, the Germans rounded up several hundred more Jews from the ghetto and deported them to Sobibór. The SS already murdered some of them at the station due to insufficient space in the railcars.²⁴

After this Aktion the Jews in the labor camp received larger monthly food rations consisting of 7.5 kilograms (16.5 pounds) of bread, 400 grams (14 ounces) of semolina, 400 grams of sugar, 400 grams of Polish poppy-bread, 200 (7 ounces) grams of jam, and 500 grams (17.6 ounces) of horsemeat. They were subjected to heavy forced labor for the Water Administration Office; getting to work required a march of 10 to 16 kilometers (6 to 10 miles). A small number of Jews were permitted to practice their old trades, but their rations were much smaller. The ghetto on Jatkowska Street continued to exist as a holding place for Jews brought in from the countryside, but conditions there were much worse. On April 30, 1943, the camp and ghetto were both liquidated, and most of the remaining Jews were deported.²⁵ Of 50 Jewish girls who were retained to sort out Jewish property from the ghetto after the Aktion, some escaped to a nearby manor, and the rest were killed on the spot shortly afterwards. Jewish Włodawa had ceased to exist. Only a few Jews managed to evade the roundups and flee to join partisan groups, for instance, the group led by Mosze Lichtenberg.²⁶ When the Red Army liberated the town in July 1944, no Jews were living there.

SOURCES There is only limited literature specifically on Włodawa during the Holocaust. Several detailed accounts of the fate of the Jewish community can be found in the yizkor book: Shimon Kants, ed., *Yisker-bukh tsu Vlodave* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Vlodovah vеха-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1974), which is mostly in Yiddish, with a shorter section in English. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 582, contains the judgment of Landgericht Hannover issued on October 29, 1964, focused on the deportations from Włodawa.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Włodawa can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/277, 2202, 2426, and 2766; 211/1109-1113); LG-Hamb (147 Ks 1/72); LG-Hann (2 Js 165/61 and 2 Ks 4/63); OKBZpNPL (Ds 16/67); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS]; RG-15.084 [Relacje]; RG-50.120 # 160); VHF; and YVA (e.g., TR.11/01238; M.10. AR.1/563).

Stephan Lehnstaedt

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.120 # 160, oral history with Sara Umelinsky; Kants, *Yisker-bukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), p. 53.
2. Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement. Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), p. 93.
3. *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, pp. 531–532.
4. AŻIH, 301/2202, testimony of Motel Rabinowicz, p. 2; Kants, *Yisker-bukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), p. 33.

5. AŽIH, 301/2202, p. 2.
6. Ibid., p. 2, dates this in October 1939; Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), p. 33, dates this in December.
7. OKBZpNPL, Ds 16/67, interview with Bernhard Falkenberg, July 16, 1965, pp. 19–20.
8. USHMM, RG-50.120 # 160; see also AŽIH, 301/2202.
9. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/113, p. 20.
10. AŽIH, 301/2202, p. 7.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/113, pp. 16, 20.
12. See the doew Web site (www.doew.at/projekte/holo-caust/shoah/wlodawa.html). For the transport from Vienna, see also AŽIH, 301/2202, p. 6. About 400 of these Viennese Jews were sent across the Bug to perform forced labor in Reichskommissariat Ukraine and were shot there together with other local Jews; see BA-L, B 162, II 202 AR-Z 472/67 (Hecht investigation), Bd. I, pp. 31–38, statement of Nachum Knopmacher, June 15, 1965.
13. AŽIH, 301/2766, testimony of Leon Lemberger, September 19, 1947, p. 1. See also *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, p. 582.
14. AŽIH, 301/2202, p. 2.
15. This kind of work is described in AŽIH, 301/277, testimony of Jecheskiel Huberman, pp. 1–2; see also 301/2766, p. 1.
16. *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, p. 582. Falkenberg's assistance to Jews is mentioned, for instance, in AŽIH, 301/2766, testimony of Leon Lemberger, p. 2.
17. Daniel Fraenkel and Jakob Borut, eds., *Lexikon der Gerechten unter den Völkern. Deutsche und Österreicher* (Göttingen, 2005), p. 109; and Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp. 274–275.
18. David Silberklang, "Die Juden und die ersten Deportationen aus dem Distrikt Lublin," in Bogdan Musial, ed., *"Aktion Reinhardt." Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004), pp. 141–164, here p. 157; and Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p. 257. For detailed descriptions of the deportation, see *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, pp. 532–549; and Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave*, pp. 33–38.
19. AŽIH, 301/2766, p. 1.
20. YVA, M.10.AR.1/563, letter from Włodawa to Warsaw, June 1, 1942. For a printed German version of the letter, see Silberklang, "Die Juden und die ersten Deportationen," p. 157; Hebrew and Polish versions can be found in *Archiwum Ringelbluma*, vol. 1, *Listy o zagładzie* (Warsaw, 1997), pp. 152–155.
21. AŽIH, 301/2766, p. 1. The number of deported children differs from between "at least 100" (*JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, p. 534) and 700 (Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave*, p. 36). Compared to the overall number of inmates, 200 to 300 seems more realistic.
22. Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), pp. 35–37; USHMM, RG-50.120 # 160; *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 582, pp. 537–538.
23. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, October 28, 1942, published in Tatiana Benzenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 342–344; see also Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), p. 38.

24. AŽIH, 301/2202, pp. 8–9.

25. Ibid., pp. 9–10; and Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp. 274–275.

26. AŽIH, 301/2766, p. 2. For information on the partisans, see also Kants, *Yiskerbukh tsu Vlodave* (English section), pp. 27–32, 79–88.

ZAKLIKÓW

Pre-1939: Zaklików, town, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Zaklikow, Kreis Janow Lubelski, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Zaklików, Stalowa Wola powiat, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Zaklików is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) south-southwest of Lublin. In 1921, the Jewish population of Zaklików was 1,403.¹ Before the war, most of Zaklików's Jews lived together in the area surrounding the town's marketplace. However, some Jewish residents shared a mixed residential area bordering the forest with Poles.²

In mid-September 1939, German airplanes bombed Zaklików, inflicting several casualties. On September 18, the first German units entered the town, encountering only token resistance from 10 Polish soldiers stationed there. In reprisal for this attempted resistance, however, the Germans burned down part of the Jewish shtetl.³ Later that day soldiers of the Wehrmacht forced the Jewish population to assemble in an empty lot. They held the Jews prisoner there for several hours with their hands on their heads. The Germans killed several Jews on this occasion, chosen more or less at random. Dozens of Jews from Zaklików, mostly single males, sought refuge from the Nazis in Soviet-occupied territory during these initial days.⁴

Those who remained in Zaklików were soon subjected to a series of anti-Jewish measures. Anything of value was confiscated by the Germans and stored in the study house, then shipped to Germany. Jewish freedom of movement was severely restricted: no Jew could go out after sunset or leave the town limits; and armbands bearing the Star of David had to be worn at all times. Soon after they arrived, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The community chose 12 representatives who became responsible for the enforcement of German decrees and demands. The Judenrat also organized a labor office (Arbeitsamt), which had the task of selecting able-bodied men for work in the town's lumber mills and in labor camps, such as that at Janów Lubelski. The Judenrat was perceived by many Jews to be actively collaborating with the Nazi regime, but one of its members also worked for an underground resistance organization. Zalman Kuperschmidt exploited his position in the Judenrat to issue forged identity papers, which helped a number of Jews from Zaklików to survive.⁵

There was also a unit of Jewish Police, which assisted the Judenrat in meeting the quota of forced laborers and in collecting the onerous "contributions" imposed on the Jewish community by the Germans. The Jewish Police wore armbands

marked “Ordnungsdienst” and applied pressure on the wealthier and more reluctant members of the community to ensure they paid their share.⁶

During 1941, Zaklików became a destination for Polish Jews driven out of other towns, considerably worsening overcrowding and living conditions. In March 1941, 400 refugees from other places in Distrikt Lublin arrived in Zaklików.⁷ On November 14, 1941, members of the Sonderdienst (ethnic German police) escorted a group of 584 Jews that came from Kraków to Zaklików and Radomyśl nad Sanem. About 200 of these deportees remained in Zaklików.⁸ By the end of 1941, there were around 2,200 Jews residing in the town.⁹

On March 15, 1941, a forced labor camp was established next to the rural settlement of Łysiaków. Poles as well as Jews from Polish territories were exploited there as forced laborers. The camp, which was headed initially by a man named Müller and later by his deputy Klau, held about 160 prisoners; during its existence nearly 700 inmates passed through it. The prisoners lived in poor conditions with no medical care. Many prisoners suffered from typhus. When it was liquidated on April 20, 1943, the Germans transferred the Polish workers, but the Jews were taken to an unknown location and murdered. The Germans then dismantled the camp.¹⁰

In Zaklików, limited rations were issued to those Jews who performed work, but these were inadequate to survive. Therefore, Jews traded remaining possessions with local Poles from the surrounding villages to obtain extra food, but “the peasants demanded exorbitant prices for their produce.”¹¹ This trade was facilitated by the fact that no fence or wall was constructed in Zaklików to contain the Jewish population. Ben Peltzman, a survivor, mentions that from October 1941 Jews who left the town without permission faced the death penalty, but he does not mention the existence of a ghetto.¹²

Under German occupation, Zaklików became part of Kreis Janow, which from August 1941 was under the control of Kreishauptmann Kurt Lenk. The main force responsible for implementing German control in Zaklików, however, was the local Gendarmerie post, headed by a brutal Gendarme named Becker. Becker frequently entered Jewish houses and took what he wanted or murdered Jews personally. The German murder and deportation of the Jews of Kreis Janow commenced in the fall of 1942. As it was located on a railway line, Zaklików, together with Kraśnik, was intended as a place where Jews were concentrated briefly from throughout the Kreis prior to their deportation by rail.¹³

On or around October 15, 1942, German SS forces assisted by Ukrainian auxiliaries entered the town and with the help of the Gendarmerie gathered all the Jews in the marketplace. Children, the sick, and the elderly were brutally murdered on the spot, as were those found in hiding. Altogether, at least 500 people were killed in and around Zaklików, and at least 1,000 were deported to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination camp.¹⁴ Excluded from the deportation were up to 500 privileged Jews, including members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police and some craftsmen, who then had to clear the streets of corpses. At least 200 others concealed themselves

successfully and emerged from hiding shortly after the Aktion. The Germans allowed them to return to their homes, granting them a very brief respite. According to Hersch Croin’s testimony, the selection of people to remain in Zaklików “was a trick to fool the local Jews who had hidden during the expulsion Aktion.”¹⁵

The German authorities announced throughout the Kreis that Zaklików would be one of two remnant ghettos along with Kraśnik, as recalled by several survivors. For example, Chaim Icek Hirschman of Janów recalled that on October 18, 1942, an order was given that the entire Janów area was to be *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews). All Jews had to report to Zaklików, which was to be designated a “Judenstadt.”¹⁶ Another Janów survivor recalled: “Then, all Jews were ordered to leave Janów. They were permitted to make their way either to Kraśnik or to Zaklików. I, together with my family, went to Zaklików. In Zaklików, a selection took place. Men capable of labor were separated out from the women, children, the elderly, and those recognized as incapable of work. . . . [I joined] my wife and 6-month-old son. . . . They loaded us onto a train and [we] were taken to Bełżec.”¹⁷ Peltzman recalled that the Jews of Janów were sent to Zaklików with the promise that they could create a new community there. He dates this prior to the first Aktion and gives high figures for the number deported. It is likely that Jews from Modliborzyce, where according to Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) records also no ghetto was established, were deported to Bełżec via the Zaklików railway station around this time.¹⁸

On October 28, 1942, Zaklików was listed as the only remaining Jewish “residential area” (*Judenwohnbezirk*) or remnant ghetto in Kreis Janow, in an order issued by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger. This served to reinforce the (false) assurances given earlier to Jews living in the Kreis that they would not be deported.¹⁹

Shortly afterwards, however, on November 2, 1942, nearly 1,500 Jews were sent to Zaklików from Kraśnik. Then on November 3, 1942, 2,000 people were deported from Zaklików by train to the Bełżec extermination camp.²⁰ These comprised about 300 people from Zaklików, together with those just arrived from Kraśnik.²¹ During this Aktion, a number of those who tried to escape were shot immediately and subsequently buried in the Jewish cemetery; the others were loaded onto cattle cars and sent to their deaths. About 150 young and healthy Jews were selected and sent to the labor camp of Budzyń near Kraśnik. This was subsequently converted into a concentration camp, and only about 20 of these people survived.²²

Following this deportation, Zaklików was officially declared to be cleansed of Jews, and it appears no “remnant ghetto” was formed in the town.²³ Rather, Zaklików served only as a collection and selection point for the Kreis within the destruction process. Nevertheless, the Germans continued to search for Jews in hiding. For example, later in November 1942, the Gendarmerie killed M. Magier, a Jew who had been able to hide until that point. His remains were buried in the forest close to the town.²⁴

In 1947, only about 200 Jews from Zaklików remained alive, most of them having fled to the interior of the Soviet Union in 1939–1941. More than 30 survived the German occupation in Budzyń and various other forced labor and concentration camps. Nearly all of the survivors left Poland shortly after the war to start a new life in Israel or other countries in the West.

SOURCES Information regarding the history of the Jewish community of Zaklików can be found in the following publications: Joshua Laks, *I Was There: Zaklików, a Small Town to Remember* (Tel Aviv: Y. Laks, 2005); Abraham Wein, Bracha Freundlich, and Wila Orbach, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999), pp. 213–215; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 2, *District Lublin* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2007), pp. 308–310.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community of Zaklików can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/27, 275, 1476, 2544, 3050; 211/704, 1142); BA-BL (R 102II/31); CAHJP (HM/6709-11); IPN (ASG; Ankieta OK Lublin, Ds 224/70/Kraś.); ITS; USHMM (RG-15.019M, reel 15; Hersh Croin Memoir: “The Last Act,” 2005.341; Larry Rosenbach papers, 2005.169.1); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1630; O-53/82; O-3/4242).

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NOTES

1. Laks, *I Was There*, p. 18.
2. Ibid., pp. 20–21.
3. AŻIH, 301/3050, testimony of Ben Peltzman.
4. Laks, *I Was There*, pp. 293–295.
5. Ibid., pp. 297–300; and AŻIH, 301/3050.
6. Laks, *I Was There*, p. 301; and AŻIH, 301/3050.
7. Wein, Freundlich, and Orbach, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 7, *Lublin and Kielce*, p. 215.
8. BA-BL, R 102II/31, Gendarmerie Post Zaklików to Kreishauptmann Janow Lubelski, November 15, 1941, and Kreishauptmann Janow Lubelski to Main Department Internal Administration, BuF, November 18, 1941.
9. Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 309.
10. RG-15.019M, reel 15, p. 54.
11. Laks, *I Was There*, pp. 303–307. A ration card is reproduced on p. 303.
12. AŻIH, 301/3050; see also Verordnung des Generalgouverneurs Frank, Warsaw, October 15, 1941, *Verordnungsblatt GG* (1941) Nr. 99, p. 595, reprinted in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 128–129. Rubin, *The Rise and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 309, also states there was no ghetto in Zaklików.
13. Laks, *I Was There*, pp. 309–313; Becker was subsequently murdered by the partisans on one of his regular visits to Kraśnik. AŻIH, 301/2544, testimony of Henryk Proper; 301/1476, testimonies of Chaim and Pola Hirszman, indicates that Jews from Janów Lubelski were deported via Zaklików.
14. Laks, *I Was There*, pp. 316–319. AŻIH, 301/3050, appears to give the figure of 2,000 people deported. Also see

David Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, February 2003), p. 280.

15. Laks, *I Was There*, pp. 321–322; USHMM, 2005.341, Hersh Croin Memoir: “The Last Act.”

16. AŻIH, 301/27, testimony of Chaim Icek Hirszman; see also 301/3050.

17. Ibid., 301/1476.

18. Ibid., 301/3050. 211/704, p. 22, the local JSS branch reported in April 1942 that there was no ghetto in Modliborzyce, noting also that 670 Jews from Vienna arrived there on March 7, 1941, raising the Jewish population to 2,218 in April 1942. RG-15.019M, reel 5, p. 436, refers to Jews from Vienna, Modliborzyce, Janów, and other surrounding towns being shot and buried at the Jewish cemetery in Zaklików in early October 1942 [*sic*]—this probably refers to the Aktions in mid-October and early November.

19. Polizeiverordnung des Höheren SS- und Polizeiführers Krüger über die Errichtung von Judenwohnbezirken, October 28, 1942, published in Berenstein et al., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, pp. 342–344.

20. Silberklang, “The Holocaust in the Lublin District,” p. 281.

21. Laks, *I Was There*, p. 319.

22. AŻIH, 301/3050.

23. This is the opinion of Dieter Pohl, *Von der “Judenpolitik” zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 136. Remnant ghettos were formed in the other places listed on the October 28 order.

24. IPN, Ankieta OK Lublin, “Egzekucje,” Zaklików, pow. Kraśnik: OK Lublin, Ds 222/70/Kraś.

ZAMOŚĆ

Pre-1939: Zamość (Yiddish: Zamoshtsb), town, Zamość powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Zamosc, Kreis center, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Zamość, Lublin województwo, Poland

Zamość lies 85 kilometers (53 miles) southeast of Lublin. Before World War II, its 12,531 Jews formed the third largest Jewish community in the Lublin region.

On September 13, 1939, a Wehrmacht unit occupied Zamość but ceded it after 12 days to advancing Soviet forces. After a September 28 border renegotiation placed Zamość under German occupation, 7,000 to 8,000 Jews joined the Red Army’s October 5–6 evacuation behind the Bug River.

Upon reoccupying Zamość on October 8, 1939, Wehrmacht soldiers humiliated, robbed, and terrorized Jews. German police desecrated the two synagogues and several prayer houses. The violence ebbed from October 12, when military authorities ordered stores reopened. The Jews were subject to forced labor, made compulsory on October 26. Marking decrees, first issued in late November, required adult Jews by December to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David. From December, a series of Distrikt-wide and local orders confiscated Jewish businesses and property.

In mid-October 1939, the local Gestapo office and the German mayor ordered a Jewish Council of Elders established. In January 1940, it was transformed into a 24-member Jewish Council (Judenrat). Attorney Mieczysław (Mendel) Garfinkel served as council chair. The council established eight departments: food supply, post office, registration office, labor, welfare services for labor camp inmates, taxes, vital statistics, and finance. It recruited a group of so-called strong arms (*shtarken*) to round up forced laborers and to confiscate property that the Germans demanded, including by early 1940 some 235,000 złoty.¹ In mid-1941, the council organized a 10-person Jewish police force. Dawid Garfinkel, its first commander, was the Jewish Council chair's brother.

On December 19, 1939, some 556 Jewish expellees arrived from Włocławek. Helmuth Weißenmaier, the Kreishauptmann of Zamosc, ordered 150 men from the transport imprisoned, pending an expulsion to Soviet-occupied Poland. Around January 15, 1940, the prisoners were resettled in Szczepieszyn. Seventeen expellees, returning to Zamość to join their families, were arrested the next day, probably by a unit commanded by Sturmbannführer Fritz, the head of the local SS office. The men were murdered outside the SS barracks, located at the former agricultural school in Janowice Małe, a western Zamość suburb. Garfinkel recalled the killings were the first great tragedy to befall the Jewish community during the German occupation.²

The January 1, 1940, census counted 5,000 Jews, including 1,000 refugees. Among the latter were expellees from Włocławek, Koło (175), and Łódź (100). By January 1941, the Jewish population had expanded to 7,626, as natives returned home; locals displaced by war devastation moved from Biłgoraj, Frampol, Janów Lubelski, Krasnobród, Tyszowce, and other devastated places; and refugees arrived from farther away, including from Częstochowa, Łódź, and Warsaw.

Most Jews fulfilled forced labor obligations by reporting daily to what ultimately were 10 different labor camps. (Hundreds of other Jews were interned at many of these same camps.) From June until November 1940, the Zamość Water Regulation Office (Wasserwirtschaftsamt) interned 550 men at two labor camps: 250 in Bortatycze (also called the Białobrzegi camp) and 350 at the cavalier (*kawaler*), located in Zamość's pre-war garrison. The SS ordered another 150 conscripts to report to Janowice to retrofit its barracks. In the fall of 1940, the Luftwaffe, in preparation for the invasion of the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941), opened the Air Force Construction Office (Bauleitung der Luftwaffe) and a Jewish labor camp. In mid-October 1940, it moved the camp to the Planty neighborhood, expanded the inmate population from 300 to 800, and assumed control for all Jewish labor in Zamość and at its airfield and hangar construction sites in Mokre (150 Zamość laborers), Łabunie (200 to 300), Klemensów, and Oszczów. Though Luftwaffe authorities set labor priorities, the SS and their collaborators exercised day-to-day authority at the camps, with the exception of a Planty-area camp the Wehrmacht had established in November.³

In early April 1941, the city was placarded with posters ordering the Jews to move by May 1 into a ghetto in the New Town (Nowa Osada), the poorer of Zamość's two Jewish neighborhoods. Because many Jews already resided there, the orders in practice required residents of the wealthier Old Town (Stare Miasto) Jewish neighborhood and a few hundred Jews in other neighborhoods to report to the ghetto.

Before the ghetto's establishment, German authorities expelled most of the Warthegau deportees from Zamość. On April 5, the SS transferred 400 expellees to Komarów. On April 8, Polish (Blue) Police escorted another 248 expellees to Krasnobród. The head of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Komarów reported the expellees, from Włocławek, Koło, and Łódź, had been cleared from the New Town to make room for wealthier native Jews. On May 1, the SS transferred to Komarów another 250 Jews who had refused to report to the ghetto.⁴

The Zamość ghetto was an unfenced open ghetto. A June 11, 1941, curfew order established the railway line on Lwów Street as the boundary separating the ghetto from the adjoining Old Town.

Because the neighborhood's Polish inhabitants were not expelled and could come and go as they pleased, food was more plentiful and cheaper than in most ghettos. To sell rations to the 7,500 to 8,000 Jews in the ghetto and to finance some of its undertakings, the Jewish Council opened five bakeries, three food distribution points, and a butcher's shop. German authorities permitted some 50 to 64 Jewish enterprises. Those established in the ghetto were mainly restaurants, where the wealthier could supplement rations, limited to potatoes, bread (3.1 kilograms [6.8 pounds] for July 1941), and occasionally sugar. A restaurant opened by the wife of SS informant Herman (Hilel) Goldhamer became legendary for its offerings of unobtainable meats and fish. The Jewish Council sometimes met there.⁵ Unable to afford such luxuries, most Jews bartered their possessions for food, usually with Polish acquaintances in the ghetto.

The ghetto's mainly wooden houses lacked indoor plumbing. Most had no outdoor latrines. There was nowhere to bathe, as the *mikveh* located within the ghetto's borders had been destroyed in a pre-war fire. From May 1941, Garfinkel attempted to renovate the structure. Only in late August did authorities consent to purchases of necessary plumbing materials.⁶

As renovations were under way, a late summer typhus outbreak became an epidemic by October 1941. To treat the sick, the Jewish Council, on September 26, opened a 60-bed hospital for infectious diseases. By October 22, the Kreishauptmann forbade Jews from leaving the ghetto and non-Jews from entering. Posters on the ghetto's outskirts warned: "Typhus! Entry Forbidden!"⁷ Some 16 of 279 hospital patients perished, including two Jewish Council members. The overburdened local JSS organization, led also by Garfinkel, shuttered its community kitchen on September 18, leaving some 1,000 impoverished without a daily meal.

The completion of the bathhouse in November 1941, shipments of medicine from JSS headquarters in Kraków, and the

Kreishauptmann's onetime consent for the Jewish Council to retain 2,000 złoty in rent payments to purchase medicine and disinfection products controlled the spread of the epidemic by December, when the ghetto reopened.⁸ The community kitchen also was reestablished. In November, the JSS increased from 120 to 130 the number of impoverished children enrolled and fed at a day-care center, established in June. The children daily received for breakfast milk or milky coffee and bread with marmalade or artificial honey and the community kitchen's daily midday meal.

The Luftwaffe expanded the Jewish labor force, mainly by doubling the number of seasonal Wasserwirtschaftsamt (Water Regulation Office) camps and sending women there to cultivate and harvest vegetables for German military units stationed in the area.⁹ In Zamość, about 200 artisans (40 percent of the pre-war figure) received licenses to work in their trades. Some 60 craft workshops operated. Most were tailoring and shoemaking enterprises. From July 1941, the SS expected the Jews to finance and to transform its Janowice compound into an opulent equestrian and driving school. The Jewish Council requisitioned sequestered building supplies from ghetto residents, purchased other materials, and paid 4 złoty daily to hundreds of Jewish laborers and craftsmen and higher wages to non-Jewish masons it also employed. The 1.5 million złoty the council spent for the project by October 1942 was one of the largest Jewish property expropriations to occur during the ghetto's existence.¹⁰

About 300 to 500 additional Jews were resettled in the ghetto. In May 1941, 78 deportees arrived from Częstochowa.¹¹ On November 10, the entire Jewish population of Wysokie was expelled to the Oszczów labor camp and transferred from there in mid-December to the ghetto. Because the Wysokie Jewish Council oversaw some 200 Jewish residents (60 families) living in areas bordering Zamość (specifically in the pre-war Wysokie, Stary Zamość, and Skierbieszów gminy), the expulsion in practice cleared all Jews from northern and northwestern villages located within an approximately 10- to 20-kilometer (6- to 12.5-mile) radius of the city.¹²

In late 1941, a cryptic letter received by a ghetto resident indicated the remaining Jews in Koło had been gassed at the Chełmno extermination center.¹³ When 18,000 Jews from Lublin were sent to the Bełżec extermination facility between March 17 and 28, 1942, Jewish Council members from Lublin called Garfinkel to inquire about their fates. Garfinkel discovered from Jewish officials in localities closer to the railway line used for the transports that 10,000 to 20,000 Jews daily arriving at Bełżec perished in "mysterious" circumstances. Garfinkel facilitated the return to Lublin of some Bełżec escapees. However, he did not believe the reports, even subsequently from a Zamość eyewitness, and kept his discovery quiet.¹⁴

On April 11, 1942, at around 1:00 P.M., local Gestapo staff, led by Hauptsturmführer Gotthard Schubert, demanded the Jewish Council immediately assemble for deportation some 2,500 people at the New Town market square. Late that afternoon, the German military police and the Gestapo, including

Fritz's cavalry unit, joined the Jewish Police and some Judenrat members in rounding up expellees. At about 9:00 P.M., the Jews were marched to the cargo railway dock (the so-called beet platform), located between Peowiak and Orlicz-Dreszer Streets (by the Luftwaffe Construction Camp), and locked into railway cars. At midnight, the expellees were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. Approximately 250 to 520 Jews were killed during the Aktion. Another 2,000 to 2,900 were gassed at Bełżec.¹⁵ After the deportation, some 4,000 Jews remained in the ghetto.

On April 30 and May 2, 1942, about 2,000 Czech Jews, mainly from Prague, arrived in two transports from the ghetto in Terezín (Theresienstadt). On May 3, some 800 deportees were escorted to Komarów. That day, another 800 German Jews arrived from the Dortmund and Düsseldorf areas.¹⁶ Transport leader Alwin Lippman, a decorated World War I officer and pilot who had served with Göring in the Richthofen squadron (officially, Fliegerabteilung 69), replaced Garfinkel as the commander of the Jewish Police. The force was doubled to 20 men.

On May 17, 1942, the Jewish Council required that the elderly be "resettled" in what survivors remember as the "Old People's Aktion."¹⁷ That day, the Jewish Police began rounding up the elderly from lists and incarcerating them in makeshift prisons. As the Aktion was ongoing, the Arbeitsamt on May 24 ordered all Jews to stand before a German civilian commission to determine their fitness for labor. Jewish-Czech Police from Izbica (nad Wieprzem) assisted the commission. Some 400 to 500 people deemed unable to work (mainly women and children) were imprisoned. Among the growing inmate population were some 950 Reich and Protectorate expellees.¹⁸ Deportees from Komarów, Tyszowce, Krasnobród, and other nearby localities were brought to Zamość and similarly imprisoned. On May 27, some 5,000 Jewish prisoners were subdivided into groups, marched separately to the beet platform, and loaded onto a train, which made three trips to transport the expellees to the Sobibór killing center.

On August 11, 1942, members of the Lublin Gestapo, commanded by Amon Göth, ordered some 2,000 Jews expelled from the ghetto. After just 250 people appeared, Göth ordered assembled instead inmates from the city's labor camps and Jewish Council and Judenrat employees. Garfinkel bribed Göth to cease the Aktion. That day, 70 Jews were shot on the spot. Another 350 were sent to Majdanek.¹⁹

On September 1, 1942, the Jews were confined to five streets in the New Town, from which Poles were expelled. To stave off deportation, the Jewish Council secured consent to transform the ghetto into a closed labor camp.²⁰ The council ordered fencing, and laborers started enclosing the ghetto. In early September, some 400 nonregistered ghetto residents were sent to their deaths at Bełżec.

On October 16, 1942, the ghetto liquidation began. Gestapo members Kolb and Lagenkampfer shot dead 60 patients and personnel at the hospital. The approximately 2,000 surviving ghetto residents were informed that Zamość soon would be transferred to SS authority and ghetto residence

limited to the organization's urban conscripts, mainly craftsmen. The remaining Jews, including all the surviving Jewish Council members, were to be marched immediately to Izbica, where the Wehrmacht would establish a labor camp.²¹ Some 150 Jews were murdered during the march. In Izbica, the Zamość deportees, except for those who hid or fled, were enveloped by the October 19 deportation, during which some 5,000 Jews were sent to Bełżec and Sobibór.²²

Almost all 300 Jews left behind in the Zamość ghetto were executed on November 20, 1942. In mid-March 1943, the ghetto, by then a single house, was liquidated. Its residents were interned at the Luftwaffe Construction Camp. On May 31, the camp's 400 inmates (including 53 women) were sent by truck to Majdanek.

About 70 Jews survived the Zamość ghetto. Among them were Mieczysław and Dawid Garfinkel; Roszia Luft (Rose Warner) and Mordechaj Sztrygler, transferred, respectively, in August 1942 and May 1943 to Majdanek; Lea Reisner, a survivor of the October 1943 Sobibór uprising; and about 20 Czech deportees.

At a postwar trial in Wiesbaden, Schubert was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

SOURCES Adam Kopciowski, the coauthor of this entry, has written *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2005), a history of the Jews in Zamość during the German occupation. The work contains an impressive multilingual bibliography. Kopciowski also has authored several smaller English-language summaries, including one published in the introduction to *Everlasting Name: Zamość Ghetto Population List, 1940*, 2nd ed. (Tel-Aviv: Israeli Organization of Zamość Jewry & Their Descendants, 2007). The list mentioned in the title was from the January 1940 census of the Zamość Jewish population. The book's front pieces include an English translation of the testimony of Fiszelson, a former Zamość ghetto resident, found after the war in the Ringelblum archives, from AŻIH, [1059] Ring I/946, pp. 1–12.

English-language testimonies published by survivors include Moshe Frank, *To Survive and Testify: Holocaust Traumas of a Jewish Child from Zamosc*, trans. Shaul Rosner (Tel Aviv: ha-Kibuts ha-me'uhad, [1998]), originally published in Hebrew as *Le-hišared ule-baid teraumat ha-Shoah shel yeled Yebudi mi-Zamoshets* (Tel Aviv: Bet loḥame ha-geṭaot, 1993); Gary Keins, *A Journey through the Valley of Perdition* (Gary Keins, 1985); "Henryk [Garfinkel] Lewandowski," in Wiktoria Śliwowska, ed., *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak*, trans. Julian Bussgang and Fay Bussgang (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 97–99; and the testimony of Lea Reisner-Bialowitz, in Miriam Novitch, ed., *Sobibór, Martyrdom, and Revolt: Documents and Testimonies* (New York: Holocaust Library and Schocken Books, 1980). The testimony of Sara Rozen is available electronically, under her married name Christine Damski, on the Web site of the Humboldt State University as part of a larger project titled "To Save a Life: Stories of Holocaust Rescue."

The yizkor book, Mordechai W. Bernstein, ed., *Pinkes Zamoshtsh: Yizker-bukh nokh der farsbnitener durkh di natsis* (Bue-

nos Aires: Tsentral-komitet far Pinkes Zamoshtsh, 1957), also contains testimonies from survivors. Important too are Grzegorz Pawłowski (Szepsel "Zvi" Jacob Hersz Griner), "Moje życie," *Tygodnik Powszechny*, nos. 15–16 (1966) and no. 11 (1967); and the substantial excerpts of the AŻIH 302 testimonies from Moshe Frank and Mieczysław Garfinkel published in the chapter devoted to Zamość in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich, 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), pp. 134–159. Testimonies from Czech deportees include those published by Jan Osers, "Flucht aus Zamosc," and Lukáš Příbyl, "Die Geschichte der Flucht von 'As 232' und 'As 233' aus Zamosc," both in *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente*, respectively, no. 5 (1998): 288–321 and no. 9 (2002): 252–271. Information about Alwin Lippman comes from the memoir of the Izbica ghetto survivor Thomas Toivi Blatt, *From the Ashes of Sobibor: A Story of Survival* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), pp. 59–62.

Contemporary press coverage includes "Zamość," *Gazeta Żydowska*, October 26, 1941, no. 103, p. 2.

Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, vol. 38 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), Lfd. Nr. 790, covers the postwar investigations and trials of several former Gestapo members assigned to Zamość during the deportations, including most notably Gotthard Schubert. This same material is covered archivally in the entry through the documentation held by Polish investigators, located at IPN-Lu, 3/67.

Additional relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: APL (RŻwZ); AŻIH (e.g., 210/741, 211/1147-1152, 301 [111, 1297, 2284, 4605, 5391, 5404, 5581, 5785, 5951, 5953, 5965], 302 [81, 122], Ring [(1199) I/378, (1481) I/596 a f g, (1482) I/583 a]); BA-L (LG-Wies, 8 Ks 1/70); FVA; IPN (e.g., 2-ob [Bełżec, Mieczysław Garfinkel deposition], 188, ASG, SOZ [41, 96]); IPN-Lu (e.g., 3/67/1-10, 51/67/1-2, 98/67/1-5, 265/67/1-2, 284/383/1-2, 328/67/1-2, 354/67/1-2, 399/67/1-3, 400/67/1-2, 401/67/1-2); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]; Acc.1999.A.0154 [AŻIH 210]; RG-15.019M [IPN ASG] [reel 6 (18/1336, 1339-1340, 1346, 1347-1348), reel 15 (49/201, 203, 207-208)]; RG-15.056M [APL RŻwZ]; RG-15.068M [IPN 188]; RG-15.079M [AŻIH Ring]; RG-50.030*0270; RG-50.549.02*58); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1287, O-3/2985).

Adam Kopciowski and Laura Crago

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 302/122, testimony of Mieczysław Garfinkel, pp. 4–5.
2. Ibid., pp. 7–8.
3. Ibid., 301/5404, anonymous testimony, p. 1.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/553, p. 1; 211/135, p. 42; Bernstein, *Pinkes Zamoshtsh*, p. 943 (testimony of Y. Tsvilikh); AŻIH, 302/122, pp. 10–12.
5. Bernstein, *Pinkes Zamoshtsh*, pp. 936–937, 946 (Tsvilikh).
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1150, pp. 32–34, 38, 41.
7. Ibid., 211/1151, pp. 16, 28, 35; AŻIH, 302/122, p. 18.
8. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1151, pp. 14, 35, 47–48.
9. AŻIH, 301/4605, testimony of Lejzor Rochman, pp. 1–2; 301/5581, testimony of Franciszka Srebnogórska (Frajda Fink), p. 2.

10. Ibid., 302/122, pp. 27–29; IPN, 2-ob (Bełżec), Mieczysław Garfinkiel deposition, p. 4; YVA, O-3/2985, testimony of Hedda (Rubinsohn) Arnold, pp. 24–25.
11. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1149, p. 11.
12. Ibid., 211/1151, pp. 46, 64; 211/1152, p. 5; 211/1137, p. 3.
13. YVA, M-1/E/1287, testimony of Boruch Wilder, pp. 12–13.
14. AŻIH, 302/122, p. 34; IPN, 2-ob (Bełżec), Garfinkiel, p. 1.
15. AŻIH, 302/122, pp. 35–38; Bernstein, *Pinkes Zamoshtsb*, pp. 949–951 (Tsvilikh); IPN-Lu, 3/67, pp. 39, 69.
16. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1152, p. 34.
17. Bernstein, *Pinkes Zamoshtsb*, pp. 951–953 (Tsvilikh).
18. AŻIH, 301/5404, pp. 2–3; 302/122, p. 41.
19. Ibid., 302/122, pp. 42–43.
20. Ibid., 301/5581, p. 5.
21. Ibid., 301/5404, pp. 4–5; 301/4605, pp. 2–3.
22. Ibid., 302/122, pp. 44–46; 301/5953, testimony of Stefan Sendlak, p. 8.; Bernstein, *Pinkes Zamoshtsb*, pp. 961–962 (Tsvilikh).

ZWIERZYNIEC

Pre-1939: Zwierzyniec, town, Zamość powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland; 1939–1944: Kreis Bilgoraj, Distrikt Lublin, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Zamość powiat, Lublin województwo, Poland

Zwierzyniec lies about 94 kilometers (58.4 miles) south-southeast of Lublin. In August 1939, some 2,050 Jews lived in Zwierzyniec (total population, approximately 4,000) and the neighboring village Rudka.

On September 18, 1939, a Wehrmacht unit occupied Zwierzyniec for less than a day before moving on to confront Polish forces near Tomaszów Lubelski. Shortly thereafter, Soviet forces occupied Zwierzyniec. When a September 28 border renegotiation returned Zwierzyniec to German occupation, as many as half the Jewish residents of Zwierzyniec and Rudka joined the October 5 regional Soviet military evacuation behind the Bug River.¹ A few days later, the Germans reoccupied Zwierzyniec.

In early 1940, Zwierzyniec was attached to Kreis Bilgoraj, headed from October 1939 until March 1942 by Kreishauptmann (and Landwirt of Bilgoraj) Werner Ansel. In April, Hans Augustin, previously the Cholem Kreishauptmann, succeeded Ansel. In Zwierzyniec, the Germans appointed a local Polish collaborationist administration, led by Józef Paszkowski, the pre-war *wójt* (mayor). In practice, a trustee or manager (*Treuhänder*) appointed by the Governor of Distrikt Lublin oversaw the Zamoyski properties and exercised day-to-day authority. In December 1941, Ernst Streit, the first *Treuhänder* of the holdings, was arrested. Walter Bünsch replaced him. Deprived of almost all his properties, Zamoyski soon organized and chaired what the Germans, in January 1940, officially recognized as the Polish Welfare (Assistance)

Councils for Zamość, then from February 1940, for Biłgoraj powiaty. (That same month, the Germans banned Jewish participation on the councils and Polish-Christian Council members from providing food assistance to Jews.)

The Germans transformed Zwierzyniec into a retreat for high-ranking military officers and for the visiting Nazi elite. The hunting lodge was designated an officer's club. Some buildings on the estate were used for a German hospital and medical clinic. From January 1940, Nazi leaders, including Hans Frank, the head of the Generalgouvernement, arrived to hunt the rare pheasants and other birds at the preserve.²

The prominent officials and military personnel living at and visiting the estate probably were responsible for the Jewish residents of Zwierzyniec being confined to a ghetto. The Zwierzyniec ghetto may have been the only officially recognized ghetto in Kreis Bilgoraj before April 1942, the date by which the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization expected its local branches to return a ghetto questionnaire. Zwierzyniec was the only JSS branch in the Kreis known to have responded positively on the questionnaire.³ (Not all the records of the various branches have survived intact.) In September 1941, Kreishauptmann Ansel nonetheless excluded Zwierzyniec from a list of ghettos he was required to submit to Distrikt-level authorities in Lublin. Ansel, in fact, claimed no ghettos existed in Kreis Bilgoraj. He maintained that only in Biłgoraj proper was Jewish residence limited to several streets. Because the list was prepared in response to a Reich Interior Department inquiry about available space for incoming Jews, Ansel (and Bünsch) may have excluded Zwierzyniec to prevent additional Jews from being resettled there.

Unfortunately, neither physician Leopold Reidler nor (Mordecai) "Mordka" Erbesfeld, the leaders of the Zwierzyniec JSS, provided a date for the ghetto's establishment on the questionnaire. The first known reference to the ghetto (*dzielnica żydowska*) in JSS records comes from July 1941.⁴ The ghetto may have been established during what diarist Zygmunt Klukowski described as a pogrom, launched by an SS unit on June 1, 1941, the Christian feast day of Pentecost (Whitsun), against Jews in neighboring Rudka. That day, the SS killed three Jews, beat several scores more, and destroyed or confiscated all the possessions of the Rudka Jews.⁵ Unfortunately, Klukowski did not recall whether the Rudka Jews were evicted to a newly established ghetto in Zwierzyniec.

Erbesfeld described the Zwierzyniec ghetto as an unfenced, open ghetto. He did not provide its exact location. He only noted the ghetto occupied a pre-war Jewish neighborhood. JSS financial records, for March, suggest the *mikveh* was located within the ghetto's boundaries.⁶ In July 1941, the ghetto population stood at 544, including at least 73 refugees. Among the latter were December 1939 deportees from Kalisz, Katowice, Łódź, and Poznań. The ghetto population also included a number of voluntary transplants from Lublin, Pruszków, and Warsaw.⁷

Little is known about the Jewish administration in the ghetto. Reidler described the Jewish Council (Judenrat)

members as belonging to the pre-war Zwierzyniec elite, all merchants, known neither for their charity nor moral virtue.⁸ In response to a mid-March 1942 mandate from the county medical director, the JSS established a sanitation force to maintain hygiene standards.⁹

On July 26, 1941, JSS officials in a telegram reported a fire, the previous night, had destroyed part of the ghetto and appealed to charity leaders in Kraków for immediate assistance for 80 to 200 people left homeless after 15 homes burned down.¹⁰ The fire makes it difficult to ascertain the number of residences included in the ghetto. Erbesfeld on the questionnaire described the ghetto as composed of 20 homes (60 rooms), making it likely that 35 residences initially were designated for the ghetto. Though 6 people on average lived in each available room, Reidler reported just 10 cases of typhus in 1941 and none in the first quarter of 1942.¹¹

The Zwierzyniec ghetto inmates were conscripted for labor at the sawmill and lumber yard on the former Zamoyski estate.¹² Others repaired and expanded the roads leading from Zwierzyniec to Biłgoraj and to Szczepieszyń. Most *matzevot* in the cemetery were used on the project. The road construction crews worked for Organisation Todt (OT), which in the spring of 1940 established an encampment (initially mostly for German employees) in the Zamoyski (Zwierzyniec) Forest. The Jewish road construction crews eventually were housed in two of six barracks erected at the camp. In June 1941, some 280 ghetto residents were interned at labor camps established in the pre-war gmina, including at the OT camp, in barracks at the lumber yard and sawmill, and at several camps the Luftwaffe established on former Zamoyski properties to build air bases and a flight training school. Another 16 Jews worked as craftsmen, mainly at four workshops established in the ghetto for painting, carpentry, tailoring, and shoemaking. Each workshop employed no more than 4 people.¹³

From the spring of 1942, several small groups of Jews, usually of two or three, were arrested and executed at the Jewish cemetery or at a mass grave located in the so-called Borek Woods.

By mid-May, the ghetto population had experienced a 172-person decline. As the postwar Polish Court Inquiries about Executions, Mass Graves, Camps, and Ghettos (ASG) records for Zwierzyniec indicate, relatively small numbers of Jews were executed, and an intermediate deportation probably occurred, perhaps in conjunction with the May 1942 expulsion of part of the Szczepieszyń Jews to the Bełżec killing center.¹⁴ Because French prisoners of war (POWs), transferred in the spring of 1942 from Stalag 325 in Rawa Ruska and housed at the OT camp, filled the places of Jewish labor conscripts at the lumber yard, the sawmill, and on road construction crews, the 372 Jews held back for labor in Zwierzyniec probably were mainly craftsmen, their families, and others providing services deemed essential to estate operations. Another deportation occurred on August 9, 1942, with the expulsion of 500 to 1,000 Jews from Biłgoraj to the Zwierzyniec railway station and their depor-

tation from there to Bełżec. Stanisław Bohdanowicz, a local Polish-Christian, recalled that the Germans also ordered the Zwierzyniec Jews deported that day. However, the Jewish Council staved off a total expulsion by offering a bribe of gold. Some 52 Zwierzyniec Jews were added to the Biłgoraj expulsion.

On October 21, 1942, Security Police stationed in Biłgoraj and SS Latvian and Lithuanian auxiliaries liquidated the ghetto. They ordered the 300 to 320 Jews immediately assembled at the square. Many Jews were killed attempting to evade expulsion. Another 100 were shot during the march to Szczepieszyń. Upon arrival, at around 9:00 p.m., the survivors were imprisoned in the buildings of the Alwa factory, along with most of the remaining Jews in Szczepieszyń. At noon, on October 22, the Jews were marched to the railway station, forced onto wagons, and transported to Bełżec, where they were gassed on arrival.¹⁵

There are believed to have been no survivors of the Zwierzyniec ghetto.

SOURCES No secondary work has ever before mentioned the Germans confining the Jewish community of Zwierzyniec to a ghetto. Unfortunately, secondary sources providing coverage of the fate of the Zwierzyniec community during World War II remain limited to Polish-language sources including the larger survey of the war offered by Krzysztof Czubara, "Zwierzyniec w latach II wojny światowej (1939–1944)," *Zamoyski Kwartalnik Kulturalny*, no. 3 (92) (2007): 17–29, which is available electronically at the journal's Web site.

Stanisław Bohdanowicz, "Likwidacja Żydów ze Zwierzynicy," in Zygmunt Klukowski, ed., *Wydawnictwo materiałów do dziejów Zamojszczyzny w latach wojny 1939–1944*, vol. 2, *Zamojszczyzna w walce z Niemcami* (Zamość: N.p., 1946), pp. 77–86, is from a Polish-Christian eyewitness of the Zwierzyniec expulsions. Historian Martin Gilbert had a part of the Bohdanowicz testimony translated into English and published it subsequently in *The Holocaust: A History of the Jews of Europe during the Second World War* (New York: Henry Holt and Company 1986), pp. 408–409, but did not realize its origins and therefore improperly attributes it. Klukowski, the editor of the document collection containing the Bohdanowicz testimony, also is the author of *Dziennik z lat okupacji Zamojszczyzny (1939–1944)* (Lublin: Lubelska Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1958), available in English as *Diary from the Years of Occupation, 1939–1944*, trans. George Klukowski (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), an indispensable wartime source for events in the larger Zamość region, including in Zwierzyniec.

Primary documentation can be found in the following archives: APL; AŻIH (e.g., 211 [219, pp. 7, 10, 19; 220, p. 78; 221, pp. 47, 58, 64; 222, pp. 5, 44, 66–67; 223, p. 19; 224, pp. 1, 28; 1162–1164]); IPN; IPN-Lu; USHMM (e.g., Acc.1997.A.0124 [AŻIH 211]); VHF (e.g., # 16536, 19996, 47064); and YVA.

Laura Crago

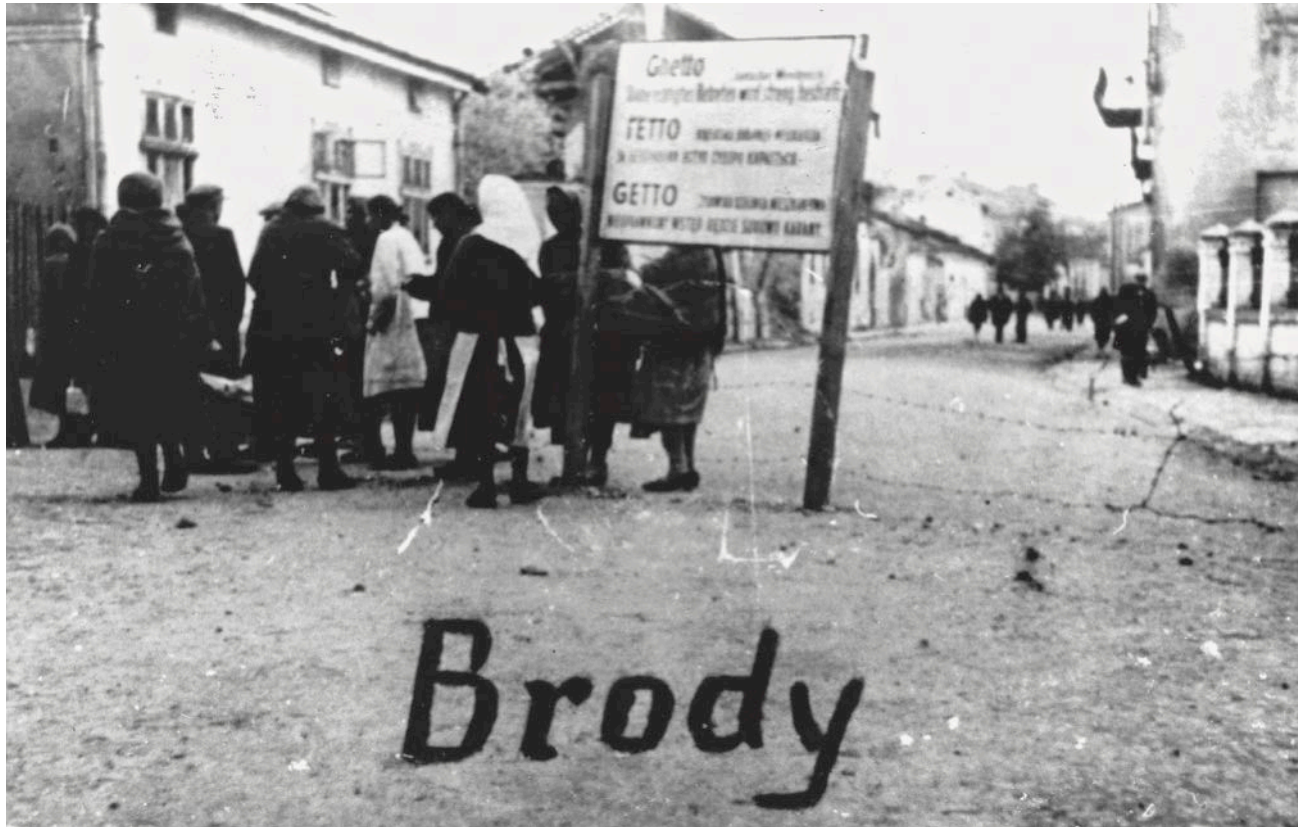
NOTES

1. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (AŻIH), 211/1162, p. 2.
2. Klukowski, *Diary*, pp. 67–68, 71, 73–74, 105.

3. AŽIH, 211/1162, p. 46.
4. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, p. 56.
5. Klukowski, *Diary*, p. 155.
6. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124, 211/1162, pp. 41–42; 211/222, p. 66.
7. Ibid., 211/1162, pp. 10–11.
8. Ibid., pp. 30–31.
9. Ibid., 211/224, pp. 16, 28.
10. Ibid., 211/1162, pp. 4, 11, 14.
11. Ibid., p. 38.
12. Ibid., 211/220, p. 78.
13. Ibid., 211/1162, pp. 2, 10, 36.
14. Ibid., 211/1160, p. 46.
15. Klukowski, *Diary*, pp. 219–220.



EASTERN GALICIA REGION



A group of Jewish women at the entrance to the Brody ghetto in Eastern Galicia, 1942. The sign is written in German, Ukrainian, and Polish.

USHMM WS #23380, COURTESY OF EUGENIA HOCHBERG LANCETER

EASTERN GALICIA REGION (DISTRIKT GALIZIEN)

Pre-1939: Lwów, Stanisławów, and Tarnopol województwa, Poland; 1939–1941: Drohobych, L'viv, Stanislav, and (most of the) Ternopol' oblasts, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: L'viv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and (most of the) Ternopil' oblasts, Ukraine

Distrikt Galizien was established and added to the four existing Distrikte of the Generalgouvernement in August 1941, just six weeks after the German invasion of the Soviet Union. The Distrikt included the pre-war Polish Lwów, Stanisławów, and Tarnopol województwa. In Distrikt Galizien, the German authorities initially created 17 Kreise, governed by Kreishauptmänner. On April 1, 1942, these were consolidated into 14 Kreise: Brzezany, Czortkow, Drohobysch, Kalusz, Kamionka-Strumilowa, Kolomea, Lemberg-Land, Rawa Ruska, Sadowa Wisznia, Sambor, Stanislau, Stryj, Tarnopol, and Zloczow. In addition, there was a Stadthauptmann in Lemberg. The governor of Distrikt Galizien was Otto Wächter. The SS- und Polizeiführer (SS and Police Leader, SSPF) was Friedrich Katzmann. At the start of the German occupation, approximately 540,000 Jews were living in the area of Eastern Galicia.

The chronology of German ghettoization was somewhat different in Distrikt Galizien than in most other regions. Many of the more than 50 ghettos were not established until the fall of 1942, some only in December, quite late in the process of concentration, deportation, and destruction. A few ghettos, some of them open ghettos, were established earlier, starting in August 1941. Accompanying the entire process was the progressive concentration of the Jews from the smaller towns and villages into the larger towns, where most of the ghettos were established. This proceeded in a series of waves up until the fall of 1942, accompanied also by large-scale killing Aktions (such as that conducted in Stanisławów in October 1941) and mass deportations, mostly to the extermination camp in Bełżec (from March 1942 onward). A number of different types of forced labor camps also existed alongside the ghettos in this region. This combination of local mass murder, deportation, and ghettoization, spread over a period of more than 18 months, gave the Holocaust a somewhat unique character in Distrikt Galizien, combining key elements both from the rest of the Generalgouvernement and from the occupied Soviet territories (e.g., Reichskommissariate Ostland and Ukraine).

Operation Barbarossa commenced in Eastern Galicia with a wave of killings, conducted mainly by the German police and Ukrainian militias. In Lwów, and other places, the Einsatzgruppen exploited outrage at the discovery of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) murders in order to conduct mass shootings of adult male Jews and suspected Communists. A wave of anti-Jewish pogroms and brutal murders, carried out primarily by local Ukrainians, swept the region during the summer of 1941, causing some Jews to flee the villages to larger towns for security. More than 20,000 Jews were murdered throughout the summer.

Despite a provisional ban on further ghetto creation, announced by Generalgouverneur Hans Frank in July 1941, in expectation that the Jews would soon be deported to the east, the new civil administration in Distrikt Galizien began setting up a few ghettos almost immediately. A Jewish residential district (open ghetto) was created in Rohatyn in August 1941, and the open ghetto established in Tarnopol in September was then enclosed in December.¹ Planning for ghettos also started in the fall for several larger cities, including Lwów and Stryj. Among the motivations for German administrators was a desire to isolate the Jews from the rest of the population and the need to acquire space in towns.



The public humiliation of a Jew in the Stryj ghetto, ca. 1942.
USHMM WS #63411, COURTESY OF YIVO

The pattern of destruction intensified in October 1941 when the Security Police in Stanisławów began the systematic mass shooting of Jewish men, women, and children in pits, shortly after the murder of more than 23,000 Jews (including 11,000 recently expelled from Hungary) in neighboring Kamenets-Podolskii to the east. The presence of many Jewish expellees from Hungary in and around Stanisławów was probably a contributory factor in this escalation. After a trial run in Nadwórna on October 6, when 2,000 Jews were killed, on October 12, 1941, "Bloody Sunday," Hans Krüger, head of the Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, GPK) Stanisław, and his men murdered around 10,000 Jewish men, women, and children in a most brutal fashion. Having reduced the city's Jewish population, a ghetto was then established in Stanisławów. It was officially pronounced a closed ghetto on December 20, 1941, and surrounded by a wooden fence. In this southeastern corner of Distrikt Galizien, the German authorities had conducted mass killings of Jews, also accompanied by ghetto formation in Horodenka, Kołomyja, and Kosów by December 1941. In Lwów, however, attempts to establish a ghetto in November and December 1941 proved too chaotic and were broken off in the face of a rampant typhus epidemic.

The usual array of anti-Jewish measures was introduced in Eastern Galicia in the second half of 1941, affecting also the bulk of Jews who had not yet been ghettoized. Jews had to wear armbands bearing the Star of David, they could not leave the town limits without permission, food was generally rationed, and trading with non-Jews was forbidden or severely restricted. The German authorities established Jewish Councils (Judenräte), which had to collect "contributions" in money and kind and supply quotas of forced laborers, and were assisted by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). Judenrat members were held personally responsible for the implementation of German demands, and a number were murdered.

By the winter of 1941–1942, the systematic recruitment of able-bodied Jews to work in a variety of forced labor camps

had commenced. Many of the camps were built to support the German Durchgangsstrasse (highway, DG) IV road construction project and were subordinated to SSPF Katzmann. Jewish forced laborers were also exploited in the oil fields around Drohobycz and Borysław, on plantations for the extraction of synthetic rubber, and for a time, in villages in the Carpathian Mountains. Some Jewish Councils were obliged to supply food and clothing to Jews sent to the camps from their communities. Living conditions in the camps were brutal, and many of the inmates died. Subsequently, the Janowska Street camp in Lwów became not only a place of forced labor but also a mass killing site.

At the end of 1941, Jews were ordered to surrender their fur items of clothing for the use of the German army, and searches conducted to enforce this demand resulted in a number of people being shot. During the winter, many Jews died of disease and starvation in Eastern Galicia. By early in 1942, the Bełżec extermination camp, just across the border in Distrikt Lublin, was preparing to receive its first victims. In response, the authorities in Distrikt Galizien began registering Jews in three separate categories, to facilitate the subsequent deportation and murder of those incapable of work. The killing of Jews in mass-shooting Aktionen continued in Lwów, Kołomyja, Tarnopol, and other places in the first months of 1942. Then from mid-March, rail transports to Bełżec from Distrikt Galizien commenced. German Security and Order Police units conducted the first Aktion in Żółkiew, deporting 700 Jews "incapable of work." However, 2 Jewish women, Mina Astmann and Mala Thalenfeld, managed to escape from Bełżec and returned to Żółkiew, spreading news of the new techniques of mass murder there.²

A renewed wave of concentration and ghetto formation accompanied the start of deportations. In April 1942, ghettos were established in Borszczów, Tłumacz, and Tyśmienica. At this time some entire Jewish communities were dissolved: in March 1942, the Jews of Husiatyń were transferred, temporarily, to the small town of Probużna, before being consolidated again, in October, in the Kopyczyńce ghetto. Following the murder of about half the Jews of the short-lived open ghetto in Gwoździec in April, the remainder were relocated to the ghetto in Kołomyja. The number of Jews living in smaller towns and villages declined steadily throughout 1942, although exemptions were permitted for doctors and certain other categories of skilled workers.

In a few towns, however, the process of ghettoization remained gradual. In Stryj, Kreishauptmann von Dewitz had ordered the establishment of an open ghetto in early October 1941, but in January 1942, 2,000 Jews were still living outside the ghetto area, and only in July did the last non-Jews move out. Even then, doctors, members of the Judenrat, and some craftsmen still resided outside the ghetto to facilitate their work, although they could not leave the town.³

On July 19, Heinrich Himmler ordered the liquidation of all the Jews in the Generalgouvernement by the end of 1942.⁴ In the last five months of 1942, the German authorities murdered more than 250,000 Jews in Distrikt Galizien,



A public hanging on Zolkovkoy Street in Lwów, 1942.
USHMM WS #37247, COURTESY OF NARA

most following deportation to Bełżec. After the murder of about 40,000 of Lwów's Jews through local massacres and deportations within two weeks in August, with the active participation of the Ukrainian police, a closed ghetto was created there in early September. Now that Bełżec was operating at full capacity, the process of concentration, deportation, and where necessary, ghetto formation became more closely synchronized.

In some cases, Jews were informed that they were being transferred to a ghetto but then were deported by train almost immediately on arriving in the larger town. According to the yizkor book, this was the case in Turka, where Jews were concentrated on August 1, 1942, but it appears that no ghetto was actually established, as most Jews were deported within a few days.⁵ Jews brought from the village of Stojanów to Radziechów in mid-September 1942 sat at the railway station for two days without food and then were packed into railroad cars and deported without entering the Radziechów ghetto.⁶

In early September 1942, the Security Police conducted a wave of mass deportations to Bełżec from Kreis Stryj. Two weeks later, the Kreishauptmann issued instructions for the Jews of the Kreis to be concentrated in Stryj, Bolechów, Chodorów, Skole, or Żurawno. Then, by the end of September, most of the remaining Jews had been further concentrated in the Stryj ghetto for deportation. However, even after a further wave of deportations in October, remnant ghettos were established in some places, such as Chodorów and Żurawno, as all Jews who remained exempted for labor were "under all circumstances to be housed in barracks." In Chodorów this comprised a group of some 800 people, performing a variety of tasks, who were moved to a separate Jewish quarter by the end of 1942.⁷

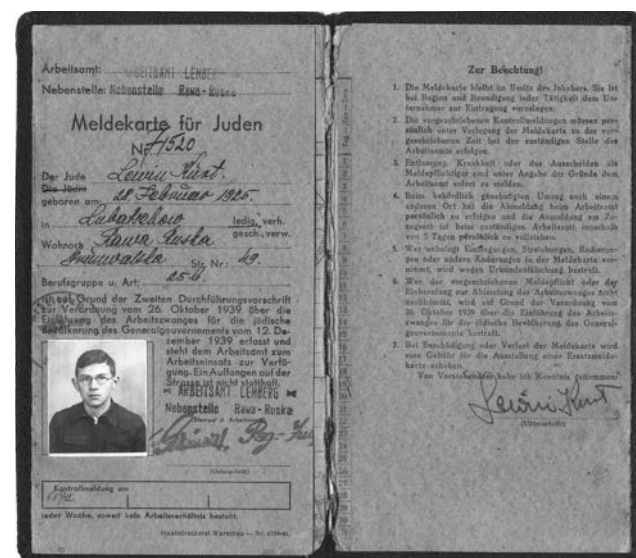
The main wave of ghettoization in the region is documented in the order of Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, issued on November 10, 1942. It proclaimed the confinement of Jews to just 32 ghettos in Distrikt Galizien by December 1, 1942.⁸ Some of these places already had ghettos, and others were created in November and December, such as those in Kozowa, Busk, Jaryczów Nowy, Rudki, and Żółkiew. In fact, in December the number of ghettos slightly exceeded the 32 officially recognized. A few remained open, marked only with signs, despite Krüger's instructions for their enclosure.

The order's intent was to clear the entire region of Jews except for those concentrated in the official ghettos or labor camps. Any Jew caught outside of these places would be shot. In view of the massive wave of deportations from the region that had been proceeding since July 1942, the remaining Jews in the smaller towns were considerably unnerved by the demand to move into the ghettos. The Jewish Council of Gliniany tried to bribe German officials in Złoczów for permission to establish a ghetto in their town, to avoid the cruel fate of resettlement. This was denied, and when the Jews left Gliniany for nearby ghettos, Ukrainians robbed them of almost everything on the way.⁹

Mass deportations of Jews, accompanied by the shooting of those unfit for travel or attempting to hide or escape, continued on a horrendous scale through the fall of 1942 into December; those who remained were Jews registered for work. People desperately sought work cards and, in some places, special armbands, which offered a measure of protection against deportation. The Germans repeatedly insisted that the Jewish Councils and Jewish Police assist in the roundups for forced labor and deportation (or be deported themselves), creating bitter divisions among the Jews. A good number of Jews created hiding places, obtained Aryan papers, or fled to the countryside in the hope of surviving a while longer. Hundreds of Jews jumped from the deportation trains, but even if they survived the ensuing manhunts, many simply returned to the ghetto they had just left to reunite with family or to exploit local contacts and resources, as seemingly their best chance of survival.

Living conditions in the ghettos deteriorated as the last reserves were used up, and being enclosed further limited their access to food and other resources. In some places, such as Skalat, the deportations were accompanied by reductions in the ghetto area, which increased overcrowding. Remaining Jews demolished the empty Jewish houses and sorted Jewish property for the Germans as part of a salvage operation.¹⁰ Lack of space, malnutrition, and poor sanitation led to the spread of disease in the ghettos. In Rawa Ruska, SSPF Katzmann used the severe typhus epidemic there as a pretext for liquidating the ghetto in December 1942, using police personnel who had been vaccinated to clear out the ghetto.¹¹

Despite the existence of many ghettos in Distrikt Galizien for at least six months or more, comparatively little evidence has survived about social life in these ghettos, beyond the naked struggle for survival. Some religious observances,



A Jewish forced labor card issued to Kurt Lewin while in Rawa Ruska. Lewin subsequently escaped from the Lwów ghetto. USHMM, ACC.1997.A.0076

including the burial of the dead, were maintained, and a few contemporary letters and diaries give insights into the Jews' awareness of their likely fate and their effort that went into surviving.¹² Jews bartered their last remaining possessions for food and sought any kind of employment that might offer the chance to obtain an extra crust of bread. In the Borszczów ghetto, some inmates wrote poems and songs, but few manifestations of cultural life in the ghettos have survived.

Among the strategies pursued by the Jewish Councils, bribing German officials was very widespread, but ultimately it offered no real protection. In 1942, the Jewish Social Self-Help (Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe, or JSS) set up branches in a number of towns in Distrikt Galizien, which helped support soup kitchens and provided additional assistance, but all these efforts to aid the large numbers of destitute Jews remained woefully inadequate. In the Bursztyn ghetto, Dr. Shumer describes Jews swollen with hunger and children with skinny legs from malnutrition. Many Jews died of starvation, and their bodies were left lying in the streets for days.¹³

At the end of 1942, around 160,000 Jews remained alive in Distrikt Galizien, interned either in labor camps or the remaining ghettos, many of which now closely resembled labor camps. In some places, such as Tarnopol, new labor camps were established outside the ghetto, and the able-bodied Jews were sent to these camps. In Lwów, the remnant of the ghetto was renamed the *Judenlager* (Jewish camp) and converted into a labor camp for Jews. In Bolechów, the short-lived ghetto had been dissolved by December 1, but groups of Jewish laborers were still housed in several barrack camps close to their workplaces for several months more. For some locations, such as Podwołoczyska and Leszniów, the available primary evidence is insufficient to confirm the existence of a ghetto, but it can be assumed that the few Jews retained, after the main wave of deportations in the fall of 1942, were exploited for labor.¹⁴

Following the closure of the Bełżec extermination camp at the end of 1942, SSPF Katzmann resorted to mass shootings to murder all the remaining Jews in the ghettos in the first half of 1943. A few ghettos were reduced in size or completely liquidated in brutal Aktions between January and March. Then from April to June 1943, almost all remaining ghettos were liquidated, although in a few locations the ensuing cleanup operations continued into July. Finally, most of the remaining forced labor camps were liquidated and their inmates shot during the summer of 1943.

In a number of ghettos and labor camps in the region, Jews offered armed resistance to the Germans and their collaborators, some even using guns bought from Italian soldiers stationed in the region. For example, a group of Jews from the Czortków ghetto obtained arms and escaped to the forest in the spring of 1943, but most members of the group were killed in subsequent clashes with the German and Ukrainian police. After the liquidation of the Tarnopol ghetto, Jews that went into hiding defended themselves with grenades and other weapons when the Nazis and their collaborators came to drive them out. The liquidation of the remnants of the Lwów ghetto (Julag) in June 1943 also encountered stiff armed re-

sistance, and some Jews escaped into the sewers of the city. An idea of the bitter nature of these last clashes, as the Germans and their Ukrainian police collaborators sought to root out every last Jew, can be found in SSPF Katzmann's concluding report on the ghetto clearances:

[D]uring the Aktions, there were many other enormous difficulties, since the Jews attempted under all circumstances to evade resettlement. They not only tried to flee, but also concealed themselves in the most inconceivable corners, in sewers, in chimneys, even in cesspits &c. . . . They barricaded themselves in underground passages, in cellars converted into bunkers, in holes in the ground, in sophisticated hiding places in attics and shacks, inside furniture, and so forth.¹⁵

Even after the ghetto liquidations, German Gendarmes and the Ukrainian police regularly combed the surrounding countryside in search of any remaining Jews; those captured were generally shot on the spot. Rewards were paid to those denouncing Jews, and the death penalty was threatened and sometimes implemented against anyone caught hiding escaped Jews. Ukrainian nationalist partisans posed an additional danger to fugitive Jews in the forests.

Despite the German threats, a number of righteous people risked their lives to save Jews in Distrikt Galizien. In Tarnopol, several individuals of Polish ethnicity, including Dr. Kolczycki and Karola Pietroszyńska, actively assisted Jews. In Borysław, many Jews were saved through the intervention of Berthold Beitz, a German manager with the "Karpathen" oil company. In Lwów, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, head of the Greek-Catholic Church, led an operation that hid around 150 Jews. Many Jews survived in the countryside, aided by local peasants; others survived with the aid of forged Aryan papers or made their way across the border into Romania or Hungary.

Among the most important German trials dealing with the perpetrators of the Holocaust in Eastern Galicia were those of Hans Krüger (head of the GPK in Stanisławów), who was sentenced to life in prison by a court in Münster in 1968, and also of Paul Raebel and Hermann Müller (Sipo Tarnopol), both sentenced to life in prison by a court in Stuttgart in 1966.¹⁶ Other trials of perpetrators were conducted in Soviet Ukraine, Poland, and East Germany.

SOURCES Among the most useful publications with regard to the Holocaust in Eastern Galicia are the following: Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); Jakob Honigsman, *Juden in der Westukraine: Jüdisches Leben und Leiden in Ostgalizien, der Bukowina und Transkarpatien 1933–1945* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2001); A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraińskiego evreistva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskii spravocchnik* (Kharkov: "Karavella," 2001); A. Kruglov, *The Losses Suffered by Ukrainian Jews in 1941–1944* (Kharkov: Tarbut Laam, 2005); Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); Dieter Pohl, "Hans Krüger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanislawow

Region (Galicia),” *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 239–265; and Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996).

Of assistance in identifying the ghettos in the region are *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980); Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010); and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; AŽIH (e.g., Collections 211, 229, 301, and 302); BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; CDJC; DAI-FO; DALO; DATO; FVA; GARF; GASBU; GASBU-L; IfZ; IPN; MA; NARA; RGVA; TsDAHOU; TsDAVO; USHMM (e.g., RG-31.003M); VHF; YIU; YIVO; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-75-105, pp. 4–5.
2. BA-L, B 162/2100, pp. 95–100.
3. DALO, 1952-1-62.
4. BA-BL, NS 19/1757.
5. J. Siegelman, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Turka al nehar Stryj ve-ha-seviva* (Haifa: Former Residents of Turka [Stryj] in Israel, 1966), p. 241. *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)*, p. 75, indicates the existence of a ghetto in Turka, but this is not corroborated by other available sources, including several survivor testimonies; see, e.g., AŽIH, 301/4974 and 4975.
6. Eichmann Trial, Session No. 23, May 2, 1961, as cited on www.nizkor.org.

7. DALO, R 1952-1-62, pp. 92, 97; AŽIH, 301/2574, testimony of Juda Kneidel.

8. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.

9. *Hurbm Glinyane: Lezikoren unzere kdoyshim* (New York: Emergency Relief Committee for Gliniany and Vicinity, n.d.), pp. 260–261.

10. Abraham Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl* (USA, 1995), pp. 12, 20, 29, 32.

11. International Military Tribunal, *Trial of the Major War Criminals (TMWC)*, vol. 37 (Nuremberg, 1948), pp. 404–405, Doc. L-018.

12. See, for example, for Przemyślany Wendy Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Golfard and the Holocaust in Galicia* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press in association with USHMM, 2011) or the contemporary correspondence published in A. Zilberman, ed., *Yizkor Bukh Zborov* (Israel: Landsmanshaft Zborov un Umgebung in Israel, 1975).

13. Dr. Lipa Shumer, “Ummmentshlechn leydn un peyn,” in Shimon Katz et al., eds., *Sefer Burshtin* (Jerusalem: Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1960), p. 371.

14. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 305–306, indicates that an enclosed ghetto was established in Leszniów on November 2, 1942. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukrainskogo evreistva 1941–1944 gg.*, p. 185, however, indicates that 250 Jews were transferred from Leszniów to Brody in November 1942. Podwołoczyska is described as a ghetto in Miron, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, pp. 605–606, but the yizkor book for the town makes no mention of the ghetto, whereas many sources describe the labor camp there, also known as Kami-onka (III).

15. *TMWC*, vol. 37, p. 405, Doc. L-018.

16. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 634, and vol. 28 (2003), Lfd. Nr. 675.



Borders as of 1942

BÓBRKA

Pre-1939: Bóbrka (Yiddish: Boiberke), town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bobrka, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: initially Kreis Lemberg-Ost then Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Bibrka, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Bóbrka is located 31 kilometers (19 miles) southeast of Lwów. According to the Polish census, 1,480 Jews resided in Bóbrka in 1921, comprising 33.7 percent of the total population. By 1931, the Jewish population of Bóbrka had increased to 1,833.¹ By mid-1941, including refugees, there were probably in excess of 2,000 Jews living in the town.

Bóbrka was occupied on June 30, 1941, by units of the 257th Infantry Division, which was part of the German 17th Army. In July 1941, a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. On August 1, 1941, Eastern Galicia was transferred to a civil administration and became part of Distrikt Galizien in the Generalgouvernement. This region was initially divided into 17 Kreise; but from April 1, 1942, following its reorganization, there were only 14 Kreise. Bóbrka formed part of the Kreis Lemberg-Ost, which became Kreis Lemberg-Land after its unification with Kreis Lemberg-West in April 1942. The Kreis was governed by a Kreishauptmann. Wilhelm Stockheck held the position of Kreishauptmann until mid-September 1941, then Otto Bauer until March 1942, Dr. Werner Becker until early 1943, and finally Baron Joachim von der Leyen. Each Kreis was divided into Landkommissariate, led by a Landkommissar. The Bóbrka Landkommissar was von Dohomeranski. There was also a German Gendarmerie post in Bóbrka, a Criminal Police (Kripo) post, and a detachment of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), which was organized initially as a militia within a few days of the German arrival. The anti-Jewish Aktions were generally carried out in the town by a team of Security Police from Lwów with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police.

On July 2, 1941, a pogrom took place in Bóbrka. The cause of the pogrom was the discovery of the bodies of 16 victims of the Soviet People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD). Their murder was blamed on the Jews, and antisemitic Ukrainian nationalists organized a "bloodbath" in revenge.² Bands of Ukrainian peasants came to town from the surrounding villages and dragged the Jews from their hiding places, beating them with sticks. Several dozen Jews were killed.³

On July 10, 1941, by decree of the military authorities, all Jews older than 14 years were obliged to wear armbands bearing the Star of David. Jews also had to be registered and were compelled to engage in forced labor. The military commandant's headquarters (Ortskommandantur) and the local Ukrainian administration implemented these orders with the aid of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), which consisted of 12 members and was created on the same day. Its first chairman was O. Miller.⁴ The next day the Ortskommandantur ordered the Judenrat to collect a "contribution" of 2,000 Reichsmark

(RM) within 24 hours. Subsequently, Jews were made to surrender articles of clothing and furniture. As Jews were forbidden from doing business or interacting with the non-Jewish population, they were forced to live off their savings.

In October 1941, the commandant of the Kurowice labor camp made a demand for 20 Jewish laborers. The Judenrat asked young unmarried people to volunteer and offered bread to the volunteers' parents as an incentive.⁵

By the summer of 1942, hunger among the Jews of the town was very serious: people were reduced to eating thorns and grass, and a few people died of hunger each day. Some food was obtained from the local population secretly by barter.

In early August 1942, the Jews of the surrounding villages (Mikołajów, Podhorodyszcze, and others) were brought into Bóbrka, together with 180 Jews from Szczerzec and all the Jews (1,252 people) from Strzeliska Nowe. Consequently, there were some 3,200 Jews gathered in Bóbrka. Conditions in the town became very overcrowded, with three or four families sharing each apartment.

On August 12, 1942, a team of Security Police from Lwów, with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police, deported 1,260 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp. Some people hid in bunkers, and the German forces killed on the spot approximately 200 Jews, who were disabled or who tried to escape. The Judenrat and Jewish Police were asked to help search for those in hiding; some refused and the Germans killed them too. It is estimated that between 1,500 and 1,900 Jews remained in the town after this Aktion.⁶

On December 1, 1942, a ghetto was created in Bóbrka following instructions issued by the German administration in November.⁷ On December 8, 1942, the Germans conducted a second Aktion in the ghetto. Again some Jews hid in bunkers. Most of the several hundred Jews rounded up for deportation to Bełżec were among those who had arrived recently from the surrounding villages. Among those Jews killed on the spot on this occasion were three Jewish doctors who "died suddenly," while two others together with the Judenrat and the Jewish Police were reportedly among those deported. After being loaded onto the train, a few people managed to jump from the moving railway wagons.⁸

Thereafter, the poor hygienic conditions in the ghetto meant that many people became sick. In the period up to April 13, 1943, approximately 300 Jews died of hunger and typhus in the closed ghetto. Some non-Jewish acquaintances advised Jews to escape, but most were too afraid to offer shelter themselves.⁹

On April 13, 1943, a squad of Security Police from Lwów, with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police, surrounded the ghetto to help in its liquidation and the shooting began. The German authorities, aided by the Jewish Police, attempted to gather all the residents of the ghetto on the square by the synagogue. The assembled Jews were ordered to deposit all valuables, including photographs, into boxes. Ten healthy Jews were escorted in the direction of Wołowe to dig the graves. The Germans also selected a group of 159 able-bodied Jews destined for work. The

remaining Jews (more than 1,000 elderly, children, and the sick) were transported to the killing site, where they were forced to undress and were shot on the edge of the pit with machine guns. A Jewish hospital containing 50 patients was also burned down. The selected group was then loaded into cattle cars on top of the clothing of those just murdered near Wołowe, and they were sent to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów. According to Avraham Fisher, only 4 of the 159 survived the war. One survivor, Moses Erlich, recalls that two militiamen searched the bloody clothing during the journey, looking for any money and valuables.¹⁰

In Bóbrka several hundred Jews managed initially to survive the ghetto liquidation by hiding, but almost all of them were later caught and killed.¹¹ After Soviet troops had recaptured Bóbrka, some Jews who had hidden in the nearby woods, especially the Świrz Forest, returned to the town and met up with others who had remained hidden with non-Jews during the occupation. Approximately 40 Jews returned to Bóbrka in total.

SOURCES Articles on the extermination of the Jews of Bóbrka and its surrounding area can be found in the Bóbrka yizkor book, Sh. Kallay, ed., *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba* (Jerusalem: Association of Former Residents of Bobrka and Vicinity, 1964); and in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980).

Documents regarding the extermination of Bóbrka's Jewish community can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1247 and 1316); DALO (R 24-3-156); GARF (7021-67-84); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. N.M. Gelber, "History of Boiberke," in Kallay, *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba*, pp. 11–16 (abridged English translation).

2. BA-MA, RH 26-257/35, Activity Report of 257th Infantry Div./Ic, July 3, 1941; RH 26-257/8, already reported on the evening of July 2, 1941, in the War Diary (KTB) of the 257th Infantry Division.

3. According to the testimony of Chaim Gimpl, 63 Jews were killed; see AŻIH, 301/1316. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, there were 30 people (GARF, 7021-67-84, p. 7). Mordechai (Moses) Erlich, "Our Town's Experiences," in Kallay, *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba*, pp. 187–198, indicates 42 were killed.

4. Erlich, "Our Town's Experiences," pp. 187–198.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.; and AŻIH, 301/1316.

7. DALO, R 24-3-156, Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land an die Landkommissare, November 25, 1941, Betr.: Bildung von Judenwohnbezirken.

8. Ibid., R 24-3-283, p. 16, Kreisarzt Bobrka an Hauptkreisarzt, December 11, 1942. According to the ChGK report for Bóbrka, in December 1942, 1,200 Jews were deported to Bełżec from the town (GARF, 7021-67-84, p. 7)—this figure is probably too high. Also see Erlich, "Our Town's Experiences," pp. 187–198.

9. Yosef Vogel, "The Last Struggle," in Kallay, *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba*, p. 199.

10. M. Erlich, "Escape from the Death Camp," in Kallay, *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba*, p. 204; see also AŻIH, 301/1247, testimony of Moses Ehrlich (in Polish).

11. GARF, 7021-67-84, p. 8; Avraham Fisher, "The Ghetto in Our Shtetl," in Kallay, *Le-zekher kehillat Bobrka u-benoteba*, p. 183.

BOLECHÓW

Pre-1939: Bolechów, town, Dolina powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bolekhov, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Bolechow, Kreis Stryj, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Bolekhiv, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Bolechów is located 64 kilometers (40 miles) west-northwest of Stanisławów. According to the 1931 census, 2,986 Jews were residing in the town. By the middle of 1941, allowing for an annual growth rate of 9 or 10 persons per 1,000, there would have been around 3,300 Jews in Bolechów.

Soviet forces abandoned Bolechów on July 2, 1941. The town was without a clear ruling authority until July 6. Units of the Hungarian and then the Slovak armies occupied the town from July 6. Initially, a military commandant's office administered the city. Then, in August 1941, power was transferred to a German civilian administration. Bolechów became part of Kreis Stryj within Distrikt Galizien. Regierungsrat Dr. Wiktor von Dewitz was appointed to the post of Kreishauptmann in Stryj.

In Bolechów, a German Gendarmerie post was established, which served under the command of the Gendarmerie platoon based in Stryj. A Ukrainian police unit was also established, which participated in the Aktions against the Jews.



Group portrait of Jewish youth in the Bolechów ghetto, 1941–1942. Pictured standing from left are Simon Weiss, Lila Berger, Burnek Josefsberg, and the donor's sister, Musia Adler. Sitting, from left, are Bela Altman, unknown, and Dyzia Lew.

USHMM WS #24603, COURTESY OF SCHLOMO ADLER

At the end of July 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Bolechów on the orders of the occupying forces. The Judenrat was headed initially by Dr. Reifeisen and then by Dr. Schindler from the end of 1941. A Jewish police force was charged with maintaining order and assisted the Judenrat in carrying out its tasks. Jews were obliged to register themselves and to appear for forced labor tasks assigned to them via the Judenrat, including cleaning and bridge repair work. The German officials also demanded furniture from the Jews for equipping their offices and villas. In October 1941, the Jews were required to pay a large monetary contribution.¹

On October 28 and 29, 1941, the first Aktion was carried out in Bolechów. Some 750 Jews, who were unable to work, were gathered in the Catholic Home and then later taken to the forest near Taniawa and shot.² The Security Police and SD unit based in Stanisławów probably carried out the shootings. In October 1941, the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Reifeisen, committed suicide after a German official slapped him in the face for failing to meet the incessant German demands.³ At the end of December 1941, the Jews were required to surrender their fur coats and warm clothing, and a number of Jews were taken hostage to ensure compliance with this order.⁴

The Judenrat organized a soup kitchen for the poor, which served watery soup and small pieces of bread each day. Many Jews made use of this service, but nevertheless between January and September 1942 roughly 60 Jews died per month of weakness and starvation, including a number of Hungarian refugees. There was also a Jewish hospital, which was staffed by Jewish doctors and women volunteers. According to one survivor account, Jewish women were forbidden to wear lipstick, apparently to prevent them from enticing Germans to help them.⁵

On June 10, 1942, 4,281 Jews were counted in the town of Bolechów and its outlying villages. Of these, 1,588 were deemed fit to work, most of them working directly for German offices.⁶ In August 1942, Jews from the outlying towns and villages of Wędrzisz, Wygoda, Wyszaków, and Mizuń Stary and also some from Rożniatów were all resettled to Bolechów.⁷ After this concentration of Jews in Bolechów, a deportation Aktion was carried out on September 3–5, 1942. Some 400 Jews were killed on the spot, including a number of children, and more than 1,600 Jews were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec. The German Security Police, Gendarmerie, Ukrainian police, and Jewish Police all participated in the Aktion.⁸

After the Aktion on September 3–5, approximately 2,500 Jews remained in the town. On October 1, 1942, the Jewish Council was informed that all Jews not carrying a work pass issued by the Security Police outpost in Stryj would soon be rounded up by the Ukrainian police and resettled to the ghetto in Stryj. The Jewish Council appealed for this operation to be delayed, as not all work passes had yet been distributed.⁹ On October 21, 1942, the Judenrat was requested to surrender 400 Jews, including some of the workers. The Jewish Police arrested the Jews, and some people paid large bribes to avoid

deportation, while others went into hiding.¹⁰ Of the 1,748 Jews who were officially counted in Bolechów on October 29, 1942, most worked in timber production for the German HO-BAG company (215); in leather manufacturing (126); in the barrel (72) and furniture (45) factories; in the combined town industries (90); or as craftsmen (49). Among these Jews, there were 147 who were members of the Judenrat, the Jewish Police, the sanitation service, or the local committee for Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS).¹¹

In September or October 1942, all Jews, including those from the surrounding villages, were required to abandon their apartments and move into a “ghetto” or “special quarter of town” reserved for Jews that consisted of “the Shuster-Gas, the Ring-Platz, the Klein-Gas, and the surrounding side-streets.” Each person was left to find new living space on his or her own. Some of the houses had remained empty after the deportations in early September, but generally there was insufficient space, and many people had to leave some of their furniture and other items behind and sell them. The “Jewish residential area” (open ghetto) was not fenced in and was not guarded, but the Jews were not permitted to leave its borders, and harsh penalties were threatened against anyone disobeying this order.¹² The mayor of the town, Ostap Hucalo, reported that the establishment of the ghetto in Bolechów had been completed on November 1, 1942, but that the Jews working in the barrel factory, the leather factory, and the combined town industries were residing in various parts of town (outside the ghetto), mostly in barracks established at their respective factories. As insufficient discipline was enforced, the mayor complained that many of these Jews were still able to roam the town freely. In response the mayor ordered that each firm should maintain only one barracks, that Jews should be permitted to leave only when going to work, and that they should always be escorted. He also requested that the other Jews not residing in barracks all be transferred to the Stryj ghetto, which was to be completed by December 1, 1942.¹³ Soon afterwards the Jewish laborers in Bolechów were all relocated into corresponding factory barracks (labor camps) that were each surrounded by a high fence. The Germans planned for these Jews to train their own non-Jewish replacements. The resettlement of all the nonworking Jews to Stryj, which was completed in December, meant in effect the liquidation of the Bolechów ghetto only a few weeks after its establishment.¹⁴

Some of the Jewish forced labor camps in the town survived until the summer of 1943, when they were liquidated. In a series of Aktions, on March 5, June 5, June 8, July 13, and August 25, 1943, all the Jewish workers were shot. The Jewish Police and most of the Judenrat were shot during the March Aktion. Recognizing that the time had come, the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Schindler, hanged himself on learning the fate of his colleagues.¹⁵

Bolechów was liberated on August 9, 1944. Only about 50 Jews managed to survive by hiding inside the town or in nearby forests. At the end of 1944 and over the course of 1945, small groups of Jews returned to the city, having survived in German labor camps or in the Soviet interior.

SOURCES Information on the extermination of the Jews in Bolechów can be found in the yizkor book edited by Y. Eshel and M.H. Eshel, *Sefer ha-Zikaron li-Kedoshai Bolehov* (Haifa: Association of Former Residents of Bolechow in Israel, 1957); in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 72–77; and in the book by Anatol Regnier, *Damals in Bolechów: Eine jüdische Odyssee* (Munich: Btb, 1997), which has also since been published in a Hebrew translation. The story of a single family from Bolechów during the Holocaust is reconstructed by Daniel Mendelsohn in *The Lost: The Search for Six of Six Million* (New York, 2006).

Documents dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Bolechów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1035, 1554, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, and 4045); DAI-FO; DALO (R 1952-1-62); GARF (7021-73-9); USHMM; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1554, 2146.
2. GARF, 7021-73-9, p. 2.
3. Eshel and Eshel, *Sefer ha-Zikaron*, pp. 341–342.
4. AŻIH, 301/2147, 2148.
5. AŻIH, 301/2145, 2147.
6. DALO, R 1952-1-62 (USHMM, RG-31.003M), p. 36, reproduced in Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien: *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz-Verlag, 1996), p. 329.
7. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 10. According to the yizkor book, the Jews of Rożniatów were mostly expelled to Dolina and Bolechów in September 1941; see Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehilat Rozniatow* (Tel Aviv: Rozniatow, Perehinsko, Broszniow and Environs Societies in Israel and the USA, 1974), pp. 157–206.
8. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 344–345.
9. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 88, Judenrat in Bolechów an Kreisjudenrat in Stryj, October 1, 1942.
10. Regnier, *Damals in Bolechów*, p. 152.
11. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 63, report of mayor on Jews working in the town of Bolechów, October 29, 1942.
12. Eshel and Eshel, *Sefer ha-Zikaron*, pp. 324, 345–346.
13. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 65, Bürgermeister in Bolechów an die Kreishauptmannschaft, November 13, 1942; Regnier, *Damals in Bolechów*, p. 153.
14. Eshel and Eshel, *Sefer ha-Zikaron*, p. 325.
15. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 10; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–44: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1997), pp. 260, 358; Regnier, *Damals in Bolechów*, pp. 161–162.

BORSZCZÓW

Pre-1939: Borszczów, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Borsbchov, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’,

Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Borszczow, Kreis Czortkow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Borsbchiv, raion center, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Borszczów is located 98 kilometers (61 miles) south-southeast of Tarnopol. In mid-1941, there were approximately 3,000 Jews living in Borszczów: this number includes both local Jews and some refugees from central and western Poland.¹

Hungarian troops occupied Borszczów on July 7, 1941. A few Jews, mostly men, escaped with the retreating Soviet troops. On July 8, Hungarian soldiers accompanied by Ukrainian policemen went from house to house, confiscating radios from the Jews, sometimes robbing them as well.² During these first days of occupation, antisemitic Ukrainians tried to organize a pogrom in the town, but the Hungarian military authorities intervened to prevent the maltreatment of Jews.³ At this time the Hungarian military commandant ordered the creation of a Jewish Committee, which was headed by Wolf Hess. In August 1941, several thousand Jews deported from Hungary passed through Borszczów, where they received some assistance from the local Jewish community. They were then handed over to the Germans, who shot them.⁴

In August 1941, the Hungarian forces withdrew and transferred authority to a German civil administration. Borszczów became part of Kreis Czortkow, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was at first the former deputy Gestapo chief in Stettin, SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Gerhard Littschwager, and from late April 1942, the former Stadthauptmann (head of the city) of Lwów, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Hans Kujath.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Borszczów were organized and carried out by a squad from the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Czortków. This unit was headed in turn by SS-Obersturmführer Karl Hildemann (October 1941 to October 1942), SS-Untersturmführer Hans Velde (October 1942 to February 1943), and SS-Sturmscharführer Heinrich Peckmann (February to September 1943).⁵

In Borszczów there was a Criminal Police (Kripo) post, which was subordinate to the Sipo outpost in Czortków, as well as a Gendarmerie post and a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, all of which played an active role in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

When power was transferred to the Germans, the situation of the Jews sharply declined. They were forced to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David and were forbidden to leave the town limits, appear on the main street, or even leave their houses; all Jewish men aged between 14 and 60 had to perform forced labor. For purchasing groceries, Jews were restricted to one hour in the middle of the day. In response to this measure, the Jewish Committee, which had been converted into a Jewish Council (Judenrat), established its own shops, but this system was abused by some Judenrat members and their families. The Jewish community was also subjected to a series of “fines,” and the Judenrat members were threatened with being shot if the goods requested were not delivered on time.⁶

On November 14, 1941, a detachment of Security Police from Czortków carried out the first anti-Jewish Aktion during which elderly and sick Jews were shot. After the Aktion, Josef Littner in Zbaraż received a postcard from the Judenrat informing him of the death of his relatives.⁷ In the winter of 1941–1942, several groups of young Jews were sent to the labor camps in Stupki, Kamionki, and Borki Wielkie.

On April 1, 1942, a Jewish residential district (open ghetto) was established in Borszczów. A curfew from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. was imposed, and non-Jews were forbidden from entering the district or having any contact with Jews. Nevertheless, contacts continued secretly, especially for barter, and non-Jews also relayed information to other towns.

In late July 1942, the head of the Judenrat, Wolf Hess, was sent to the Bełżec extermination camp for sabotaging German orders. A refugee from Vienna, Oscar Hessing, was appointed chairman of the Judenrat in his place; unlike Hess, he carried out all the occupants' demands. His brother Shimon was the head of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which imposed punishments of beatings and fines.

On September 26–27, 1942, the second anti-Jewish Aktion was carried out during which 800 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp, and about 100 people (the elderly and the sick) were killed on the spot. After this Aktion, some of the remaining able-bodied Jews who had not been deported or killed on September 26–27, from the neighboring towns of Mielnica, Skalat, Jezierzany, Korolówka, and Krzywca, were transferred to Borszczów. As a result, there were now more than 4,000 Jews in Borszczów. With this influx the Judenrat was reconstituted such that each of the newly arrived groups was now represented.

On December 1, 1942, the Jewish residential district in Borszczów was converted into an enclosed ghetto and isolated from the rest of the town on the orders of the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger.⁸ Within the ghetto, the Judenrat had numerous responsibilities, including social welfare, ghetto workshops, statistics, food distribution, and tax collection. Jews were not permitted to contact the German authorities directly but only via the Judenrat. Owing to the problems in managing scarce resources, there was much animosity towards the Judenrat, especially among the new arrivals. Nevertheless, cultural activities continued, as some inmates wrote poems and songs.⁹

In the spring of 1943, Aktions in the ghetto recommenced. Thus, on March 13, 1943, about 400 Jews were sent to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów, 800 Jews were shot on April 19 at the Jewish cemetery, and 700 more were shot on June 5. On June 9, 1943, German forces and their collaborators began the liquidation of the ghetto, during the course of which 1,800 people were shot in the Jewish cemetery, and Borszczów was officially pronounced to be *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews). Nevertheless, 60 Jews remained in the town for some time, engaged in sorting Jewish belongings, as well as there being several hundred Jews in hiding. Of the latter group, the

Germans were able to lure a number out of hiding, and they shot 360 people on August 14, 1943.

Altogether, in 1941–1943, according to the documents of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) for the Borshchov raion, 4,557 Jews were shot in the town; they are buried in 15 mass graves in the Jewish cemetery and include nearly all of the victims of the German occupation of the town.¹⁰

In the spring of 1942, in the Jewish residential district, a resistance group was created, which was headed by Wolf Ashendorf, Joel Weintraub, and Kalman Schwartz. Not long before the last Aktion, members of the group escaped to the surrounding forests. In the summer and fall of 1943, the group performed several operations against the German occupation forces and the Ukrainian police. Thus, on November 17, 1943, the group freed 50 prisoners (including 20 Jews) from the Borszczów prison.

The German police carried out a series of operations against the Jewish partisans. During one of these operations, on December 10, 1943, five bunkers were destroyed in the forest near the town, and 13 armed Jews were killed in battle.

SOURCES Publications on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish population of the town include the following: Nachman Blumenthal, ed., *Sefer Borshtshiv* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Borshts'ov be-Yisrael Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Perets, 1960); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 102–106; and I. Fajersztejn, "Banda żydowska," in *Fun letstn khurbn* (Munich: Tsentral historishe komisye baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner zone, 1946), no. 3.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/350, 1504, 2522, and 2540); BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 239/59); DATO; GARF (7021-75-87); USHMM; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 3.
2. Blumenthal, *Sefer Borshtshiv*, p. 176.
3. Ibid.; BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 23, July 15, 1941.
4. Blumenthal, *Sefer Borshtshiv*, p. 177.
5. Verdict of LG-Sa, 6 Ks 2/62, June 25, 1962, in *Justiz and NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 28 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 541, p. 664; Peckmann was acquitted by the court in Saarbrücken.
6. Blumenthal, *Sefer Borshtshiv*, pp. 178–179.
7. Jakob Littner, *Journey through the Night: Jakob Littner's Holocaust Memoir* [trans. and ed. Kurt Nathan Grübler] (New York: Continuum, 2000), pp. 35–36, which includes a facsimile of the postcard. Blumenthal, *Sefer Borshtshiv*, p. 180, states that two Hungarian Jews from Budapest were shot on this date for not wearing their armbands.

8. Order of HSSPF Krüger issued on November 10, 1942, published in *Verordnungsblatt GG* (1942) no. 98, November 11, 1942, reprinted in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

9. Blumenthal, *Sefer Borshitsiv*, pp. 181–182, 219.

10. GARF, 7021-75-87, pp. 1 and reverse side.

BORYSLAW

Pre-1939: Boryslaw, city, Drohobycz powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Borislav, Drogobych raion and oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Boryslaw, Kreis Drogobytsh, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Boryslav, Drohobych raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Boryslaw is located roughly 75 kilometers (47 miles) southwest of Lwów. On the eve of World War II in 1939, there were about 13,000 Jews in the city.¹

On September 12, 1939, German forces occupied Boryslaw. German soldiers imposed forced labor on the Jews and stole their property. Ukrainian nationalists also attacked Jews on the outskirts of the city. After a few days, in mid-September 1939, the Red Army took over the area under the terms of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

Forces of the German 17th Army occupied Boryslaw on July 1, 1941. The next day, the hastily formed Ukrainian militia, supported by local peasants, organized a pogrom, enraged over the discovery of 44 prisoners murdered in the city by the Soviet People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) as the Red Army retreated. Some German soldiers also participated in the pogrom in which up to 350 Jews were murdered, dozens were wounded, and many others were robbed. After the initial wave of violence, the German military restored order. It soon appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat), initially led by Michael Herz, which was made responsible for supplying a number of Jews for various forced labor tasks. These included arduous bridge reconstruction work, in the course of which a number of Jews lost their lives.²

On August 1, 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Boryslaw became part of the Kreis Drohobycz. The Kreishauptmann was initially Sturmbannführer Eduard Jedamzik, who was succeeded in June 1942 by Hermann Görgens. Boryslaw's local administration was directed by a Stadtkommissar. This post was initially held by SA-Hauptsturmführer Bornemann, who was succeeded by Wilhelm Möllers in the fall of 1942.³

From November 18, 1941, a 20-man unit of the Schutzpolizei (Schupo) from Vienna, led by Meister der Schupo Gustav Wüpper, was stationed in the city. On their arrival, the Ukrainian militia, which had been converted into an Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), was subordinated to this unit and placed under the command of Hauptwachtmeister Heinrich Nemetz. A small unit of Criminal Police (Kripo) was also present, directed by the head of the Border Police

Office (GPK) in Drohobycz, Hauptsturmführer Franz Wenzel, who was succeeded in May 1942 by Hauptsturmführer Hans Block.⁴

The Germans conducted the first organized Aktion in Boryslaw at the end of November 1941. On November 27–28, 1941, using a list compiled by the Judenrat, the Security Police from Drohobycz, assisted by the Schupo and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, seized around 700 or 800 Jews who were unfit for labor or sick. They were confined in the barracks of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police and were then transported to the forests of Truskawiec and Tustanowice, where men of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police and Schupo shot them on November 29.⁵

In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jewish community suffered severely from hunger and typhus, and a number of Jews died. In addition, the Jews were forced to surrender their winter clothing to the Wehrmacht. By February 1942, allowing also for Jews sent to nearby forced labor camps and the repatriation to central Poland of some refugees, the Jewish population had declined to 10,734.⁶

In November 1941, Kreishauptmann Jedamzik in Drohobycz initiated preparations to establish a Jewish residential quarter (open ghetto) in Boryslaw. On November 20, he introduced the death penalty for Jews leaving their place of residence without permission. In March 1942, Stadtkommissar Bornemann approved a plan to establish a ghetto with separate sections for specialist workers, those capable of work, and those unfit for work, in accordance with new regulations to register all Jews for labor service. However, practical ghettoization measures were then postponed until after May 1942, on the recommendation of the German medical official, Medizinalrat Dr. Wilhelm Dopheide, owing to the continuing typhus outbreak and fears that the stream, which would form the border between the “Aryan” and Jewish quarters, might spread disease to the general population.⁷

At the end of July 1942, the Judenrat was ordered to compile a list of deportees for “resettlement to the Pińsk area.” On the morning of August 6, the Schupo, Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) began to round up those selected and detain them in the Graszyna Cinema. The Aktion was temporarily halted because many Jews had escaped into the outlying forests or hidden in the city. The operation resumed later that day, and many Jews were arrested indiscriminately; children, the sick and elderly, and some of those found in hiding were murdered on the spot. Those detained were housed in the overcrowded movie theater, as well as in the former headquarters of the Polish Socialist Party.

On the morning of August 8, the prisoners were taken to the train station, where 400 were selected for the Janowska Street labor camp located near Lwów. Another 250, many of them children under the standard working age, were saved through the intervention of Berthold Beitz, a manager with the German “Karpathen” oil company. The remaining 5,000 Jews—including some from Podbuż, Schodnica, and other villages nearby—were sent to the Bełżec extermination

camp. During this process Michael Herz, the head of the Jewish Council, and several policemen managed to escape the city. Heinrich Kahane and Bernard Eisenstein were then appointed as heads of the Jewish Council and Jewish Police, respectively.⁸

Following the Aktion, the Germans established two separate open ghettos in Borysław, in the districts of Potok Górny and Nowy Świat, where the poorest Jews already lived. The non-Jews had to leave these areas within a few days, and Jews were given two weeks to move in. The health and living conditions in the ghettos were very bad, and overcrowding was severe.⁹ In September 1942, there were 1,760 Jews working in the oil industry in Borysław, who had been issued special armbands bearing the letter “A,” as needed workers (*Arbeitsjuden*). These armbands enabled them to travel to their workplaces and were thought to give them some protection from further roundups. A small number of Jews who worked for Beitz in key positions lived with their families in a separate camp in the Mrasznica suburb, known as the “White House,” where living conditions were much better, including even payment in cash.¹⁰

In early September 1942, Kreishauptmann Görgens set a deadline of September 22 for the concentration of the remaining Jews of Borysław into a ghetto enclosed with barbed wire. This deadline was not met, but on October 13, 1942, Görgens declared that the resettlement of the Jews into the ghetto was completed. The ghetto now consisted of a number of living quarters for Jews, each surrounded with barbed wire and guarded by Ukrainian auxiliaries.¹¹

On October 21–24, 1942, the Germans conducted a third Aktion. First, Jews from outlying communities (including 140 Jews from Schodnica) were deported to the Borysław ghetto, bringing the total number of its inhabitants to 4,890. After the population was assembled, the Schupo and Ukrainian militia, assisted by Company 5, 24th Police Regiment (commanded by Hauptmann Ernst Lederer), arrested 1,020 Jews and deported them to Bełżec. Among those deported were some people who had been issued armbands. In early November, the remaining Jews working in Borysław were officially transferred to the control of the SS, and employers now had to pay the SS 5 złoty per day for their continued use.¹²

A fourth Aktion followed on November 29–30. The Schupo and militia, reinforced by a platoon of mounted police, deported to Bełżec and the Janowska Street camp an estimated 1,500 Jews (mainly the families of those Jews now issued new “R” armbands as *Rüstungsarbeiter*, or armament worker). Before being deported, the Jews were held under terrible conditions for three weeks in the Graszyna Cinema, which at least gave Beitz the chance to intervene on behalf of about 150 people. A few days before their deportation, on November 21, the local Schupo post, led by Wüpper, also shot 100 Jews who had been found in hiding places. With Beitz’s assistance, some Jews fled across the Hungarian border, but these efforts had to be abandoned after one group was captured, almost leading to Beitz’s arrest.¹³

In November 1942, a forced labor camp (*Zwangsarbeitslager*, ZAL) was established for Jews working in the oil industry at Mrasznica, close to the privileged Jews in the “White House.” By early December 1942, there were 1,470 Jews working for the Karpathen AG (Aktiengesellschaft) who had been issued passes to leave the ghetto for work. Over the following weeks, an increasing number of Jews were transferred from the ghetto (or Karpathen-Wohnblock) to the ZAL. As many as 400 Jews were shot in and around the city during December 1942. By January 1943, of 993 Jews with ghetto passes, 443 were based at the ZAL, and 550 were still in the ghetto. A number of illegal Jews had also managed to be smuggled into the ZAL. Several hundred additional Jews, working for other German offices, still resided in the ghetto.¹⁴

On February 16–17, 1943, a fifth Aktion took place in which 600 Jews were shot at the slaughterhouse by members of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, German mounted police, and Schupo. Among the victims were Jews who worked in the city’s workshops and sawmill, as well as Jews from the ghetto who were deemed unfit for labor. Smaller executions continued during the next few months at the slaughterhouse. Most of the victims were Jews found hiding in the woods outside the city.¹⁵

From May 25 to June 2, 1943, the German forces completed the liquidation of the Borysław ghetto. Schupo and Ukrainian militia forces assembled the surviving inmates at the Graszyna Cinema and made selections for the Janowska Street camp. The security forces then shot an estimated 700 sick, young, and elderly Jews at the slaughterhouse. Among the victims were the members of the Jewish Police, who had been forced to dig the graves. A series of smaller shooting Aktions took place at the slaughterhouse throughout the summer as the Schupo and Ukrainian forces combed the woods and ghetto for Jews in hiding.¹⁶

During 1943–1944, a partisan unit under the command of David Erlbaum was active in the area. It was mostly composed of escapees from the ghetto. The unit was later absorbed into a larger partisan unit of Polish Communists, belonging to the Gwardia Ludowa (People’s Guard, GL). A small resistance organization also existed in the ghetto, led by a man named Marenholz. The group was able to obtain a few small arms and also set fire to a large amount of raw materials and finished products in the ghetto industry.¹⁷

Besides Berthold Beitz, several Polish and Ukrainian residents of Borysław rescued Jews and have been recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. Roughly 400 Jews emerged from hiding after the liberation of the city by the Red Army on August 7, 1944. Most of the survivors soon left after the war, and only a few remained in Borysław.¹⁸

Several former members of the Borysław Schupo were prosecuted after the war for their crimes. On July 26, 1956, the regional court of Vienna tried six former policemen, among them Josef Pöll, one of the unit’s most sadistic members, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Leopold Mitas was sentenced to life in prison, but the remaining four were acquitted.¹⁹

SOURCES Publications regarding the Boryslaw ghetto and the destruction of the Jews of Boryslaw include the following: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 92–99; Nathan Michael Gelber, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-Drobobycz, Boryslaw ve-ha-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Drhobits, Borislaw ve-ha-sevivah, 1959); Bernd Schmalhausen, *Berthold Beitz im Dritten Reich: Mensch in unmenschlicher Zeit* (Essen: Pomp, 1991); Tuviah Friedmann, ed., *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher vor dem Wiener Volksgericht: Schutzpolizei Dienstabteilung in Boryslaw: Dokumentensammlung* (Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1995); Andrzej Zbikowski, “Inny pogrom,” *Karta*, no. 5 (1991); Shevah (Sze-wach) Weiss, “Mizh rokami 1941–1945,” *Dialohy*, nos. 7–8 (1985); M. Terlets’kyi, “Strakhittia druhoi svitovoi viiny u Boryslavs’komu baseini,” in *Drobobychchyna—zemlia Ivana Franka* (New York, 1975); Alfred Jasiński, “Boryslawska apokalipsa,” *Karta*, no. 4 (1991); Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in *Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996); Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997); and Thomas Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener waren ja bei der Bevölkerung beliebt: Österreichische Schutzpolizisten in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2002).

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Boryslaw can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/176, 679, 1068, 1315, 2138, 2193, 2465, and 4448); BA-L (B 162/5831-5839 [ZStL, II 208 AR-Z 8/62]; ZStL, II 208 AR 1471/67; and II 208 AR 1468/67); DALO (e.g., R 1933-1-15 and R 2042-1-55); GARF (7021-58-21); RGVA (1275-3-663; and 1323-2-2926); SHLA (Abt. 352 Lübeck/1731ff.); Sta. Bremen (3 Ks 1/53 and 29 Ks 1/66 gegen Friedrich Hildebrand); USHMM (RG-31.003M); VHF (e.g., # 8188, 12064, 14681, and 15542); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacija ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967).

2. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 303–305; according to Sandkühler’s sources, 183 Jews were buried in the Jewish cemetery, but others were killed in hiding, and their bodies may not have been retrieved. RGVA, 1275-3-663, p. 4, report of Ortskommandantur II/347 in Boryslaw dated July 1941, gives the figure of 350 Jews murdered. Zhanna Kovba, *Liudianist’ u bezodni pekla: povedinka mistsevoho naseleennia Skhidnoi Halychyny v roki “Ostatocnoho rozv’iazannia evreiskoho pyttannia”* (Kiev: Sfera, 1998), pp. 239–242; VHF, # 12064, testimony of Adam Auslander; # 14681, testimony of Jenny Backenroth; # 15542, testimony of Murray Bergman; Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 54–57; and AŽIH, 301/2465.

3. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 297, 309.

4. Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 72, 74, 80; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” p. 310.

5. GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 44; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” p. 318; AŽIH, 301/2465; and Berenstein, “Eksterminacija,” table 4.

6. Berenstein, “Eksterminacija,” table 4; Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 92–99.

7. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 318–324; DALO, R 1933-1-15, pp. 1–2; and R 2042-1-55, p. 32, Umsiedlung der Juden in Boryslaw, March 17, 1942.

8. VHF, # 15542; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 336–341; Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 105–108.

9. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 92–99; AŽIH, 301/2465.

10. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 346, 351; AŽIH, 301/2465.

11. Report of Kreishauptmann Görgens, October 13, 1942, in DALO, R 1933-1-15, p. 2; and AŽIH, 301/176 and 800; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” p. 348.

12. DALO, R 1933-1-15, p. 2; RGVA, 1323-2-2926, p. 28, report on the resettlement of Jews by Schupo Hauptmann Lederer, commander of Company 5, 24th Police Regiment, October 25, 1942; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 354–356; AŽIH, 301/2465.

13. VHF, # 15542; GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 45; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 359–361; Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung*, p. 241; Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 112–115; Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 92–99.

14. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 361–366.

15. GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 45; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 370–373; Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 117–118.

16. GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 45; Geldmacher, *Wir als Wiener*, pp. 124–130.

17. Il’ia Al’tman, *Zbertvy nenavisti: kholokost v SSSR 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow: Fond Kovcheg, 2002), p. 328.

18. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 92–99; and Kovba, *Liudianist’*, p. 241. For more information regarding Berthold Beitz, see Sandkühler, “Endlösung.”

19. Friedmann, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher vor dem Wiener Volksgericht*.

BRODY

Pre-1939: Brody, city, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, L’vov oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Zloczow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: raion center, L’viv oblast’, Ukraine

Brody is located 87 kilometers (54 miles) east-northeast of Lwów. In 1939, of 18,020 residents, 8,365 were Jewish. In 1940, there were 12,617 Jews, but by mid-1941, of 22,218 residents, just 10,070 were Jews.¹ The sudden increase in the Jewish population was caused by the arrival of many Jewish refugees from western and central Poland in the autumn of 1939. The rapid decrease again by mid-1941 reflected the deportations, especially of Jewish refugees, carried out by the Soviet People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) in a series of actions in 1940 and the first half of 1941.

After Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a small part of the Jewish population was able to evacuate to the east, leaving almost 9,000 Jews in Brody.² Units of the



Postwar photograph of the ruins of the main synagogue in Brody.
USHMM WS #23382, COURTESY OF EUGENIA HOCHBERG LANCETER

German army occupied the city on June 29, 1941. At the start of the occupation, the city was controlled by a German military administration; from August 1941, a German civil administration assumed responsibility for governing the area. Brody became part of the Kreis Zloczow, within Distrikt Galizien. Initially, the Kreishauptmann was Gerichts-Assessor Hans Mann, but in January 1942, Dr. Otto Wendt succeeded him. The Kreis was divided into several subdistricts known as Landkommissariate. Fritz Weiss was in charge of the Brody Landkommissariat.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Brody were carried out under the direction of the office of the Security Police and SD based in Lwów (KdS Lemberg), assisted also by staff from the office of the Criminal Police (Kripo) based in Złoczów, directed by a police officer from Vienna, Otto Zikmund. There was also a local office of the Kripo in Brody, which received its orders from the Criminal Police office in Złoczów. In addition, in Brody there was an office of the German Gendarmerie, which supervised the local Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), headed by Stepan Syhovich. The Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police played an active role in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

Within two weeks of the start of the occupation, the first anti-Jewish Aktion took place in Brody in which 250 members of the Jewish intelligentsia were arrested and murdered by a squad of the Security Police and SD. The forces involved included members of the special operational group (Einsatzgruppe z.b.V.) based in Lwów.³ In July 1941, another 60 Jews were murdered by the intelligence section (Nachrichtenabteilung 2) of the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Russia South.⁴

In the second half of July 1941, the German military administration established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Dr. Jakow Blech. Jews were made to wear white armbands bearing a Star of David; most of their property was confiscated; and they were stripped of many basic rights. The Jews were required to register for compulsory work for very low wages and also had to pay a mandatory fee of 750 rubles each to the main

bank in Brody by August 5, 1941. Those who failed to comply with these demands faced severe punishment.⁵

In October 1941, Jews from the surrounding areas were ordered to move to Brody. Some Jews from Brody were also forced to go to Złoczów for work. On October 19, 1941, several groups of young Jewish males who were physically fit for hard work were sent to the Kozaki labor camp. On December 27, 1941, several larger groups were sent to labor camps from which no one usually returned. These camps were located in Lackie Wielkie, Jaktorów, Płuhów, and Zborów.⁶ In January 1942, the German authorities established an open ghetto (Jewish residential district) in Brody. At the same time, Jews were required to give up their winter clothing, including any fur coats and winter shoes.

In June 1942, a number of Jews reportedly were living in the following villages around Brody: Toporów, 734; Leszniów, 321; Sokołówka, 269; Koniuszków, 236; Suchowola, 452; and Stanisławczyk, 626.⁷ On September 19, 1942, the Germans deported 2,500 Jews from Brody to the Bełżec extermination camp. About 300 of them were killed during the roundup. At the end of November, 2,500 more Jews were sent to Bełżec.⁸

On German orders, the Jewish Police was involved in rounding up the Jews; the German Security Police, Gendarmerie, and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police supervised and implemented the deportations and killings. The outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Sokal under the command of SS officer Oswald Heyduk organized the first deportation Aktion. The second Aktion was conducted by forces under the command of SS officer Carl Wöbke of the outpost's Jewish section, assisted by the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police.

On December 2, 1942, around 2,000 more Jews were brought into the ghetto from various villages, including Toporów, Podkamień, Sokołówka, Stanisławczyk, Leszniów, Koniuszków, Ponikawica, Ponikwa, and Suchowola. Around this time, in accordance with the order of HSSPF for the Generalgouvernement Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, issued on November 10, 1942, the German authorities set up an enclosed ghetto in Brody.⁹ The ghetto was located around Shlitalnaia Street, where most Jews already lived, and it was surrounded with barbed wire with only a single entrance. German and Ukrainian police guarded the ghetto. Placards declared that anyone attempting to leave would be shot. The overcrowding in the ghetto was terrible: often as many as 25 or 30 people had to share one small room.

Those Jews who received special work passes because they were working for the Wehrmacht ("W") or for the armaments industry (*Rüstungsindustrie*, "R"), however, were put into small labor camps consisting mostly of enclosed barracks located at the factories, some inside and some outside the ghetto. The total number of people in the ghetto increased to more than 5,000. During the winter of 1942–1943, about 1,000 people died from starvation, sickness, and disease, especially from typhus.¹⁰

On May 21, 1943, the HSSPF for Distrikt Galizien, Friedrich Katzmann, issued orders for the liquidation of the Brody ghetto, which resulted in the immediate shooting of 100 Jews

and numerous deportations to concentration or extermination camps (probably to Majdanek).¹¹ Some Jews offered armed resistance, killing four Ukrainians and several German policemen. This rebellion provoked the German forces into treating the remaining Jews even more brutally, burning down some of the houses to force hiding Jews to come out. The liquidation of the ghetto took about one month, lasting well into June 1943.¹²

Two months after the liquidation of the Brody ghetto, there still remained about 40 Jews working in the city, but they were murdered on July 19, 1943.

At the end of 1942, a Jewish resistance organization was secretly formed in the Brody ghetto. The leaders of the group were Jakow Linder and Shmuel Weiler. They managed to develop contacts with the Jewish underground organization in the Lwów ghetto, as well as with members of a secret Communist Party group called Narodnaia Gvardia imeni Ivana Franka, which was also based in Lwów. Their primary goal was to establish an independent partisan force, which would have three bases operating clandestinely throughout the Lwów region to resist the murder of the Jews. In April 1943, around 70 Jews managed to escape from the ghettos. Linder's group organized a number of attacks on ghettos, forced labor camps, and other targets, which were only weakly protected. Among the successful attacks were those on the fuel factory in Sokolowska and against the labor camp in Sasów. As a result of the above-mentioned efforts to liberate Jewish prisoners, the strength of the resistance was augmented. The partisans were also active in blowing up bridges used by German troops.¹³

As a result of the interrogation of some captured partisans, the Germans acquired more detailed information about the group operating in the forests near Brody. Consequently, German soldiers and Ukrainian police searched the area and launched a number of raids, which resulted in the killing of 33 Jewish partisans.¹⁴

One group of Jews in Brody managed to escape the liquidation operations and hid in the ruins of the old synagogue. However, the local police reported their presence to the Germans. The German commander, Meister der Gendarmerie Damm, ordered the arrest of the Jews. Of the 12 Jews hiding there, 6 were captured and murdered by the German security forces and their collaborators.¹⁵ At the time of the liberation of Brody in 1944, several hundred Jews returned to the city, having survived with the partisans in the surrounding forests or in hiding.

After the war, Otto Wendt was a secretary in the Ministry of Economics in Lower Saxony, Germany. In 1969, without bringing charges, the German authorities abandoned their investigation into his alleged involvement in the persecution of the Jews. Otto Zikmund was extradited to the USSR in 1949; he was convicted by a Soviet court and died in prison. S.I. Syhovich was sentenced to death by a Soviet military tribunal and executed in 1944.

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Brody and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following

publications: Mosad HaRav Kook and N.-M. Gelber, *Toldot Yebudei Brody 1584–1943* (Jerusalem, 1955); Aviv Melzer, ed., *Ner tamid, yizkor li-Brodi: Sefer zikaron li-kebilat Brodi u-sevivat* (Israel: Irgun yots'e Brodi be-Yisrael, 1994); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 121–134; Iakov Khonigsman, *Evrei goroda Brody (1584–1944)* (L'viv, 2001); Chymak, ed., *Brody and Bridesbuna: Historical and Memorial Collection* (Toronto, Ontario, 1998); Henry Friedman, *I'm No Hero: Journeys of a Holocaust Survivor* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999); Shmuel Weiler, "The Jewish Resistance Movement in Brody," in Meyer Barkai, ed., *The Fighting Ghettos* (Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1962), pp. 109–117; and F. Zorne Laufer, "Dziennik z czasów okupacji hitlerowskiej (Brody)," *BŻIH*, no. 59 (1966): 93–100.

Documentation about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Brody during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/39, 40, 198, 1777, 2888, 4517, 4737, 5439; and 302/170 and 227); DALO (R 77-1-574); GARF (7021-67-80); USHMM (RG-02.156 and RG-50.002*0057); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Khonigsman, *Evrei goroda Brody*, p. 102.
2. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 12.
3. GARF, 7021-67-80; Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 12.
4. See LG-Kais Verdict of Dec. 22, 1976 (18 Js 7/73 Ks) and Verdict of June 25, 1982 (18 Js 7/73 Ks).
5. AŻIH, 301/170, testimony of Samuel Weiler.
6. Ibid.
7. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja" tables 5, 12.
8. AŻIH, 301/170.
9. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
10. GARF, 7021-67-80, pp. 88–89, statement of Rosa Lerner, September 11, 1944.
11. Ibid., pp. 82, 88.
12. Friedman, *I'm No Hero*, p. 29; DALO, R 77-1-574.
13. Khonigsman, *Evrei goroda Brody*, pp. 86–87.
14. Weiler, "The Jewish Resistance," pp. 109–117.
15. AŻIH, 301/170.

BRZEŻANY

Pre-1939: Brzeżany (Yiddish: Berezhan), town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Berezhan, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Brzezany, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Berezhan, raion center, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Brzeżany is located 48 kilometers (30 miles) west-southwest of Tarnopol. The Jewish population of Brzeżany was 3,670 in

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1931. Jews were the second-largest ethnic group in the town after the Poles. On the eve of World War II, Poles constituted 42.2 percent, Jews 35.5 percent, and Ukrainians 22.3 percent of the local population.

The Red Army occupied Brzeżany in September 1939 in accordance with the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. After the Germans launched their invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, the first Wehrmacht units arrived on July 4. A small number of Brzeżany's Jews fled with the retreating Soviets. Ukrainians, mainly from nearby villages, broke into the Brzeżany prison, where they found the mutilated bodies of Ukrainian nationalists who had been arrested by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD). Some corpses were floating in the local river. The prevailing popular images of Jewish collaboration with the Soviets and the wrath ensuing from the murder of Ukrainian prisoners resulted in an anti-Jewish pogrom on July 6. Dozens of Jews were forced to dig graves and bury the Ukrainian dead. Then they were slaughtered by the Ukrainian mob, some with their own spades. A Ukrainian crowd ran all over town, looting Jewish property and occasionally killing and wounding Jews.¹

German administrative personnel began arriving in Brzeżany in the fall of 1941. The highest-ranking German official in town and in Kreis Brzeżany was Kreishauptmann Hans-Adolf Asbach, a Nazi Party member trained in law and economics. The Brzeżany Kreishauptmannschaft was located in the impressive modern building of the pre-war Polish high school. Asbach wanted to transform Brzeżany into a German-looking town. Hundreds of Jews were forced to raze buildings and prepare open spaces for future construction, which was never realized. His grandiose architectural fantasies wreaked additional damage on the already half-devastated town. Asbach assisted the German Security Police in the roundups and deportations of Brzeżany's Jews.² The local representation of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (Office for Ethnic German Affairs, VoMi), in charge of appropriating Jewish property, was headed by Hubert Kohnen, a member of the Nazi Party. He arrived in Brzeżany in the summer of 1942 and remained there until the last roundup in June 1943. Though his official work was to collect Jewish property, he apparently participated in the murder of Brzeżany Jews in the old Jewish cemetery on Okopisko Hill. "Hubert," as people referred to him, was the terror of Brzeżany's Jews. Some of the few survivors recalled him as "the Mephisto of the Ghetto" or "the Angel of Death."³

Several police units were stationed in Brzeżany. The German Gendarmerie consisted of nine men. A particularly vicious Gendarme was Zipprich, who participated in the Okopisko killings. The Sonderdienst, the Special Police, a group of about 30 men, was subordinated to Kreishauptmann Asbach, and most of its members were *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans). There was also a local branch of the Criminal Police (Kripo). The local Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), headed by a Ukrainian officer, consisted of a few dozen men, supervised by the German Gendarmerie.⁴

A short while after his arrival in Brzeżany, Asbach nominated a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The chairman was Dr. Shi-

mon Klarer, and his deputy was Israel Ros. Among its members were Dr. Philip Pomerants, Dr. Bernard Falk, and Dr. Eliezer Wagszal. The Brzeżany Judenrat assisted the German authorities in their anti-Jewish policies, but it also attempted, as much as it could, to ameliorate the terrible living conditions of the local Jewish population. The Judenrat appointed a Jewish Police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), consisting of 12 young men, some of them local Jews and some Jewish refugees.⁵

The first Aktion, the so-called intelligentsia roundup, occurred on the eve of Yom Kippur in early October 1941. All local Jewish males were required to report to the Brzeżany marketplace. About 600 Jews, mostly professionals and merchants, were detained and locked up in the Brzeżany prison. Asbach promised the Judenrat to help free them in return for 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of gold, which he got from the Judenrat, but nobody was released. The men were loaded onto trucks and driven in the direction of the village of Raj, southwest of Brzeżany, where men of the Security Police (Sipo) from Tarnopol shot them. Their bodies were buried in a nearby quarry. Most of the killings of Brzeżany Jews were conducted by the German Sipo outpost in Tarnopol. The Security Police in Tarnopol was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Herman Müller and his specialist on Jewish affairs, Willi Herrmann. The next large-scale Aktion in Brzeżany took place in mid-December 1941, on the second day of Hanukkah.

About 1,000 Jews, mostly the elderly, women, and children, were rounded up and taken on foot and in horse-drawn carts in the direction of Podhajce, southeast of Brzeżany. A Sipo detachment from Tarnopol, headed by Herman Müller, was waiting for them in the Litiatyn Forest, halfway between Brzeżany and Podhajce. All were shot on the spot and buried there.⁶

On January 15, 1942, an announcement was published in the local Ukrainian newspaper: "Jews who leave their designated quarter without permission, as well as those who provide them with shelter, are subject to the death penalty."⁷ The final establishment of the ghetto in the center of Brzeżany occurred in the fall of that year, with a number of Jews being brought in from surrounding villages such as Narajów.⁸ The first mass deportation from Brzeżany to the Bełżec extermination camp was carried out on Yom Kippur, September 21 and 22, 1942, by the Tarnopol Sipo, with the assistance of the local Ukrainian police. More than 1,000 Jews were loaded onto freight cars at the Brzeżany railway station. A few managed to jump off the train and make it back to Brzeżany.⁹ Then 1,000 Jews were deported from Brzeżany to Bełżec on October 31, 1942, arriving in Bełżec in early November. Another 1,500 Jews were rounded up in Brzeżany on the first day of Hanukkah, December 4, 1942, and sent to Bełżec.¹⁰

The first roundup of 1943 took place in late March and early April. It lasted three days. Some of those apprehended were deported to nearby labor camps. Others were shot at the old Jewish cemetery on Okopisko Hill, on the way to Raj. The last roundup and the liquidation of the Brzeżany ghetto occurred on Saturday, June 12, 1943, two days after the Shavuot holiday. It was directed and supervised by SS-Scharführer

Willi Herrmann. The last Jews of the Brzeżany ghetto, including the “W” group of some 300 Jewish men, supposedly needed as workers by the Wehrmacht, were marched to the Okopisko Jewish cemetery. Some 1,400 Jews were shot one by one on that day and buried in mass graves. Brzeżany became officially cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).¹¹ Those Jews who survived the liquidation of the Brzeżany ghetto went into hiding with non-Jewish families, mainly Polish. Some were hidden by mixed Polish-Ukrainian families, and very few, by Ukrainians.

The first Red Army units entered Brzeżany on July 22, 1944. Fewer than 100 of Brzeżany’s Jews, including some children, returned to the town. Almost all left within a year and were repatriated to Poland. Among them were also a few Brzeżany Jews who had survived the war in the Soviet Union.¹²

SOURCES Articles and memoirs on the Brzeżany ghetto and the extermination of Brzeżany’s Jews can be found in the Brzeżany yizkor book, edited by Menachem Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva: Toldot kehillot shenebrevu* (Haifa: Association of Former Residents of Brzeżany, Narajow, and Vicinity, 1978); and in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980).

For published memoirs on Brzeżany’s Jews, see Oren Elyashiv, *Ha-rofe shebazhar* (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Poalim, 1981); Menachem Ben Shimon Katz, *Bishvilei ha-tikva* (Tel Aviv: Eked, 1992; repub. Jerusalem: Carmel, 2006) [a Polish translation was published as *Na ścieżkach nadziei* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2003); and an English translation, *Path of Hope*, was published by Yad Vashem in 2007]; and Hersch C. Altman, *Brzezany Boyhood* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006).

A comprehensive study of Brzeżany in the years 1919–1945 can be found in Shimon Redlich’s *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews and Ukrainians, 1919–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002). It has also been published in Polish (2002), Ukrainian (2003), and Hebrew (2005).

Documentation regarding the extermination of Brzeżany’s Jewish community can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/879); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 76/61); DATO (R 274-1-123, p. 106); GARF (7021-75-370); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/263; M-33/896).

Shimon Redlich

NOTES

1. Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, p. 261; Redlich, *Together and Apart*, pp. 104–106, 116; and YVA, M-1/E/263, testimony by Pinhas Fenner.

2. *Berezhans’ka zemlia: Istorichno-memuarnii zbirnyk* (New York: Berezhany Regional Committee), vol. 1, pp. 304–305; Zbigniew Rusinski, *Tryptyk Brzeżański* (Wrocław: W kolorach tęczy, Oficyna Artystyczno-Wydawnicza, 1998), pp. 36–37.

3. YVA, Brzezany collection of witnesses’ testimonies collected by the Israeli Police, peh-ayin/01167; and BA-L, ZStL 208 AR 797/66 (Becker case).

4. BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 76/61 (Asbach case); *Berezhans’ka zemlia*, vol. 1, p. 303.

5. Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, pp. 264–269.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 266–268, 271–273.

7. *Berezhans’ki visti*, 3(46), January 15, 1942.

8. AŽIH, 301/879, testimony of Mojżesz Kin, who recalls that his family was brought from Narajów to Brzeżany following the Aktion on Yom Kippur (September 21) 1942. DATO, R 274-1-123, p. 106, notes that the ghetto was located in the center of town.

9. Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, pp. 305–313; Robin O’Neil, “Belzec: A Reassessment of the Number of Victims,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 29: 1–2 (Summer–Winter 1999): 95.

10. Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, pp. 328–329; O’Neil, “Belzec: A Reassessment,” pp. 99–100.

11. YVA, M-33/896, documents of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (GARF, 7021-75-370); Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, pp. 334–339; Katz, *Bishvilei ha-tikva*, pp. 9–26.

12. Redlich, *Together and Apart*, pp. 147–149.

BU CZACZ

Pre-1939: Buczacz, city, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Buchach, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Buczacz, Kreis Czortków, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Buchach, raion center, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Buczacz is located 55 kilometers (34 miles) south-southwest of Tarnopol. An apparently gerrymandered Polish census in 1931 claimed 23,884 residents, of whom half were Roman Catholic and one third Jewish.¹ But the demographic reality indicated a Ukrainian rural majority and a Jewish urban plurality.

On July 5, 1941, the German army reached Buczacz, expelling the Soviets, who had occupied the town since September 1939. The following day the 101st Light Infantry Division reported “murders of inhabitants (Ukrainians) in the jails of Buczacz and Czortków,” noting that “a Ukrainian militia took over as local police until the arrival of German troops.” Such army units merely passed through Buczacz on the way to the east.² Meanwhile, the self-proclaimed Buczacz “Sich,” or Ukrainian militia, included more than 100 men initially commanded by Tadei Kramarchuk and Andrii Dan’kovych, along with the representative of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Myron Hanushevs’kyi. In late July, command over the militia was transferred to former public prosecutor Volodymyr Kaznovs’kyi. The Sich abused, looted, exploited, and murdered Jewish inhabitants of Buczacz. Together with a few Gestapo officials, in mid-July it executed at least 40 politically suspect Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians. Then on August 25, the militia assisted a German police unit from Tarnopol in a mass shooting of some 400 Jewish craftsmen and professionals on the Fedor Hill, not far from the center of Buczacz.³

There were at the time approximately 8,000 Jews in Buczacz, making up about half the total population. Because many Jews were conscripted into the Red Army or fled to the east, and refugees were streaming in from the west,



Portrait of Polish rescuer, Gregory Baran, who hid six Jews fleeing an Aktion in Buczacz in 1941. Baran was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations in 2001.

USHMM WS #57638, COURTESY OF JFR

precise figures cannot be determined. In early August, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 12 men and a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) that grew to about 30 members. The first head of the Judenrat was Mendel Reich, former chairman of the kehillah, or Jewish community, who was assisted by a deputy, Rabbi Chaim Schapira, and a secretary, the lawyer and chairman of the General Zionists, Dr. Engelberg. Other lawyers on the Judenrat included Samuel (Berko) Hersas; Dr. Szaja Hecht (treasurer); Dr. Emanuel Meerengel, deputy mayor and community chairman in the 1930s; and Dr. Y. Stern. Among additional known members at one time or another were Jankiel Ebenstein; chairman of the Mizrachi, Munisz Frankiel; the merchant Ozjasz Freudenthal; quarry owner Dawid Kanner; factory owner Baruch Kramer; high school teacher Kriegel; physician Dr. Bernhard Seifer; and Dr. Silberschlag. Kanner, Kriegel, and Stern were murdered in the mass shooting of August 1941. Reich was replaced soon thereafter by Silberschlag, who was in turn replaced by Engelberg. The latter, described as an "upright man," escaped with his wife and child, but all three were denounced and shot. In early 1943,

Kramer was appointed head; he was killed in the final liquidation Aktion in June 1943.⁴

The Judenrat has been credited with providing assistance to thousands of Hungarian Jewish expellees, soon to be driven out of Buczacz and murdered in Kamenets-Podolskii by Police Battalion 320 on August 28–31, 1941.⁵ The Judenrat also set up a soup kitchen for the poor and arranged housing for expellees from nearby towns. Nevertheless, most survivors condemned the Judenrat and the Jewish Police for corruption and collaboration. When supplying the Germans with workers for forced labor camps, the Jewish Police, initially commanded by Josef (Józef) Rabinowicz, would "seize . . . only the poorest Jews . . . who could not ransom themselves." Dr. Seifer of the Judenrat "saw the poor as human dust, which was meant to satiate the German beast until the bad times would pass, and thereby to save those who were 'worthy of rescue.'" The last head, Baruch Kramer, came in for the harshest condemnation. This "handsome Jew . . . was still a follower of Hasidism and wore side locks" before the war. But "under the Germans he shaved and became their servant." As head, he "ran around with a hatchet during the roundups and betrayed the hiding places of the Jews. . . . He celebrated with the Germans and forced young Jewish women to come to these feasts." He was thus deemed "more of a collaborator than a Jew," in charge of a Judenrat that "became a tool of the Gestapo." Similar bitterness was expressed about "the shameful actions of the Jewish Police, which, at the height of its degeneration, was headed by Mojżesz Albrecht." Moshe Wizinger, who later fought with the Polish resistance, wrote scathingly: "The Jewish Police are robbing, killing, worse than the Germans; Albrecht walks down the streets in an Ordnungsdienst uniform. Like the Germans, he is holding a whip in his hand and woe to whoever will stand in his way." Albrecht died of typhus in the winter of 1942–1943 and was replaced by the law student Wolcio Wattenberg. The latter was replaced by Lichtenholz, who was eventually shot in June 1943.⁶

Some Ordnungsdienst members eventually turned against the Germans or joined resistance groups in the forests. Jewish policeman Janek Anderman, who attacked the perpetrators during the mass shooting of April 1943, was beaten and then burned alive in the town square. Yitzhak Bauer, who served in the Ordnungsdienst, later became a partisan.⁷ Several Judenrat members resigned in protest; some provided funds to purchase arms; and some chose direct action. Jankiel Ebenstein, who "during his few months . . . in the Judenrat became hated by everyone" and "was called an agent of the Gestapo," was said to have "died a hero's death" when he tried to conceal a bunker with Jews in November 1942 and then attacked and was killed by the Gestapo. "That day," as one account puts it, "he was forgiven everything."⁸

Unlike the Ukrainian police, the Ukrainian mayor of Buczacz, Ivan Bobyk, was reportedly considerate to the Jewish population.⁹ But in the fall of 1941, control over extermination policies in the region reverted to the Security Police (Sipo) outpost based in nearby Czortków. Assisted by several hundred Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, as well as by locally based

German Gendarmes and Ukrainian police, during the next three years this outpost murdered approximately 60,000 Jews in the Czortków-Buczacz region. The Sipo outpost's first chief was Kriminalsekretär Fritz-Ernst Blome, who came there in September 1941. The following month he was replaced by Kriminalkommissar Karl Hildemann, who remained at his post until October 1942. His successor, Kriminalsekretär Hans Velde, remained at the outpost until March 1943, when he was replaced by Kriminalsekretär Heinrich Peckmann, deputy chief from late 1942. In October 1943, Kriminalkommissar Werner Eisel came in as the chief of the Czortków Sipo outpost, which was finally dismantled in early 1944. Of these men, only Peckmann was tried after the war, but he was acquitted of all charges.¹⁰

Another notable character associated with the Czortków Sipo outpost was Kurt Köllner, who was in charge of Jewish affairs from July 1942 to the dismantling of the outpost. Well known for his brutality was Paul Thomanek, who commanded a labor camp in Czortków as of November 1942 and kept a room in Buczacz, where he participated in mass killings and other brutalities, including rapes. While the Buczacz town administrators, or Landkommissare, Richard Lissberg and his successor Walter Hoffer, were not active in anti-Jewish Aktionen, some of the local Gendarmes, notably Peter Pahl, are recalled by witnesses as having been particularly brutal. Buczacz was also the site of the only railroad tunnel in Galicia, blown up by the Red Army in the summer of 1941. The tunnel and bridge were rebuilt by the German firm Ackermann with local Jewish forced labor. Subsequent trials of the perpetrators made use of evidence by German civilians associated with this firm, who witnessed firsthand much of the killing.¹¹

Following the first mass shooting in the summer of 1941, Buczacz was spared from large-scale killing operations for over a year, although hundreds of mostly poor Jewish men were sent to the labor camp of Borki Wielkie near Tarnopol, where many died. The first Aktion, or roundup, occurred on October 17, 1942, when Gestapo personnel, aided by Ukrainian and Jewish policemen, deported some 1,600 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp; hundreds of others were shot in their homes and on the streets. A second Aktion took place on November 27; approximately 2,500 Jews were deported to Bełżec, and many others were shot on the spot.

Meanwhile, Buczacz was being crammed with Jews brought from surrounding villages. In December 1942, a ghetto, or "residential district," was established, which Jews were not allowed to leave without permission, although it was not enclosed. The crowded conditions and lack of food, sanitation, and medication caused a typhus epidemic that claimed many lives. People were frantically trying to build bunkers or hiding places into which they could flee during a raid, while others sought shelter in the surrounding villages. In early February 1943, a third Aktion took place; this time the approximately 2,000 victims were led to Fedor Hill, where they were shot in front of previously dug mass graves. The bloodletting was so massive that the town's water supply was polluted. The surviving Jews were then divided between those who remained

in the ghetto and others who were incarcerated in a labor camp on the outskirts of Buczacz. Only Jews who could afford to pay large sums of money to the Judenrat, as well as members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police, were admitted into this camp.

The Baedeker tourist guide of 1943 described Buczacz as a town of 9,000 inhabitants, distinguished by its castle, town hall, churches, and monastery on the slope of Fedor Hill. No mention was made of Jews.¹² On March 1, 1943, the German authorities reported the total number of residents in Buczacz as 8,207.¹³ Sporadic killings went on for the next two months, followed by a fourth major Aktion in April, when some 4,000 Jews still living in the ghetto were shot on Fedor Hill, and hundreds of others were killed on the streets. In mid-May, Buczacz was declared to be cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*), and the surviving Jews, with the exception of those in the labor camp, were expelled to other towns in the area. Most of them were either killed on the way or subsequently slaughtered by the Germans, local collaborators, and bandits who attacked the farms on which they were employed.¹⁴ The labor camp in Buczacz was liquidated in mid-June 1943. Some armed Jewish Police resisted the perpetrators, and in the course of the fighting, many managed to flee to the nearby forests or villages. The rest, some 1,800 people, were shot and buried on Baszty Hill, where the Jewish cemetery was located.

The hunt for hidden Jews continued with the assistance of local denouncers. A certain dynamic developed in this last phase whereby Jews "hiding among the peasants paid high sums for the shelters, and the simple-minded peasants went to town and bought whatever they desired." Consequently, "the Ukrainian murderers . . . began following these peasants . . . and found Jews in attics, cellars, and so on . . . [and] shot them on the spot." This in turn unleashed "large-scale denunciations," and "the peasants themselves began to kill the Jews or evict them."¹⁵ In an attempt to end this upsurge of local killings, a group of local Jewish resisters attacked the notorious "Jew-catchers" Kowalski and Nahajowski.¹⁶ This may be one reason why about 800 Jews were still alive when Buczacz was liberated on March 23, 1944. Tragically, on April 7 a counter-offensive brought the Germans back to Buczacz, and most of these last survivors were murdered. When the Red Army returned on July 21, 1944, fewer than 100 Jews were still alive in Buczacz.

Some of the local Ukrainian residents of Buczacz and its vicinity profited from the genocide by taking over the property of the victims and finding new employment opportunities. The Ukrainian high school teacher Victor Petrykevych noted in his unpublished diary in early January 1944 that although most people were living in "unprecedented poverty . . . some of the people live well and comfortably . . . the war destroys and ruins some, and gives too much to others, often undeservedly." On March 22, the day before the Soviets arrived, he added: "People, merchants, artisans, and so forth, who lived in former Jewish houses . . . are moving out . . . in view of the recent developments in the war. They anticipate Jewish revenge."¹⁷

In fact, there was no Jewish revenge. The few survivors who returned to Buczacz after the liberation soon left the town and ended up mostly in Israel and the United States. Buczacz became part of Soviet Ukraine, an almost exclusively Ukrainian town, with no memory of its Jewish past or of the mass murder of its Jewish population.

SOURCES The most important published source on Buczacz is the yizkor book, Yisrael Cohen, ed., *Sefer Buczacz; matsevet zikaron le-kebila kedosha* (Tel Aviv, 1956). Also valuable is the entry “Buczacz” in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 83–89, and sources cited therein.

Zbigniew Fedus, “Pierwsza deportacja z województwa tarnopolskiego (10 lutego 1940 roku),” *Zesłaniec* 21 (2005): 49–63, offers a detailed analysis of Polish deportations by the Soviets. Evaluations of the number of Jews deported to Bełżec can be found in Robin O’Neil, “Bełżec: A Reassessment of the Number of Victims,” *East European Jewish Affairs (EEJA)* 29: 1–2 (1999): 85–118; and Dieter Pohl and Peter Witte, “The Number of Victims of Bełżec Extermination Camp: A Faulty Reassessment,” *EEJA* 31:1 (2001): 15–22.

The unpublished diary by the Ukrainian high school teacher Victor Petrykevych (provided by his son) is of great importance in understanding events in Nazi-occupied Buczacz as seen by a conservative nationalist Ukrainian. The published diaries Arie Klonicki-Klonymus’s *The Diary of Adam’s Father* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1969) and Baruch Milch’s *Testament* (Warsaw, 2001) are invaluable, as are several other unpublished lengthy diaries and testimonies written in the immediate aftermath of the war. The 150-page 1947 Polish-language testimony by Moshe Wizinger, cited in the notes, is exceptional in its expressive quality and the range of experiences it depicts, not least of Jewish, Polish nationalist, and Russian Communist collaboration in fighting nationalist Ukrainians and Nazi Germans. Altogether there are hundreds of testimonies by Jews referring to Buczacz, as well as numerous Polish and a few Ukrainian testimonies. Trials conducted in the Federal Republic of Germany in the late 1950s and early 1960s are extremely rich sources of information about the Holocaust in Buczacz; much of it is collected in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1968–). Some useful material can also be found in the records of trials conducted by the German Democratic Republic. Investigations by the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission, the NKVD, and the KGB and trials conducted in the Soviet Union similarly contain much useful information.

Published memoirs include Pesach Anderman, *The Power of Life* [in Hebrew] (Ramat Gan, 2004); Alicia Appleman-Jurman, *Alicia: My Story* (New York, 1988); Etunia Bauer Katz, *Our Tomorrows Never Came* (New York, 2000); Yisrael Munczer, *A Survivor from Buczacz* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1990); Mina Rosner, *I Am a Witness* (Winnipeg, 1990); and Moshe Schwartz, *Versteimertes Herz* (Konstanz, 2005). An interesting memoir and popular history of Buczacz by a former Polish resident is Stanisław J. Kowalski, *Powiat Buczacki i jego zabytki* (Biały Dunajec-Ostróg, 2005).

The Soviet official postwar view of Buczacz can be gleaned from Igor Duda, *Buczacz: The Guide* [in Ukrainian] (L’viv,

1985). Conditions in the town in recent years are described in Omer Bartov, *Erased* (Princeton, NJ, 2007), pp. 127–141.

Scattered documentary and testimonial sources on the Holocaust in Buczacz can be found in a number of archives. In Austria: ÖSA and SWA. In the Federal Republic of Germany: BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; BDC; BStU; GLA-K; and other regional archives; ITS; LA-BW; LG-Hag; LG-Man; LG-Sa; and other Landgerichte; and PAAA. In Israel: YVA. In Poland: AAN; AGAD; AŽIH; GUS; and IPN. In the Russian Federation: GARF. In Ukraine: DAI-FO; DALO; DATO; DASBU; HADSBU; TsDAVO; and TsDIAL. In the United Kingdom: BNA and PISM. In the United States: FVA; HI/MID; USHMM; and VHF.

Omer Bartov

NOTES

1. Office Central de Statistique de la République Polonaise, *Deuxième recensement général de la population du 9 décembre 1931: Voïévodie de Tarnopol* (Warsaw, 1938).

2. BA-MA, RH20-17/32, 5.7.41 (July 5, 1941), 6.7.41; RH26-101/8, 5.7.41; RH24-52/3, KTB, Heft 2, pp. 40–42, 55; RH20-17/38, 6.7.41, 12.7.41; RH20-17/277, 7.7.41; RH26-257/8, KTB Nr. 5, 20.5.41-12.12.41; RH26-257/10, Anlagen z. KTB Nr. 5, vol. 2, 12.7.41, 13.7.41; RH20-17/33, 11.7.41, 12.7.41.

3. HADSBU Ternopil’, Kaznovs’kyi trial (1956–57), spr. 30466, vols. 1–2; 26874; 14050-P; 736; 3713; 14340; 9859-P; 8540-P; 8973-P; 14320-P; Letter by Markus Kleiner, April 10, 1951; AŽIH, 301/327, Izaak Szwarc (1945); IPN, 0192/336, vol. 29, Józef Humeniuk trial (1949).

4. Isidor Gelbart, YVA, O-33/640, and BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 239/59, Band III, Bl. 1004-13, Kurt Köllner trial (1965); Józef Kornblüh, AŽIH, 301/2605 (1945), 301/3279 (1948), 301/3283 (1948); Samuel Rosen, YVA, M-49/1935 (1960); Samuel Rosenthal, AŽIH, 301/2086 (1947?); Moshe Wizinger, YVA, O-3/3799 (1947); M-1/E/1726, unsigned testimony on Baruch Kramer (1948); letter by Jewish physician, signature illegible, June 5, 1946, private collection.

5. HADSBU Ternopil’, spr. 240, vol. 3, photos of Police Battalion 320 in Kopyczyńce near Buczacz; DATO, R 174-1-1283, September 3, 1941.

6. YVA, O-3/3799; Yehoshua Friedlander, 2004, private collection; Jozef Rabinowicz, BA-L, B 162/5163, and BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 239/59, Band III, Bl. 935-938, Köllner trial (1961, 1964); testimonies in notes 3 and 4 and in Cohen, *Sefer Buczacz*.

7. AŽIH, 301/327; Yitzhak Bauer (Ischak, Izio), BA-L, B 162/5182, testimony at Albert Brettschneider’s trial (1968); interview with author, 2003.

8. YVA, O-3/3799.

9. YVA, O-33/640.

10. USHMM, RG-31.003M, reel 1; Fritz Ernst Blome, BDC, RS/BA-BL; Indictment against Köllner and Heinrich Peckmann, BA-L, DP 3/1645; Werner Eisel, BWSL, GLA-K 309. Zug. 2001_42/881, LG-Man SB. 40.

11. Urteil LG-Hag 601031, Paul Thomanek, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 16 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 498, pp. 727–772; testimony by Henriette Bau (Lissberg), Brettschneider trial (1969), BA-L, B 162/5183; testimony by Walter Hoffer, Köllner and Peckmann trial, BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 239/59 (1960); Peter Pahl,

trial, BA-L, B 162/5167, 5169, 5173 (1966–67); Albert Wachinger, employee of Ackermann, Brettschneider trial (1960), BA-L, B 162/5180.

12. Karl Baedeker, *Das Generalgouvernement* (Leipzig, 1943), p. 235.

13. *Amliches Gemeinde- und Dorfverzeichnis für das Generalgouvernement* (Krakau, 1943), in GUS Library.

14. AŻIH, 301/3492, Mojżesz Szpigiel (1948); YVA, O-3/3799.

15. Elias Chalfen, YVA, M-1/E/1559 (1947).

16. Bauer, interview; YVA, O-3/3799.

17. Petrykevych diary, unpaginated.

BUKACZOWCE

Pre-1939: Bukaczowce, town, Rohatyn powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bukachevtsy, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Bukaczowce, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Bukachevtsy, Rohatyn raion, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast', Ukraine

Bukaczowce is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) west-northwest of Stanisławów. On the eve of World War II in 1939, there were 780 Jews living there.

The Germans entered Bukaczowce on July 3, 1941. A German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) initially ruled the town. In August 1941, authority passed to a German civil administration. Bukaczowce was incorporated into Kreis Brzezany, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann in Brzezany was Hans-Adolf Asbach until the beginning of 1943, when he was replaced by Dr. Werner Becker.

Until the end of March 1942, the anti-Jewish Aktions in Bukaczowce were organized by the office of the Security Police and SD (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów, headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger. From April 1942, responsibility for the area was transferred to the Sipo office in Tarnopol. From October 1941, the Security Police office in Tarnopol was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller. In June 1943, he was succeeded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger. In Bukaczowce there was a post of the German Gendarmerie and a unit of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) that participated in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In the summer of 1941, the occupational authorities imposed a curfew on the Jews and ordered them to wear insignia bearing the Star of David. They were also obliged to surrender all their valuables, and several Jews were taken hostage to ensure compliance. Jews were not allowed to leave the town and were frequently beaten by the Ukrainian police, who seized them off the streets for forced labor.

The German authorities soon established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and appointed Emil Kroiz as its head. They used the Judenrat to communicate their regulations regarding demands made of the Jewish population. The Judenrat had to organize daily work details of Jewish men and women, many of whom had to walk up to 8 kilometers (5 miles) to work on agri-

cultural estates outside the town. Some of those who worked for the local authorities, in services, or in other professions received small salaries, or at least some extra food as pay.¹

At some time between the summer of 1941 and the spring of 1942, a Jewish residential district, or open ghetto, was established in Bukaczowce. In April 1942, Jews from the surrounding villages, including Knihynicze, Wasiuczyn, Łukowiec, Kozara, Czerniów, Tenetniki, Czahrów, Kołokolin, Martynów, and several others, were resettled into Bukaczowce, bringing the total Jewish population there to 1,303. This large influx resulted in severe overcrowding and the worsening of sanitary conditions.² Jews received a basic daily allowance of only 40 grams (1.4 ounces) of bread, causing hunger, especially among those who had been resettled into the town and were able to bring very little property with them to barter for extra food. In September 1942, an epidemic of typhus broke out. Since there was no hospital, the sick continued to live with the healthy, and a number of Jews died as the epidemic spread.³

In the fall of 1942, the Germans conducted two deportation Aktions in Bukaczowce. During the first Aktion on September 21, 230 mostly elderly and sick Jews were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec via Rohatyn. German and Ukrainian police conducted the Aktion, while the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) assisted them in gathering the deportees next to the office of the Judenrat. As some Jews went into hiding, house searches were conducted, and a few dozen Jews were shot in the town.⁴ Following the deportation, several hundred Jews from Bursztyn were resettled to Bukaczowce on October 15, 1942.⁵ On their arrival there on October 15, there was no room in the Jewish quarter, so the Germans ordered the non-Jews to vacate one street for the Bursztyn Jews temporarily, explaining that the Jews would be deported again after only 11 days.⁶

During the second Aktion, on October 25–26, 1942, a detachment of the Security Police from Tarnopol headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller, assisted by the German, Ukrainian, and Jewish Police, rounded up 550 Jews and deported them to Bełżec.⁷ Besides those deported to Bełżec, 255 more Jews were killed in and around Bukaczowce.⁸

On November 10, 1942, SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger ordered that the Jewish residential district in Bukaczowce should be completely fenced off from the rest of the town, creating an enclosed ghetto.⁹ However, it is doubtful whether such an enclosed ghetto was created.¹⁰ In January 1943, the 320 or so Jews who remained in Bukaczowce were given only three days by the German authorities to move to the enclosed ghetto in Rohatyn, where they shared the fate of the local Jews.¹¹

The Red Army recaptured Bukaczowce on July 27, 1944. Only about 20 Jews from Bukaczowce managed to survive the remainder of the German occupation, hiding in the woods, using false papers, or obtaining the aid of local Christians.

SOURCES A short article on the Jewish community of Bukaczowce and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 89–91.

Documents concerning the extermination of the Jews of Bukaczowce can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2572, 3655); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-12); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2572; Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 90.
2. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967). The Jewish survivor Sol Mandel dates the establishment of the ghetto in Bukaczowce in the summer of 1941; see www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Bukaczowce/Threads.htm; also AŻIH, 301/2572. The Jewish populations of these villages in 1921 were as follows: Knihynicze, 414; Wasiucyn, 16; Łukowiec, 16; Kozara, 13; Czerniów, 52; Tenetniki, 17; Czahrów, 38; Kołokolin, 28; Martynów, 97; see Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 90.
3. AŻIH, 301/2572.
4. GARF, 7021-73-12, p. 3016; Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 90.
5. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja."
6. Shimon Katz et al., eds., *Sefer Burshtin* (Jerusalem: Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1960), pp. 324–325, 373.
7. GARF, 7021-73-12, p. 3016.
8. Ibid.
9. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
10. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 244.
11. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 91.

BURSZTYN

Pre-1939: Bursztyn, town, Rohatyn powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Burshtin, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Bursztyn, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Bursztyn, Halych raion, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Bursztyn is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) north of Stanisławów. On the eve of World War II, about 1,800 Jews lived there.

German troops occupied Bursztyn on July 3, 1941. Until August, the town was under the authority of a German military administration, but the local Ukrainian militia was more or less in control.

On July 20–21, 1941, antisemitic local Ukrainians together with a German noncommissioned officer (NCO) initiated a pogrom against the Jews in Bursztyn. A number of leading Jews were arrested and beaten in the community building. The pogrom organizers then ordered the Jews to collect a tribute of sugar, coffee, liquor, and other valuable materials from their homes. Thereafter, another group of Jews, includ-

ing two rabbis, were gathered in the synagogue, where they were humiliated, beaten, and had their beards shorn, while being forced to pray. Throughout the night, as the Ukrainians drank and celebrated, Jews were beaten close to death on the streets and their properties looted. Many Jews went into hiding until the pogrom abated.¹

In early August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Bursztyn was in Kreis Brzezany. From November 1941 until the start of 1943, Hans-Adolf Asbach served as the Kreishauptmann. From the spring of 1942, the German Security Police post in Tarnopol was responsible for organizing the deportation and killing Aktions against the Jews of Kreis Brzezany. Between October 1941 and May 1943, this post was commanded by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller. In the town of Bursztyn, there were posts of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), both of which actively participated in the Aktions against the local Jews.

In early August 1941, the German authorities ordered the establishment of an eight-man Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Bursztyn. The first head of the Judenrat was Mine Tobias, but he resigned after a few weeks when he was requested to send Jewish youths to the forced labor camps. He was replaced by his cousin Filip Tobias. Other members of the Judenrat included Jehuda-Hersh Fishman and, for a time, Dr. Lipa Shumer.² One of the first tasks of the Judenrat was to collect part of a massive contribution of 10 million rubles, which the Germans had demanded from the Judenrat in Rohatyn and the surrounding communities, including Bursztyn. According to Dr. Shumer, who traveled to Rohatyn as part of the Bursztyn delegation, the Bursztyn Jews had to pay some 2 to 3 million rubles within a short time. By selling most of their remaining property, somehow the Jews of Bursztyn gathered the sum, but the hopes that the Germans would then leave them in peace went unfulfilled.³

During the first months of the occupation, the German authorities introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures. The Jews were registered by the Judenrat and had to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. Jews were forbidden to trade with non-Jews or to leave the limits of the town. Male Jews were forced to carry out physically demanding work. Jewish survivor Feiga Sager, whose father was a kosher butcher, recalls that the Germans prohibited the ritual slaughter of meat.⁴

The Jewish Council also had an executive force at its disposal, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). The tasks of the Jewish Police included assembling Jews required for forced labor tasks and collecting required contributions from the Jews. Some time after the first contribution, two Gestapo men arrived in Bursztyn and demanded many silver items and other luxuries. Again the Judenrat somehow managed to collect these things, as the Jews sold their very last precious reserves, despite the ban on trading with non-Jews. Nonetheless, the Germans still kept coming back for more.⁵

Information about the Bursztyn ghetto can be found in the personal accounts in the yizkor book. According to Yankel

Glazer: “the ghetto in Bursztyn was created right after the Germans arrived in the shtetl.” The Jews had to live in the Jewish quarter and were not allowed to come into contact with the Christian population.⁶ Dr. Shumer states “that the Germans did not create a ghetto, but the whole quarter where the Jews lived was converted into a ghetto. Jews had to leave their houses on the main streets, as they were not permitted to live among the Christians.” The resulting Jewish quarter was very overcrowded, with up to 20 people sharing a room. Some Jews from the surrounding countryside had been driven from their homes and gathered in Bursztyn during the first days of the occupation. Their Ukrainian neighbors robbed most of them on the way, and a number were killed.⁷

From late 1941 and during 1942, the Judenrat periodically was required to surrender groups of Jews to work in forced labor camps at Zborów and other sites near Tarnopol on road construction. Conditions in these camps were so bad that many inmates died of exhaustion after only a few weeks.

Living conditions in the open ghetto in Bursztyn were also severe. During the winter of 1941–1942, Jews had to walk almost 5 kilometers (3 miles) to collect firewood from the forest, and sometimes they were beaten and robbed on the way. The Judenrat was responsible for the distribution of the meager bread rations, with those performing forced labor receiving larger portions; but it was accused of showing favoritism, and on occasion people waited for their share in vain.⁸ Some survivors criticize members of the Judenrat harshly, for collaborating too eagerly with the Germans and protecting their own families at the expense of others. Hersh ben Moshe-Ahron Veysman, however, mentions an incident in which he was arrested by the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police for illegally possessing some butter. He was released, however, after the Judenrat paid a bribe to the head of the police.⁹

The Jews suffered from hunger, as they were no longer permitted to buy food from the stores, now owned by the non-Jews in the town. After all the robberies and contributions, the Jews had to barter their last poor items for a piece of bread or a few potatoes. Dr. Shumer recalls the terrible picture of Jews swollen with hunger and children with skinny legs from malnutrition. Many Jews died of hunger, and their bodies were left lying around for several days.¹⁰

In May 1942, the German authorities permitted the establishment of a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Bursztyn, appointing Dr. Wolf Schmorsk as its chairman. The other two members of the delegation were Filip Tobias and Dr. Lipa Shumer.¹¹ The late date of its establishment gave the JSS little time to ameliorate the suffering of Bursztyn’s Jews.

In June 1942, a total of 1,564 Jews were registered in Bursztyn. After more Jews from the surrounding villages were brought into the town over the summer, the population rose to 1,650. On September 21, 1942, the first major anti-Jewish Aktion took place. To make up a deportation quota from Rohatyn, German police arrived in Bursztyn and rounded up approximately 200 Jews, killing a number of others who tried to flee. The Jews were escorted to Rohatyn and then deported by train to the extermination camp at Bełżec.¹²

On October 10, 1942, the Germans posted announcements in Bursztyn that all the Jews had to move to Bukaczowce. On their arrival there on October 15, there was no room in the Jewish quarter, so the Germans ordered the non-Jews to vacate one street for the Bursztyn Jews temporarily, explaining that the Jews would be deported again after only 11 days. Then on October 26, several hundred Bursztyn Jews were among a large transport sent from Bukaczowce to the Bełżec extermination camp. A number of Jews were killed in the town during the roundup, which was carried out by members of the Security Police based in Tarnopol, assisted by the local Ukrainian Auxiliary Police.¹³

About 30 Jews remained in Bursztyn after this Aktion concentrated in a camp based in one house, as they were still needed for road construction work. At the end of October these Jews were transferred to the Rohatyn ghetto, where most were murdered together with the local Jews of that area in 1943. A number of Jews managed to escape during the round-ups and sought shelter with local peasants, often in exchange for payment. Many of these people, however, were denounced to, or uncovered by, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police and were subsequently shot or added to the deportations. Some other escapees also made their own way to the Rohatyn ghetto, due to the difficulties of surviving in hiding.

According to the materials of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), a total of 1,806 Jews from Bursztyn were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec or to the Rohatyn ghetto.¹⁴

SOURCES Publications on the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Bursztyn include the following: Shimon Katz et al., eds., *Sefer Burshtin* (Jerusalem: Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1960); “Bursztyn,” in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 99–102; and Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967): 18 (table 2). Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 223, mention the open ghetto in Bursztyn, dating its establishment in September 1941.

Documents regarding the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Bursztyn can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/263 [JSS]); BA-L (B 162/4134 [AR-Z 76/61 Brzezany, vol. 5]); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-2); VHF (# 11656); and YVA.

Martin Dean and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Yankel Glazer, “Der gang iber ale gehinums,” pp. 320–321; and Dr. Lipa Shumer, “Ummentshlechn leydn un peyn,” pp. 361–368—both in Katz et al., *Sefer Burshtin*.

2. Glazer, “Der gang,” p. 323; Shumer, “Ummentshlechn leydn,” p. 369; Yankel Feldman, “In tal fun yammer un gruel,” in Katz et al., *Sefer Burshtin*, p. 305.

3. Glazer, "Der gang," pp. 321–322; Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," pp. 369–370.
4. Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," p. 369; VHF, # 11656, testimony of Feiga Sager.
5. Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," pp. 370–371.
6. Glazer, "Der gang," p. 323.
7. Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," pp. 368, 371.
8. Feldman, "In tal," pp. 306–307.
9. Hersh ben Moshe-Ahron Veysman, "Durch sheudern un angst," in Katz et al., *Sefer Burshtin*, pp. 379–380.
10. VHF, # 11656; Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," p. 371.
11. AZIH, 211/263 (JSS).
12. Glazer, "Der gang," p. 324.
13. Shumer, "Ummentshlechn leydn," p. 373; Glazer, "Der gang," pp. 324–325.
14. GARF, 7021-73-2.

BUSK

Pre-1939: Busk, town, Kamionka Strumiłowa powiat, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Kamionka-Strumilowa, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Busk is located 45 kilometers (28 miles) northeast of Lwów. In 1931, there were 1,840 Jews living in Busk (22.8 percent of the total population).

When German forces occupied Busk on July 1, 1941, there were about 1,900 Jews residing there. Initially, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town, but in August 1941 a German civil administration was established. Busk became part of Kreis Kamionka-Strumilowa, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was at first SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rebay von Ehrenwiesen, and from June 1942, his former assistant SS-Untersturmführer Joachim Nehring was given the position.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Busk were organized and carried out by a squad of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) from the office in Sokal, which was subordinate to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) in Lwów. The Sokal outpost was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hans Block from October 1941, and from May 1942 until October 1943, it was headed by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk. In Busk itself, there was a post of German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, which actively participated in the anti-Jewish Aktions. A teacher named Roman Czuczman was appointed head of the police. The mayor was another Ukrainian teacher by the name of Oleksy Bay.¹

During the first days of the occupation, Ukrainians and German soldiers broke into Jewish houses and arrested people who might then be released in return for a ransom. The first Aktion was carried out in mid-July 1941, when 28 Jews from the intelligentsia and two Ukrainians were shot in a forest near Jablunówka as Soviet activists.² The shooting was apparently carried out by a squad (Einsatztruppe) of the Security Police and SD from Lwów.

In July 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by Isaac Margalit, was created in Busk on orders from the German military administration, and Jews were forced to wear distinguishing markings on their clothing. Jewish property, especially valuables, was confiscated, and Jews were deprived of many basic rights. All Jews had to be registered, and they were compelled to engage in forced labor accompanied by cruel beatings. The Judenrat was responsible for selecting Jews for forced labor, and recruitment was carried out by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), who wore blue hats and were armed with clubs. Among the labor tasks performed was road construction on the main highway from Lwów to Kiev for the Organisation Todt. The Judenrat managed to limit the robberies and violence by bribing German officials and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police and trying to meet all their demands.³

In the winter of 1941–1942, an outbreak of typhus spread from the emaciated Soviet prisoners of war. On instructions from the local doctor, the Judenrat set up a separate hospital for Jews to treat those who fell ill; only three or four Jews died of the disease. The Judenrat also ensured that all Jews had work, so that the Gestapo was not able to take away any unemployed Jews. There were no ration cards issued by the Judenrat, but everyone received a portion of potatoes and 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread every other day; poor people, who could not supplement these basic rations by bartering with local peasants, received just the bread every day.⁴

On September 21, 1942 (Yom Kippur), the Germans carried out a large Aktion in Busk. On this day, a squad of Security Police from Sokal, with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian forces, rounded up about 600 Jews who were incapable of work. They were escorted out of town and shot with other Jews from the region in trenches near Kamionka Strumiłowa.⁵

In late October 1942, Jews from the surrounding villages were transferred to Busk. At that time, there were 1,760 Jews in Busk (including the surrounding villages, there were 2,023 Jews).⁶

On December 1, 1942, a ghetto composed of two streets and surrounded by a fence was created in Busk on orders from Kreishauptmann Nehring.⁷ Several hundred Jews died of hunger and disease in the ghetto during the fall and winter of 1942–1943. They were taken out on carts and buried in mass graves in the Jewish cemetery. Jews could leave the ghetto only on Tuesdays and Fridays for two hours to buy food. Otherwise, Jews caught attempting to leave the ghetto would be shot. People bartered their last possessions, including their warm clothes, for something to eat. In January 1943, all the patients in the ghetto hospital were murdered.

From among the Jews in the ghetto, a special workers' brigade was formed. These Jews lived outside the ghetto and wore special armbands bearing a "W" for Wehrmacht, as they worked for the German army and at least for a time were spared from Aktions and other roundups of Jews.⁸ A resistance movement, headed by Jacob Eisenberg, collected arms inside the ghetto and made plans to escape to the forests, but on May

21, 1943, the ghetto was liquidated. German security forces, Ukrainian police, and ethnic Germans stormed Jewish apartments, and many people were murdered on the streets. Those Jews who were rounded up on the main square were then escorted to the Jewish cemetery, where the German forces shot them in a number of mass graves. During the Aktion, some 1,200 people were murdered and about 300 were taken to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów. The Jews with the “W” sign on this occasion were among the first victims.⁹ A few Jews were kept alive to assist in cleaning up the ghetto area. The Germans also kept about 30 pretty Jewish girls as “sex slaves” for themselves and the local police. The women became pregnant, and the Germans called in a Security Police detachment from Sokal to shoot them in the forest about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away.¹⁰

On June 7, 1943, Kreishauptmann Nehring published an announcement that the ghettos in Busk and Sokal had been dissolved and that his Kreis was now free of Jews (*judenfrei*). The same poster declared that any remaining Jews were sentenced to death, and the same punishment was threatened against anyone who housed, fed, or hid Jews, or knowingly failed to report their presence to the police.¹¹ Some Jews managed to hide in the ghetto and subsequently escape to the forests, but they faced intensive searches by the Ukrainian police.

Several years after the war, an investigation was opened against Rebay von Ehrenwiesen by the Federal German authorities. However, the case was soon closed owing to insufficient evidence. Nehring was acquitted on August 24, 1981, by the Landgericht in Stade. Block died in August 1944. Heyduk was sentenced to life imprisonment on July 13, 1949, by a court in Munich.

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community can be found in the yizkor book: A. Shayar, ed., *Sefer Busk; le-zekher ha-kehila she-barva* (Haifa: Busker Organization in Israel, 1965). There is also a memoir of the Holocaust period in Busk by Thomas T. Hecht, who was a teenager at that time, *Life Death Memories* (Charlottesville, VA: Leopolis Press, 2002). Some of the testimonies collected by the Yahad-in Unum research team in Busk have been published in the book of Father Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), pp. 161–191.

Documentation regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Busk can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/477, 1704, 4486, and 4926); BA-L (ZStL, AR-Z 14/1964; 208 AR 1415/66); GARF (7021-67-82); StA-Lud; YIU; and YVA.

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trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/477, testimony of Maria Steinberg.
2. GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 61; AŽIH, 301/1704, testimony of Israel Hecht.
3. AŽIH, 301/477.
4. Ibid.
5. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŽIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 5; GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 55; AŽIH, 301/477 and 4926.

6. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 5.

7. BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR 1415/66, statements of J. Nehring on March 24, 1965, and of W. Rebay von Ehrenwiesen on May 21, 1965; AŽIH, 301/4486, testimony of Mieczysław Rolsztein, who dates the formation of the ghetto in November.

8. Hecht, *Life Death Memories*, pp. 103–104.

9. Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), p. 82; Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” p. 26; AŽIH, 301/1704. According to the documents of the ChGK, about 2,000 Jews were killed in the Busk raion, and more than 2,000 were deported (see GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 55); however, from the available evidence, it appears that these figures are too high. See also *The Mass Shooting of Jews in Ukraine 1941–1944: The Holocaust by Bullets* (Paris: Mémorial de la Shoah and Yahad-in Unum, 2007), pp. 106–107; the research of Yahad-in Unum uncovered 15 mass graves at the site of the Jewish cemetery in Busk in August 2006.

10. YiU, testimony # 033, Anna Dychkant in Busk; testimonies # 136 and 286, Anton Davidovski, Busk, April 12, 2006, and August 25, 2006; Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, pp. 167–168.

11. StA-Lud, EL 317 III, LG-Stutt, Ks 5/65, Bekanntmachung Nehring dated June 7, 1943 (transcription).

CHODORÓW

Pre-1939: Chodorów, town, Bóbrka powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Khodorov, raion center, Drogobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Chodorow, Kreis Stryj, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Khodoriv, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Chodorów is located 53 kilometers (33 miles) south-southeast of Lwów. According to the population census of 1931, 2,216 Jews were living in Chodorów.¹ By the middle of 1941, allowing for an annual increase of 9 to 10 persons per 1,000, there were probably around 2,500 Jews in the town.

German troops occupied Chodorów on July 2, 1941. During the first weeks of the occupation, the Germans and their Ukrainian collaborators abused Jews in the streets, robbed their homes, and burned down the Great Synagogue.

Initially, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. On August 1, 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Chodorów was incorporated into Kreis Stryj, within Distrikt Galizien. Regierungsrat Dr. Wiktor von Dewitz was appointed as Kreishauptmann in Stryj from 1941 to 1944. A number of Landkommissare served under the Kreishauptmann. The Landkommissar in Chodorów was Karl Hohlmann.

Along with a local Ukrainian police unit, a German Gendarmerie post was also established in Chodorów. The German Gendarmerie served under the Gendarmerie in Stryj. The members of these units took an active part in the anti-Jewish Akions conducted in the town.

In the summer of 1941, the German military administration ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by a man named Teichman. The Judenrat was subsequently assisted by a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). The German authorities ordered the Judenrat to collect contributions in money and valuables from the Jews, threatening to execute its members if they failed to meet these demands. The Jews were obliged to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David in plain view. Adult Jews were required to perform forced labor, during which they were beaten and abused, sometimes resulting in death. In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews were ordered to surrender their furs and warm coats for the use of the German army.

On June 10, 1942, 2,732 Jews were registered in Chodorów, of whom 1,169 were engaged in various kinds of labor.² A deportation Aktion was carried out in the settlement on September 4 and 5, 1942, in which between 1,100 and 1,500 Jews were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec. Sick Jews and others who were unfit were shot on the spot.

Information on the existence of a ghetto in Chodorów is sparse. After this first wave of deportations in September, the Kreishauptmann issued instructions for the remaining Jews of the Kreis to be concentrated in Stryj, Bolechów, Chodorów, Skole, or Żurawno before the end of October. Those working Jews who remained in some locations after this date were “under all circumstances to be housed in barracks.”³ Although not officially included as a ghetto on the list announced by Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Krüger in November 1942, the concentration in Chodorów of the Jews from the surrounding villages during October led to overcrowding. According to survivor Dora Iwler, the influx of Jews from other villages meant that another 17 or 18 people had to be put up in her home, on the orders of the Judenrat. She describes this concentration of Jews as being “like a ghetto.”⁴

On October 18, 1942, in a second Aktion, 350 Jews were deported from Chodorów to Bełżec.⁵ After this operation, around 800 Jews were allowed to remain in Chodorów, where they worked in different professions. Some 487 Jews worked in agriculture, while the remainder worked at a sugar factory, in a sawmill, at a butchers’ shop, for the town administration, and in other public workplaces.⁶ According to the testimony of Juda Kneidel, these remaining Jews were ordered by the German SD to vacate their homes and move into a special Jewish quarter, or remnant ghetto, at the end of 1942. Among the German officials who beat and murdered Jews in the town were Kundt, Janson, Kogel, and Mischke.⁷

On February 5, 1943, the German police assisted by the Ukrainian police murdered all the remaining Jewish laborers in Chodorów near the local sugar plant.⁸

A handful of Jews managed to survive with the assistance of local non-Jewish acquaintances. According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, Henryk Piczek displayed particular courage by hiding 10 Jews in his cellar for 22 months.

SOURCES Information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Chodorów can be found in Danuta Dabrowska,

Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), p. 224. Reference to the existence of a ghetto in Chodorów is made in *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 75.

Documents about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Chodorów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2574); DALO (R 1952-1-62); TsDAHOU (57-4-235, p. 7); VHF (# 24587); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 10.
2. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 36.
3. Ibid., p. 92, Runderlass Kreishauptmann Stryj an alle Vögte, October 7, 1942.
4. VHF, # 24587, testimony of Dora Iwler.
5. Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 387.
6. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 97, Stadtverwaltung Chodorow an den Kreishauptmann, October 31, 1942.
7. AŻIH, 301/2574, testimony of Juda Kneidel.
8. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 10.

CZORTKÓW

Pre-1939: Czortków, city, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Chortkov, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Czortkow, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Chortkiv, raion center, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Czortków is located 61 kilometers (38 miles) south-southeast of Tarnopol. On the eve of World War II, there were around 8,000 Jews living in the city.

German forces occupied Czortków on July 6, 1941. On August 1, 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Czortków became the center of Kreis Czortkow, within Distrikt Galizien. The first Kreishauptmann was the former deputy head of the Gestapo in Stettin, SS-Sturmabführer Dr. Gerhard Littschwager, and from April 1942, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Kujath, who previously had served as the chief city administrator in Lwów. The deputy Kreishauptmann and also the Stadtkommissar in Czortków was J. Haase.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the city were organized and carried out by the Security Police branch office based in Czortków. This office was run successively by Kriminalsekretär Hermann Blome (September 1941), SS-Obersturmführer Karl Hildemann (October 1941–October 1942), SS-Untersturmführer Hans Velde (October 1942–February 1943), SS-Sturmscharführer Heinrich Peckmann (February



A child's dress with red and blue flowers with small green leaves, embroidered by Lola Kaufman's mother in the Czortków ghetto and worn by Lola while in hiding.

USHMM WS #N08182, COURTESY OF LOLA AND WALTER KAUFMAN

1943–September 1943), and SS-Obersturmführer Werner Eisel (September 1943 until the German retreat). The Jewish Affairs Officer (Judenreferent) in Czortków was SS-Oberscharführer Konrad Rimpler, and from July 1942, SS-Scharführer Kurt Köllner. This office was subordinated to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) in Distrikt Galizien, which was based in Lwów. The city also had a German Gendarmerie post and a squad of Ukrainian police, both of which took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In early July of 1941, just before the arrival of German forces, local Ukrainians began killing Jews in Czortków and in neighboring villages. On July 10, antisemitic elements of the Ukrainian population and German soldiers carried out a pogrom in the town. In the course of the violence, more than 300 Jews were killed, and many more were beaten and robbed.¹

At the end of July 1941, on the orders of the German military administration, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 12 people was established. Initially the head was Dr. Kruh, assisted by Israel Langerman, Bertsie Steiger, and others. In addition to the Jewish Council in Czortków, there was also a Jewish Council for the entire Kreis, which could give instructions to the various Jewish Councils in the area. The chairman of the Kreis Jewish Council from October 1941 was M. Margules.²

Soon after its establishment, a number of Judenrat members were murdered in the Aktion against the Jewish intelligentsia, and the Germans dissolved the first Judenrat. Then the lawyer Dr. Chaim Ebner, who had served as deputy mayor before the war, became chairman of a reconstituted Judenrat. A unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) consisting of 20 men was also set up as an organ of the Jewish Council. The Jews were then ordered to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. They were also forbidden to leave the city, use the main street, and leave their homes at night. All

male Jews aged between 14 and 60 had to perform forced labor on a regular basis.³

The Germans conducted the first Aktion on August 25, 1941, seizing around 100 Jews and killing them in a nearby forest.⁴ A unit of the Security Police and SD based in Tarnopol probably organized and implemented this Aktion. On September 10, 1941, the German authorities imposed a contribution of 25,000 złoty on the Jewish community.⁵ Subsequently, there were further demands on the Jewish Council for valuables and, in December 1941, for the surrender of all fur garments for the German army.

On October 15, 1941, the Security Police branch office carried out a second Aktion in Czortków during which around 150 members of the intelligentsia were arrested and shot, based on lists prepared with the assistance of the Jewish Council.⁶

At the end of 1941 and in early 1942, several raids were carried out against young, healthy Jews. In the course of these raids, several hundred people were seized and sent to labor camps in the Tarnopol area (including those in Kamionki, Borki Wielkie, and Stupki). Those who had sufficient means were able to pay the Jewish Council to gain exemption from these transfers.⁷

By April 1942, the pogrom, successive Aktions, the deportations to labor camps, and deaths from hunger and disease had reduced the number of Jews in Czortków by approximately 1,000, to 6,800 people.⁸

In mid-March 1942, the German authorities announced the creation of a ghetto and gave the Jews until April 1 to move in. Six streets—Rzeźnicka, Składowa, Targowa, Łazienna, Podolska, and Szkolna—were designated as being within the ghetto. All the Jewish houses were marked with a large Star of David, and leaving the ghetto without a permit was punishable by death. It was terribly overcrowded, with two to three families (up to 20 people) sometimes occupying one room.⁹ Some Jews received passes that permitted them to go to their workplaces outside the ghetto. Those who were unemployed received different cards and were at the mercy of the Arbeitsamt for forced labor deployment. In May 1942, 150 girls were selected and sent to work on local estates for the cultivation of the rubber-yielding plants kok-saghyz.¹⁰

In the summer of 1942, German security forces shot about 110 Jews at the Jewish cemetery. These people had been arrested for violating German regulations.¹¹ By August 1942, the number of Jews in the ghetto was 6,500.¹²

In the second half of 1942, two deportation Aktions took place in which the Jews were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. The first Aktion was on August 27, 1942. The Security Police, Gendarmerie, Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and a company of Order Police from Tarnopol took part in the Aktion, assisted by the Jewish Police. During the Aktion, all of Czortków's Jews were driven onto the city's market square. In this process, more than 300 people were killed. On the market square, the Security Police, together with the Jewish Council, selected specialists and other workers, who were then returned to the ghetto. The remaining Jews were escorted to the train

station and forced into freight cars, 120 to 130 people per car. Despite the best efforts of the Security Police, between 300 and 500 people could not be squeezed into the cars. These people were then taken to the Security Police prison, where they remained until October, when a new Aktion was conducted. In all, more than 2,000 people were sent to Bełżec; some of them died en route from the intolerable heat and overcrowding. After this Aktion, the ghetto's dimensions were reduced to only two streets (Składowa and Rzeźnicka) near the Seret River.¹³

The second deportation Aktion took place on October 5, during which the Security Police, with the help of the Jewish Council and its police force, assembled 500 Jews. These people were loaded into railway cars designated with the letter "L" (Lager, or camp), as the Jews were to be sent to the Janowska Street forced labor camp in Lwów.¹⁴ The other 45 wagons on that train were filled with Jews from Tłuste, Buczacz, Monasterzyska, and Jagielnica. Aside from the Czortków Jews, who were left at the Janowska Street camp, all the other Jews were killed in the gas chambers in Bełżec.

At the end of 1942, several hundred Jews were sent to work on the surrounding estates, while about 600 people were placed in a newly created labor camp for those working for the Wehrmacht. In early 1943, the Czortków ghetto contained about 2,500 people, living in conditions of starvation and poverty. Typhus spread among the inhabitants. On June 16, 1943, the Security Police, Gendarmerie, and Ukrainian police liquidated the ghetto. The Jews tried to save themselves by fleeing. As a result, the liquidation Aktion took three days.¹⁵ The Jews seized during the combing of the ghetto were shot in ravines located on the grounds of the local airport.

During the ghetto's existence, attempts were made to organize an underground resistance. A group led by Reuven Rosenberg obtained arms and escaped to the forest in the spring of 1943, but it was soon discovered by the Germans and their Ukrainian auxiliaries. In the ensuing clash, most members of the group were killed. The few survivors continued to roam the forests. Another group under Meir Wassermann also escaped to the forest. They operated against the Germans between Tłuste and Jagielnica. Most of them also fell in battle. The Red Army liberated Czortków on March 23, 1944, but one week later the Germans drove them out again for a few days, forcing more than 60 Jewish survivors to retreat briefly with the Soviet forces until the city was recaptured.

After the war, Littschwager was the subject of an investigation carried out by the State Prosecutor's office in Darmstadt. The case was closed in 1972. Kujath was also under investigation after the war, but the case was closed on his death in 1963. Blome, the deputy chief of the Security Police in Czortków from October 1941 until July or August 1942, died in 1948. Hildemann died in 1945 in American detention. Velde died in February 1943 from typhus. Peckmann was acquitted by the district court (Landgericht, LG) in Saarbrücken on August 25, 1962. Eisel died in 1947 and Rimpler

in 1946 in a camp in Czechoslovakia. Köllner was sentenced to life imprisonment.

SOURCES Information on the destruction of the Jews of Czortków can be found in the following publications: Dr. Yeshayahu Austri-Dunn, ed., *Sefer yizkor le-bantsabat kedoshai kehillat Czortkow* (Tel Aviv and Haifa: Irgun Yotzey Czortkow in Israel, 1967); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 443–450; A. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered: The Annihilation of a Jewish Community* (Dumont, NJ, 1990); and "Tschortkow," in Israel Gutman et al., eds., *Enzyklopaedie des Holocaust: Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden* (Munich: Piper, 1995), pp. 1435–1436.

Documents and witness testimonies describing the fate of Czortków's Jews can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/835, 3206, 3754, and 4682); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 239/59, 208 AR 611/60, and verdict of LG-Man, 1 Ks 1/70); DATO; GARF (7021-75-107); Sta. Dortmund (45 Js 11/65); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.028; and RG-50.030*0021); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, pp. 20–21; AŻIH, 301/835, 3206, 3754, and 4682; GARF, 7021-75-107, pp. 8, 37–38.
2. Austri-Dunn, *Sefer yizkor Czortkow*, p. 15; LG-Man 1 Js 210/64, Anklage in der Strafsache gegen Albert Brettschneider und Richard Pal, September 3, 1970, p. 68.
3. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, pp. 21–23; Austri-Dunn, *Sefer yizkor Czortkow*, p. 16.
4. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, p. 24.
5. AŻIH, 301/4682.
6. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, p. 24.
7. AŻIH, 301/4682 and 4911. Dr. Frankel and Dr. Goldstein resigned from the Jewish Council at this time. By early 1943, word of the poor reputation of the Jewish Council in Czortków had even spread to Buczacz.
8. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 3.
9. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, pp. 29–30; D. Seidenberg, "The Destruction of Czortkow," in Austri-Dunn, *Sefer yizkor Czortkow*; GARF, 7021-75-107, pp. 9 and verso.
10. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, p. 35.
11. GARF, 7021-75-107, pp. 80–81.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
13. GARF, 7021-75-107, pp. 9–11; Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, pp. 37–53; Seidenberg, "The Destruction of Czortkow."
14. Morgenstern, *Chortkov Remembered*, pp. 53–60; Seidenberg, "The Destruction of Czortkow."
15. AŻIH, 301/3206, 3770, 4682, 5710, and 302/50. According to some sources, the liquidation of the ghetto was not fully completed until September 1943.

DOLINA

Pre-1939: Dolina, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Kalusz, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Dolyna, raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Dolina is located 51 kilometers (32 miles) west of Stanisławów. According to the 1931 census, there were 2,488 Jews living in the town. Assuming a natural annual increase of 9 to 10 persons per 1,000, it is estimated that there would have been more than 2,700 Jews living there in 1941.

Hungarian army detachments occupied the town on July 2, 1941. Initially the settlement was under the control of a Hungarian military commandant, but in August 1941 authority was transferred to a German civil administration. In 1941–1942, Dolina, which was the administrative center of Landkommissariat Dolina, was incorporated into Kreis Kalusz within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann until March 1942 was Regierungsrat Dr. Friedrich Gercke. His successor until early 1943 was Dr. Karl-Hans Broschegg.

In Dolina, the Germans established a Gendarmerie post, a Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle), and a force of Ukrainian policemen. The anti-Jewish Aktions in Dolina were organized and implemented primarily by the Sipo outpost in Stanisławów, which was headed from the end of July 1941 to the start of November 1942 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger.

In early August 1941, a large transport of Hungarian Jews passed through Dolina, before most of them were drowned in the Dniester River. A few hundred of these Jews managed to escape, and many went into hiding in and around Dolina. However, the occupational authorities lured them out with the false promise of returning them to Hungary. The Jews who responded to this appeal were taken out to a neighboring forest and shot together with a group of local Jews.

In the late summer of 1941, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Dolina, led by Julius Weinraub and Ephraim Weingart, and a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). The Jews were registered and required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Judenrat had to meet repeated German demands for money, foodstuffs, furniture, and valuables, on one occasion enforced by the temporary arrest of 55 Jews. It was also responsible for supplying quotas of Jews for forced labor.

Since the Jews in Dolina lived together in their own part of town and did not mix with the local Ukrainians, there was no need for the Germans to establish a separate residential area for the Jews. Instead, the area where the Jews lived became a de facto open ghetto. Some survivors from Rożniatów, who were forcibly resettled to Dolina from the fall of 1941, refer to Dolina as a ghetto, as many Jews from Rożniatów and other villages were concentrated there. One account from the Rożniatów yizkor book recalls: "[T]he life of the exiles that were sent to the

Dolina ghetto from the entire region became more difficult by the day. The hunger was increasing. Jews were perishing on the outskirts of the town from hunger. New decrees were issued daily, each one harsher than the preceding one."¹

In January 1942, the Germans organized a mass roundup in Dolina of Jewish men for forced labor. These Jews were taken initially to Stryj and, from there, together with other Jews, they were sent to work in various villages in the Carpathian Mountains, where most of them perished from hunger and cold.

In the spring of 1942, the German Security Police conducted an Aktion against the Jews in Dolina in which they shot 300 people at the Jewish cemetery.² After this, by the middle of 1942, hundreds more Jews were resettled to Dolina from Rożniatów and other villages. As a result, conditions became very overcrowded in the town, with many people forced to live in stables and barns and others having to sleep under the open sky.

On the orders of Hans Krüger in Stanisławów, a Sipo detachment under the command of Rudolf Müller was sent to Dolina to conduct a mass shooting there in early August, as no transportation was at that time available to deport the Jews from Dolina to the Bełżec extermination camp. The Germans initially demanded that the Judenrat surrender 1,200 Jews, but the chairman refused, saying he was not able to decide over the fate of people's lives. Then on August 3, 1942, the German police, assisted by local Ukrainian policemen, drove 3,500 Jews out of their houses and assembled them on the market square. The police abused many of them there and shot numerous children. After a selection, which resulted in able-bodied Jews being sent to labor camps, including one in Wyszaków, the remaining 2,500 or so Jews, including most members of the Judenrat, were escorted to the Jewish cemetery and shot. The Germans carefully removed any valuables from the Jews' clothing, and local inhabitants were ordered to bury the corpses in a mass grave.³

Some of the Jews managed to evade the roundup and escape into the surrounding forests, where Jewish partisan units, which included Jewish escapees from other towns in the region, were subsequently established. Ukrainian policemen, German Gendarmes, and also the Wehrmacht regularly searched for and killed Jewish fugitives in the area around Dolina over the ensuing 20 months.⁴ Only a few Jews from Dolina managed to survive until the return of the Red Army in 1944.

In 1983 a court in Memingen sentenced a German Gendarme who was based in Dolina during the occupation to five and a half years in prison for the shooting of Jews at the forced labor camp in Broszniów.⁵

SOURCES Relevant publications regarding the fate of the Jewish population in Dolina during the Holocaust include Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 153–156; and Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Rożniatów*

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(Tel Aviv: Rozniatow, Perehinsko, Broszniow and Environs Societies in Israel and the USA, 1974), pp. 157–206—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/670, 2148, 3365, 4919); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, 208 AR-Z 398/59 against Krüger et al.); DAI-FO (R 42 [Landkommissariat Dolina], R 98-1-13); GARF (7021-73-7); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Rozniatow*, pp. 201–206.
2. “Dolina,” in *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia akademiia estestvennykh nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), vol. 4, p. 397. See also Verdict of LG-Münst, May 6, 1968, in the case against Krüger et al., published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 28 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 675, p. 202.
3. DALO, R 35-12-11, p. 4; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 226–227, 315; AŽIH, 301/670 (Z. Rotenbach), 301/2148 (D. Szuster), 301/4919 (S. Sindler). According to another source, the shooting took place on August 30, 1942. See GARF, 7021-73-7, pp. 3, 19.
4. GARF, 7021-73-7, p. 19.
5. Verdict of LG-Mem, 1 Ks 115 Js 5640/76, against Jarosch, December 23, 1983.

DROHOBYCZ

Pre-1939: Drohobycz, city, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Drogobych, raion and oblast’ center, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Drogobytsh, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Drohobych, raion, center, L’viv oblast’, Ukraine

Drohobycz is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) south-southwest of Lwów. According to the census of December 9, 1931, 12,931 Jews were living in Drohobycz.

German troops occupied Drohobycz on June 30, 1941. Beginning in July, a military commandant’s office (Feldkommandantur 676) governed the city. On August 1, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. The city became the administrative center of Kreis Drohobycz. From August 1941 until June 1942, the Kreishauptmann was SS-Sturmabführer Eduard Jedamzik, who was succeeded by Hermann Görgens. A Stadtkommissar headed the German civil administration in the city of Drohobycz. Vetterman originally held that position; Wilhelm Schübler replaced him at the end of February 1942. The Stadtkommissar reported to the Kreishauptmann in Drohobycz. In addition to the Stadtkommissar’s department, beginning in November 1941, a 20-man municipal police unit (Schutzpolizei-Dienstabteilung) from Vienna was permanently located in the city. Hauptmann Rudolf Hötzl commanded this unit; his deputy was Oberleutnant Ferdinand Holzschuh. The Ukrainian Auxiliary Po-



Portrait of thirteen-year-old Bernard Mayer taken in Drohobycz, November 1941.

USHMM WS #14244, COURTESY OF BERNARD MAYER

lice (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) was subordinated to the municipal police; by the summer of 1943 it was 150 men strong. Like their Austrian counterparts, the Ukrainian police took an active role in all the anti-Jewish Aktionen.

Beginning on July 8, 1941, an SD detachment (SD-Einsatztrupp) was among the punitive units stationed in Drohobycz. It was subordinated to a special-purpose Security Police task force (Einsatzgruppe z.b.V.). SS-Hauptsturmführer Nikolaus Tolle commanded the SD detachment in the city; his deputy was SS-Untersturmführer Walter Kutschmann (who died in 1985 in Argentina).

In September 1941, the German authorities established a Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office, GPK) at the base of the SD detachment in Drohobycz. SS-Sturmabführer Franz Wenzel commanded the GPK from October 1941 to May 1942; SS-Sturmabführer Hans Block succeeded him. Beginning in the fall of 1942, Block’s deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Lucas Heckl, was in charge of the Criminal Police (Kripo). In June 1942, the Germans also established an outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Drohobycz, under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Benno Paulischkies.

On July 1 and 2, immediately after the occupation of the city by German troops, antisemitic sentiments among Ukrainian and Polish inhabitants set off an impromptu pogrom in which German soldiers also participated; 47 Jews were killed.¹ At least two executions of Jews took place soon after the arrival in the city of the SD-Einsatztrupp. On July 12, that unit murdered 23 Jews, including two women, in the woods near the city, and on July 22, 20 more Jews were killed.²

In the second half of July 1941, the German military authorities in Drohobycz required Jews to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Germans confiscated a large number of Jewish possessions, especially valuables. The occupying authorities also deprived the Jews of many basic rights. To assist them with the implementation of the new restrictions, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The newly created Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) served the council. Among the tasks of the Jewish Police was filling the required quota of Jewish workers for the labor office (Arbeitsamt).³

Jewish workers who had permanent jobs, for example, with the city administration, other German offices, or private firms, were supposed to receive regular wages that were 80 percent of those paid to non-Jews performing the same task, as payment was vital if their ability to work was to be maintained.⁴ They were also registered for social security payments, to be deducted from their wages. In addition, there was the daily quota of casual laborers (*Hilfsarbeiter*), supplied by the Jewish Council. These men were not paid directly, but their meager pay was supposed to be remitted entirely to the Jewish Council, which then issued larger rations to these workers' families. Unfortunately, many offices and companies paid these "wages" to the Jewish Council very late or not at all, such that payments were some 20,000 złoty in arrears by the end of October 1941.⁵ In July 1942, the Jewish Council also imposed a tax on those Jews earning wages directly, requesting their employers to deduct 10 percent and remit it to the Jewish Council to help pay for welfare services.

The Germans carried out their first Aktion in Drohobycz on November 22, 1941. From a list provided by the Jewish Council, on that day the Security Police, with the help of the Schutzpolizei and Ukrainian policemen, seized and executed some 400 Jews, who were either sick or otherwise unfit for labor.⁶ After that massacre, according to data for February 1942, 12,781 Jews remained in Drohobycz.⁷ By that count, the number of Jews in the city had dropped by more than 1,000 in the first seven months of the occupation.

The first so-called deportation Aktion was carried out in Drohobycz on March 25, 1942. In that operation, some 1,000 "poor" Jews were seized, transported, and then murdered in the Bełżec extermination camp.⁸ The Jewish Council compiled the list of those destined for deportation. After that Aktion, some 11,400 Jews still remained in Drohobycz in May 1942.⁹

The Germans carried out a second deportation Aktion on August 7 and 8, 1942. Before it began, they gathered in the city Jews from the villages of Medenica, Stebnik, and Truskawiec. In the course of this Aktion, in which the German, Austrian,

Ukrainian, and Jewish policemen participated, about 100 Jews were killed on the spot, and some 4,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec.¹⁰

Although it appears that plans existed for the creation of a Jewish residential area in Drohobycz from at least the beginning of 1942, it was reported in March 1942 that no closed (or consolidated) residential area (*geschlossener Wohnbezirk*) for the Jews had yet been established.¹¹ From October 1941, Jews were forbidden to leave the city, on pain of death, and they were also prohibited from using certain streets in the city center. However, the formal creation of a ghetto was not implemented until the end of September 1942.¹² According to the yizkor book, the Jews were given until October 1, 1942, to move into the ghetto and could take with them only up to 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of possessions. The ghetto was organized on the following streets: Zuzki, Kuwolska, Gabarska, Krashevski, Ribia, Skutnizki, and part of Sienkiewicz. A large number of Jews were also brought into Drohobycz from the surrounding area at this time. About 100 Jews died during the operation, either shot or from hunger and exhaustion. Two or three families had to share a small room. Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto. However, many Jews disobeyed this order to go in search of food to ward off starvation.¹³ The order issued by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, on November 10, 1942, confirmed retrospectively the establishment of the ghetto in Drohobycz.¹⁴

A third Aktion on October 23 and 24, 1942, led to the deportation of another 1,179 Jews.¹⁵ An Aktion on November 30 sent about 1,000 more Jews to Bełżec.¹⁶ Rounding up the Jews took about two weeks, in the course of which Jewish Police, on the orders of the Gestapo, were obliged to deliver 100 victims daily to an assembly point (a former synagogue). In several cases, Jewish policemen reportedly turned over their own mothers.¹⁷

In the interval between the third and fourth Aktions, an event took place in Drohobycz that came to be known as "Wild Thursday." In retaliation for the wounding of SS-Oberscharführer Karl Hübner by a Jewish pharmacist, Reiner, on November 19, 1942, 230 Jews were seized on the streets and killed. Among those slaughtered was the well-known writer and artist Bruno Schulz, who was shot on the street by SS-Oberscharführer Karl Günther.¹⁸

About 3,000 Jews still remained in Drohobycz at the beginning of December 1942. Some 1,500 were in the ghetto, and about the same number were in the forced labor camp of the Karpathen-Öl AG and several other labor camps. At the end of December 1942, the German civil administration ordered a reorganization of the Jewish Council. At this time, many of the Jews in the ghetto were in possession of official passes (*Passierscheine*) issued by the German police, permitting them to go unhindered to their places of work outside the ghetto. By March 1943, however, this was still possible only when accompanied by a non-Jewish escort who had been issued the pass on the Jew's behalf. At the end of March 1943, the Jewish Council was still concerned about obtaining a Passierschein that would

remain valid for some time for one of its employees who left the ghetto every day to collect the post.¹⁹

The next Aktion took place on February 15, 1943, in the ghetto. Some 500 Jews were seized and murdered.²⁰ The final liquidation of the ghetto began on May 21, 1943. On that day the Germans murdered the members of the Jewish Council, as well as about 500 Jews from the Rawa Ruska region. On June 6, 1943, the Germans killed the Jewish policemen. However, the search for Jews hiding in bunkers continued for several weeks. On July 15, 1943, the Germans put up signs declaring that Drohobycz was officially cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).²¹

After the liquidation of the ghetto, there remained in Drohobycz the labor camp at the petroleum extraction company, Karpathen-Öl AG, and several other work crews, such as that at the Klinker cement factory (600 workers), including various kinds of craftsmen and gardeners. SS-Obersturmführer Friedrich Hildebrand was in charge of the labor camp from July 1943 until July 1944. The former head of the camp, SS-Unterscharführer Erich Minkus, was removed from this position for drunkenness but remained as a subordinate of Hildebrand. By order of the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) for Distrikt Galizien, as early as June 12, 1943, local German authorities removed some 170 women and children from the labor detachments and murdered them. On August 25, 1943, the SSPF ordered the liquidation of the labor detachment at the cement factory. At Karpathen-Öl AG, the German authorities selected between 80 and 100 individuals to continue working for the company; the rest were killed; 40 Jews who had worked previously at Karpathen-Öl were slaughtered with them.²² The labor camp crew at the petroleum company was disbanded on April 14, 1944. The German authorities then took 489 Jews, together with 533 Jews from Boryslaw, to the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp in Poland.²³

When Soviet troops liberated Drohobycz in August 1944, some 400 Jews emerged from hiding. A number of them had been saved through the efforts of non-Jews—Ukrainians and Poles. Maria Strutinskaia, a schoolteacher, and her sister saved 13 Jews, including 5 children.²⁴ Even some German officials were known to have concealed Jews. In Drohobycz, for example, the head of the Arbeitsamt hid labor crews in his own house in 1943.²⁵

On May 6, 1953, a court in Bremen sentenced former SS-Obersturmführer Friedrich Hildebrand to eight years in prison. In his capacity as commander of the Jewish forced labor camp in Drohobycz, he had taken part in killing Jews. On May 12, 1967, also in Bremen, the court sentenced Hildebrand to life imprisonment for crimes in other locations and camps.

In Vienna, on March 18, 1959, a court issued a life sentence to former SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Gabriel. As a member of the German Security Police in Drohobycz in 1942 and 1943, Gabriel took part in the persecution and extermination of Jews in the city; he was released from prison in 1963. On March 16, 1962, a court in Stuttgart sentenced former SS-Hauptscharführer Felix Landau to life in prison. As a member of the Security Police in Drohobycz, Landau had taken an ac-

tive role in the murder of Jews. A court in Munich sentenced former SS-Rottenführer Hans Sobotta to life imprisonment on December 2, 1971, for taking part in killing inmates of the Jewish forced labor camp in Drohobycz in 1942–1943.

In the early 1990s, survivors erected a memorial to the Jewish victims in the Bronnitsky Wood on the outskirts of Drohobycz.

SOURCES Publications relevant to the history of the Drohobycz ghetto include the following: N.M. Gelber, ed., *Sefer zikaron il-Drohobits, Borislav veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Drohobits, Borislav veba-sevivah, 1959/2000); Tuvia Friedmann, ed., *Die Tätigkeit der Schutzpolizei, Gestapo und Ukrainischen Miliz in Drohobycz, 1941–1944* (Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1995); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 169–171.

Documents and testimonies regarding the extermination of the Jewish community in Drohobycz can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/193, 344, 1799, 4909, and 4920); BA-L; DALO (e.g., R 2042-1-55, 154-56; and R1952-1-152); FVA (# 60 and 120); GARF (7021-58-20); RGVA (1275-3-661); USHMM (e.g., RG-30.003M, Acc.1995.A.561 and 1995.99); and YVA (e.g., M-4/106, M-20/6199).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. RGVA, 1275-3-661, Report of the Ortskommandantur in Drohobycz, August 8, 1941.
2. LG-Stutt, Verdict of March 16, 1962, in the case of Felix Landau, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 18 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1978), Lfd. Nr. 531; Tuvia Friedman, ed., *Love Letters of a Nazi Murderer in Lemberg and Drohobycz* (Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1995), p. 11.
3. DALO, R 2042-1-155, pp. 91–92, Arbeitsamt an Kreishauptmann, Betr.: Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst, May 11, 1942.
4. USHMM, RG-30.003M (DALO), R 1951-1-186a, p. 1, Arbeitsamt Drohobycz an Stadtverwaltung, Betr.: Arbeitseinsatz der Juden, September 6, 1941.
5. Ibid., p. 11, Arbeitsamt an Städt. Schlachthaus Drohobycz, October 27, 1941.
6. GARF, 7021-58-20, pp. 521, 539.
7. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 4.
8. Ibid.; GARF, 7021-58-20, pp. 521, 539; and USHMM, Acc.1995.99.
9. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 4.
10. GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 522; Friedmann, *Die Tätigkeit der Schutzpolizei*, statement of Alexander Rybak (1901) on July 23, 1947.
11. USHMM, RG-30.003M (DALO), R 2042-1-56, an den Gouverneur des Distrikts Galizien, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, Betr.: Errichtung von Wohnbezirken für Juden (n.d., March 1942); see, however, also BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 8/62, Abschlussbericht, November 29, 1963, which indicates that a form of “open ghetto” may have existed by this time.

12. GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 522; AŻIH, 301/193; Friedmann, *Die Tätigkeit der Schutzpolizei*, testimony of Wilhelm Krell (1902). See also DALO, R 2042-1-33 and R 2042-1-155.

13. Gelber, *Sefer zikaron il-Drohobits*, pp. 210–211; Jan Kulbinger, “Im Gefängnis,” in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, eds., *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), pp. 297–300.

14. Order of HSSPF Krüger on October 11, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein, ed., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–346.

15. See the report of October 25, 1942, by Captain Lederer, commander of the 5th Company, 24th Regiment, Schutzpolizei, concerning the resettlement of Jews, RGVA, 1323-2-2926, p. 28.

16. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 4; GARF, 7021-58-20, p. 540.

17. YVA, M-20/6199, Letter of Rothenberg, p. 8.

18. Jerzy Ficowski, ed., *Letters and Drawings of Bruno Schulz: With Selected Prose* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 248–249, personal account of Tadeusz Lubowiecki (aka Izydor Friedman). A slightly different version of events is given in AŻIH, 301/4920.

19. USHMM, RG-30.003M (DALO), R 2042-1-154, pp. 2, 172, Polizeiliche Erlaubnis zum Verlassen des Judenwohnbezirkes in Drohobycz, January 15, 1943; and Judenrat an Kreishauptmann, March 27, 1943.

20. GARF, 7021-58-20, pp. 523, 534.

21. Ibid.; Friedmann, *Die Tätigkeit der Schutzpolizei*, statements of David Freimann, July 1, 1948, and Maritus Dornstrauch (born 1901), n.d.

22. LG-Brem, Verdict of May 6, 1953, in the case of T. Hildebrand, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 10 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1973), Lfd. Nr. 355, pp. 663–693.

23. Sta. Bremen, 29 Ks 1/66, Beiakten, Liste der am 14. April 1944 aus Drohobycz und Boryslaw überstellten jüdischen Häftlinge.

24. Ilya Al'tman, *Zbertvy nenavisti: Kholokost v Rossii 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow: Fond Kovcheg, 2002), p. 441.

25. Sta. Munich I, 115 Js 5640/76, statement of G.A. on August 20, 1965.

GRÓDEK JAGIELLOŃSKI

Pre-1939: Gródek Jagielloński, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodok, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Grodek, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Horodok, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

According to the Polish census in 1921, 2,545 Jews resided in Gródek, which lies 26 kilometers (16 miles) southwest of Lwów. Jews comprised 24.2 percent of the total population. On December 9, 1931, 3,281 Jews were residing in the town. In mid-1941, there were approximately 5,000 Jews in Gródek (including a number of Jewish refugees from Poland).¹

German forces first occupied Gródek on September 17, 1939. They withdrew again three weeks later, handing the

town over to the Red Army. Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, German forces entered the town again on June 29, 1941. In July 1941, a military commandant's headquarters governed Gródek.

On August 1, 1941, Eastern Galicia was transferred to a German civil administration and became part of Distrikt Galizien in the Generalgouvernement. This region was initially divided into 17 districts (Kreise); but from April 1, 1942, following a redrawing of boundaries, there were only 14 districts. Gródek was initially the center of its own Kreis, but from April 1, 1942, it became part of the Kreis Lemberg-Land. The Kreis was governed by a Kreishauptmann. Wilhelm Stockheck held the position of Kreishauptmann from September 1941 until February 1942. Dr. Werner Becker was the Kreishauptmann of Kreis Lemberg-Land from March 1942 until early 1943; he was succeeded by Baron Joachim von der Leyen. Each Kreis was divided into county commissariats (Landkommissariate) administered by a county commissioner (Landkommissar). From February 1942 the Gródek Landkommissar was SS-Untersturmführer Josef Steyert. SS-Untersturmführer Franz Weisskind was his assistant. In the summer of 1943, Steyert was replaced by Dr. Breczowsky; in 1944, Dr. von Trijansky was the Landkommissar. There was also a German Gendarmerie post in Gródek, a Criminal Police (Kripo) post, and a detachment of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). The anti-Jewish Aktions were generally carried out in the town by a team of Security Police from Lwów with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police.

As early as June 29, 1941, a pogrom was organized in the town and widespread looting and destruction began within two weeks.²

Jews residing in the so-called new part of town were forced to relocate to the “old city,” and all Jewish houses had to be marked with a Star of David. Jews were also compelled to engage in forced labor. In particular, they were used in land improvement and road construction tasks, as well as for work at the brick factory; others were sent to forced labor camps.³

In August 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created in Gródek, and its first chairman was a teacher by the name of Laks. Most of its members were part of the local Jewish intelligentsia. Shortly after its establishment, the Judenrat organized the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) and was ordered to provide the Germans with workers and various contributions in cash and valuables.

From the spring of 1942, the occupation forces began the systematic extermination of the town's Jews. The first Aktion took place on March 21, 1942, when more than 300 older Jews were shot in a nearby forest. Mala Weinbaum was a witness of the Aktion; at the time, she was working in the building of the military commandant (Ortskommandant). She saw a car—in which Steyert and Weisskind were sitting—drive up to a house where three Jewish families lived (Herring, Levin, and Blazer). Weisskind led the Jews out of the house and announced: “[S]ince you complained about me to the Ortskommandant, I will shoot you myself.” He carried out his threat.⁴

The second Aktion took place on May 8, 1942. On this day, on Steyert's orders, the Jewish Police gathered approximately 800 Jewish men aged from 15 to 55 on the market square. These Jews were separated into groups according to their profession. Then Steyert, Weisskind, the German Gendarmerie, the Ukrainian police, a team of Security Police from Lwów, and SS men from the Janowska Street labor camp appeared. They carried out the selection. Weisskind killed Jakub Bauer and the 15-year-old son of the assistant chairman of the Judenrat, Dr. Margolis. In the evening, the Jews gathered in the square were taken to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów; from there most of them were subsequently taken to other Jewish labor camps (e.g., Jaktorów, Lackie Wielkie, and Płuhów).⁵

The third Aktion (the so-called Aktion against the poor) was carried out in late June 1942 when the German Gendarmerie, headed by Leutnant der Gendarmerie Haase, shot 70 to 100 elderly Jews; 25 Roma (Gypsies) were shot along with the Jews.⁶

The fourth Aktion in Gródek was carried out on August 19, 1942. A team of Security Police from Lwów, the German Gendarmerie, the Ukrainian police, and the Jewish Police, under the direction of the chief of staff, SS-Sturmbannführer Willy Ost, subordinated to the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Lwów (SS-Brigadeführer Fritz Katzmann), combed the Jewish district in the old city and shot at least 100 Jews on the streets. The assistant Landkommissar Weisskind killed the patients in the Jewish hospital. After the Jews were driven to the train station, a selection took place, during the course of which Steyert, Weisskind, and Hauptmann der Gendarmerie Junge beat the Jews. Officials of the Ortskommandantur were barely able to reclaim Jewish craftsmen they employed. The head of the poultry farm had to go to great lengths to reclaim his 25 Jewish workers. Subsequently, about 2,800 Jews were driven into freight cars and taken to the Bełżec extermination center. On the orders of Ost, who commanded the Aktion, the belongings of the Jews were taken to four synagogues and then sent on to Lwów from there. After this Aktion, about 1,100 Jews remained in the town, whereas before the Aktion there had been 3,635 Jews.⁷ Another Aktion took place on September 14, 1942, during which an unknown number of Jews were taken to Lwów. Those deemed fit to work were sent to the Janowska Street labor camp, the rest to Bełżec.

In the summer of 1942, the Jews were further concentrated to a few small streets. A second Judenrat was organized at this point, as the members of the first had been killed.

On December 1, 1942, the Jewish district in Gródek was converted into a ghetto: it was surrounded by a fence and guarded by the Ukrainian police. The ghetto housed both the local Jews and those brought in from Janów in November 1942.⁸ The inmates were made to work at local factories run by German firms. Because of the extreme overcrowding (about 12 people lived in every room), lack of food, and severe cold, an epidemic of typhus soon broke out in the ghetto. The Germans and the Ukrainian policemen regularly beat and robbed the Jews.

On January 27, 1943, a squad of Security Police from Lwów, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, liquidated the ghetto, shooting about 1,300 Jews. Because some of the Jews were able to avoid the shootings by hiding, the squad returned to the town on February 3, 1943, and killed several hundred more Jews they were able to capture.⁹

In 1952, in Warsaw, two former Ukrainian policemen (the brothers Vladimir and Roman Svitenko), who played an active role in the extermination of Gródek's Jews in 1942–1943, were sentenced to the death penalty. For the same crimes, the former official of the German Kripo in Gródek, Bania, was sentenced to the death penalty in Poland.

The former Gródek Landkommissar Josef Steyert was under investigation in Germany in the early 1960s, but the investigation came to an end in September 1964 owing to his poor health; Steyert died in November 1964. The person in charge of the Gródek Aktion of August 19, 1942, former SS-Sturmbannführer Willy Ost, disappeared in 1945.

In 1968 in Stuttgart, the former head of the Gródek labor camp of March–June 1943, Adolf Kolonko, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. The former "official for Jewish affairs" at the office of the SSPF in Distrikt Galizien, SS-Untersturmführer Anton Löhnert, who in June 1943, on the orders of SS-Brigadeführer Katzman, controlled the liquidation of the Gródek Jewish labor camp, was given the same prison sentence in Stuttgart.

SOURCES Articles on the extermination of the Jews of Gródek can be found in the following publications: *Sefer Grayding (Gródek Jagiellonski)* (Tel Aviv: Society of Grayding Emigrants, 1981); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980); and Adam Rutkowski, "Zbrodnicza działalność hitlerowskiego ludobójcy Franza Weisskinda," *BŻIH*, no. 4 (1952): 251–260.

Documents regarding the extermination of Gródek's Jewish community can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1944, 2510, 2510a, 2526, and 4634); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 276/60); DALO (R 15: Gorodok Ukrainian police; R 24: Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land; R 3-1-279); FVA (# 574); GARF (7021-67-80); TsDAVO; YVA; and ZSSta-D (Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 29/63).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2526.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 301/2510.
5. ZSSta-D, Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 29/63, against Josef Steyert, vol. 1, pp. 119–120.
6. Ibid., pp. 46–47. Other sources (Act of the Town's Commission, October 8–10, 1944) indicate that in Gródek in June 1942, 200 Jews were killed; see TsDAVO, 4620-3-290, pp. 4–8.

7. Rutkowski, “Zbrodnicza działalność hitlerowskiego,” pp. 255–257; DALO, R 24-3-283, p. 17. Other sources (the Act of the Town’s Commission, October 8–10, 1944) indicate that on August 19, 1942, 2,500 Jews were deported, and on August 20, 1942, 50 Jews were shot; see TsDAVO, 4620-3-290, pp. 4–8. See also Thomas Sandkühler, “*Endlösung*” in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), pp. 231–232.

8. AŻIH, 301/2526.

9. Act of the Town’s Commission, October 8–10, 1944; see TsDAVO, 4620-3-290, pp. 4–8. Other sources indicate that on December 26, 1942, roughly half of the remaining population of the ghetto was taken to pits outside of town and shot; see Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* pp. 145–149.

GWOŹDZIEC

Pre-1939: Gwoździec, town, Kołomyja powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gvozdetz, raion center, Stanislav oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Gwoździec, Kreis Kolomea, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Gvizdets’, Kolomyia raion, Ivano-Frankivs’k oblast’, Ukraine

Gwoździec is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) southeast of Stanisławów. According to the 1921 census, there were 1,234 Jews living in Gwoździec. By the middle of 1941, the number of Jews in the town is estimated to have been around 1,500.

Units of the Hungarian army first occupied the town on July 2, 1941. While in charge, the Hungarian military authorities treated the Jews reasonably. Jewish men were required to perform forced labor at a nearby airfield and in farming, but when Ukrainian overseers beat the workers, the Hungarians intervened to stop the abuse. While Gwoździec was still under the control of the Hungarian army, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established. Presiding over the Judenrat were Greenberg and also Elisha Zannenzów.

With the transfer of power to the Germans after several weeks, the situation of the Jews deteriorated sharply. The German authorities established the Jewish Police and forced the Jews to wear distinguishing armbands. They confiscated most of the Jews’ property, especially any valuables, and registered the Jews.

According to *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, at the end of 1941 or in early 1942, all the Jews were ordered to move into a ghetto in the eastern part of town, near the train station. The move had to take place within only a few hours, which forced the Jews to leave behind most of their possessions. Living conditions in the ghetto were cramped, but the Jews did not suffer from starvation, due to the ongoing illegal trade with local farmers.¹ The Jewish survivor Paul Schmelzer states that “all the Jews in Gwoździec were herded into a two-block ghetto.”²

In March 1942, the ghetto (Jewish residential area) in Gwoździec held a total of 1,540 Jews.³ By this time, news had reached the ghetto about the mass murder of Jews in other

places, especially in nearby Kołomyja. Expecting similar treatment, the Jews of Gwoździec began to prepare hiding places.

On April 12, 1942, German and Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto and drove the Jews from their houses, shooting some indiscriminately in the streets. The Aktion lasted eight hours, and part of the ghetto was set on fire, probably to smoke out those in hiding. The Germans and Ukrainians then led the several hundred assembled Jews into a nearby forest and murdered them all.

In the Aktion, roughly half of the ghetto population perished. The survivors consisted of those who had managed to hide or had been out of town during the Aktion on work assignments. The Germans ordered the survivors to collect the corpses strewn about the ghetto and bury them in a mass grave at the cemetery in Kolaczkwicza.⁴

On April 24, 1942, the Germans ordered those Jews who remained to assemble in front of the Judenrat to be transferred to the recently established ghetto in Kołomyja.⁵ According to records of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), in April 1942, Jews from the following villages around Gwoździec were relocated to Kołomyja: Soroky, 16 Jews; Rosokhach, 23; Prikhmische, 14; Dzurkov, 45; Trophanovka, 2; Staryi Gwoździec, 19; Malyi Gwoździec, 13; Balinty, 12; Slobodka, 13; Kulachkovtsy, 56; Vinograd, 34; Ostrovets, 11; and Zagaipol’, 53—311 people in total.⁶

Owing to the poor conditions in Kołomyja, some of the refugees from Gwoździec and its surroundings escaped to other places or were transferred by the Germans to forced labor camps. A few even managed to get permission from the Germans to return and work in Gwoździec, where they lived in the remaining buildings of the ghetto. Others worked in the countryside on farms until the late summer of 1942, when all Jews were ordered to move to the nearest large towns.⁷

On September 11, 1942, the Germans deported around 4,000 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp from the Kołomyja ghetto, including most of the remaining Jews from Gwoździec. A few of those who went into hiding in the countryside managed to evade the German roundups and survived until the Red Army drove the Germans from the region in 1944.

SOURCES A short article on the Jewish community in Gwoździec and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 135–137. The ghetto in Gwoździec is mentioned also in *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia akademiia estestvennykh nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), vol. 4, p. 309.

Documentation on the persecution and extermination of the Jews in Gwoździec can be found in the following archives: DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-12); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2315).

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VOLUME II: PART A

NOTES

1. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 135–137.
2. Joseph J. Preil, *Holocaust Testimonies: European Survivors and American Liberators in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), p. 189.
3. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967): 18 (table 6).
4. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 135–137.
5. GARF, 7021-73-12, pp. 130–133.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 136–167.
7. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 135–137.

HORODENKA

Pre-1939: Horodenka, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodenka, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Horodenka, Kreis Kolomea, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Horodenka, raion center, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast', Ukraine

Horodenka is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) east-southeast of Stanisławów. In 1931, 3,526 Jews were living in the town.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, trains carrying refugees from the towns and cities to the west began passing through Horodenka, and on July 2 the Soviets abandoned the town. Only a few Jews managed to flee in time, owing to the lack of transportation.

The Hungarian army occupied Horodenka in early July. In the second half of July, about 1,000 Jews arrived in the town, following their deportation from the Transcarpathian Ukraine by the Hungarian Gendarmerie. These Jews arrived hungry and exhausted. Local Jews took in some of them, and the rest lived in the synagogue, in crowded and dirty conditions. With the new arrivals, the number of Jews in the town rose to about 4,500.¹

Under Hungarian administration, a Jewish Council was formed, which was required to make a contribution in money and produce. When this demand was not met, the Hungarian army hanged 1 Jew in the marketplace. Subsequently, the Hungarian commandant took first 10, then 20 Jews as hostages, to ensure Jewish compliance. The Jews were also required to perform forced labor.

The town remained under Hungarian military administration until August, when authority was gradually transferred to a German civil administration. Initially Horodenka became a local administrative center (Kreis) within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was SA-Obersturmführer Johann Hack. In April 1942, Kreis Horodenka became part of the Kreis Kolomea, which until July 1, 1942, was headed by Klaus Peter Volkmann. He was succeeded, until July 26, 1943, by SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Gorgon.

The Jewish Aktions in Horodenka were organized and carried out by the office of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Kreis Kolomea, which was headed by SS-Obersturmführer Peter Leideritz. In Horodenka there was a Criminal Police (Kripo) post, a German Gendarmerie unit, and a Ukrainian police force, which all took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

The new German administration imposed a number of additional restrictions on the Jews. They registered all Jews and confiscated most remaining Jewish property, particularly any valuables. Jews were also prohibited from leaving the town limits on pain of death. According to survivor accounts, on November 8, 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews off the main streets of the town and crowded them together into a small Jewish quarter (*Judenviertel*) in the west of the town, giving them three days to make the move.²

On December 5, the first anti-Jewish Aktion was carried out in the town. Under the pretext of giving typhus shots, the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police gathered the Jews in a synagogue. For further authenticity, Jewish physicians were also requested to be present with all the necessary instruments. After freeing craftsmen and specialists, a detachment of Security Police from Kołomyja shot 2,500 Jews in the forest near Semakowce. The chairman of the Judenrat tried to prevent the Aktion with a bribe. He was murdered together with all the other members of the council.³ Kreishauptmann Hack, who was not a confirmed Nazi (in the 1920s, he had been a member of the German Communist Party), protested the Aktion and even wrote a letter to an acquaintance who was the head of the foreign organization (Auslandsorganisation) of the Nazi Party (Reichsleiter Bohle), but his protest was fruitless.⁴

After the first Aktion, the Germans ordered the remaining 1,500 or so Jews to move into a tiny ghetto area three or four blocks long. Its borders included Schtelshetska Street to the house of Fleshner, then proceeding to the other side of the bridge leading to Kotokivka, and from there to the Polish church and finally the high school (*gimnazjum*). To assist with the transfer, a new Judenrat was formed. All the entrances and exits to the ghetto were sealed off. Within the ghetto there was considerable overcrowding. Jewish forced labor was organized by the Judenrat. Those Jews who worked for the Germans outside the ghetto received work passes. The Jewish Police strictly controlled their departure to and return from work.⁵

On April 13, 1942, a second Aktion was carried out in Horodenka. The Jews found out about the forthcoming Aktion from a bribed employee at the labor exchange in Kołomyja, and many of them hid in bunkers they had prepared. As a result, the German police shot only 75 people on this occasion, as they released many of those they had arrested in return for bribes.⁶

In April and May of 1942, Jews from the surrounding villages were transferred into the ghetto, bringing the number of Jews to 2,348. At that time the ghetto was enlarged slightly

to accommodate the new arrivals, and some specialists were permitted to live outside its confines.⁷ Every day men from the ghetto were conscripted to work in the local sugar factory. There were also occasional roundups of younger Jews for the labor camps, where many died of overwork and undernourishment. Apart from the roundups, hunger and outbreaks of typhus also decimated the ghetto's population, as there was no hospital.⁸ In August 1942, some 500 Jews from Czernelica, as well as any remaining Jewish farmers in the surrounding countryside, were brought into the ghetto. Any Christians caught helping Jews who went into hiding were also threatened with severe punishment.⁹

On September 7, 400 Jews from Obertin were brought to the town. On September 8, 1942, a third Aktion was carried out in Horodenka that lasted for three days. Under the pretext of registration, the Jews were gathered in one place, and 200 or 300 of them were murdered on the spot. About 2,000 people were placed into 10 freight cars (180 to 200 people in each car), and on September 10, most of them were transported to the Bełżec extermination camp, although a small group of 80 Jews capable of work was sent to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów.¹⁰ About 120 specialists were retained in the town to help clear out the ghetto area, and several hundred more people hid in bunkers. In late September 1942, all the Jews remaining in the town were ordered to move to Kołomyja, and Horodenka was officially proclaimed to be cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).¹¹ After this, however, the Ukrainian police regularly captured Jews still hiding in the town, and all those captured were immediately murdered.

Only a few Jews managed to hide successfully. For example, Aharon Frischling turned to Bronisława Otwinowska, a former neighbor, to hide him during the final liquidation of the ghetto. Despite harassment from her Ukrainian neighbors, Otwinowska hid and fed Frischling and his family right up to the arrival of the Red Army in March 1944.¹²

Herbert Gorgon (born 1909) was sentenced to death by the SS and Police court in Lwów on August 6, 1943, and he committed suicide in prison on October 27, 1943. Peter Leideritz was extradited to Poland in December 1946 and was executed on November 17, 1947, following his conviction by a Polish court.

SOURCES Publications on the annihilation of Horodenka's Jews include the following: S. Meltzer, ed., *Sefer Horodenka* (Brooklyn, NY: Book Committee of Sefer Horodenka in the United States and Israel, 1963), also available in English translation by Ellen Biderman (Santa Fe, NM: E. Biderman, 2004); T. Friedman and J. Zak, eds., *Zusammenstellung der Begebenheiten über die Vernichtung des Judentums in Ostgalizien (Kolomea, Stanisławów, Stryj und Umgebung)* (Vienna: Jüdische Historische Dokumentation Wien, n.d.); J. Wermuth, "The Jewish Partisans of Horodenka," in Y. Suhl, ed., *They Fought Back* (New York, 1967); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 175–181.

Documents and testimonies about the fate of Horodenka's Jews in the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1396, 1404, 1434, 2877, 2880, 3337, and 3647); BA-L (ZStL, AR-Z 277/1960); DAI-FO (R 71-1-1); GARF (7021-73-11); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. Testimony of Mendel Rozenkranz, in Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, eds., *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), pp. 278–279; AŻIH, 301/2178, testimony of Rozia Grinberg; and 301/1434, testimony of Izak Plat.

2. AŻIH, 301/1434.

3. Friedman and Zak, *Zusammenstellung*, pp. 43–44; Verdict of LG-Darm, July 28, 1967, in the case against Haertel and others, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 26 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2001), Lfd. Nr. 657, pp. 491–492; GARF, 7021-73-11, pp. 4, 17.

4. G Sta. Berlin, P(K) Js 7/68, Beistück 46, statement of J. Hack, April 12, 1965.

5. Reuben Prifer, "My Walk through Seven Levels of Hell," p. 312; Meyer Sucher, "The Murder of the Jews of Horodenka," p. 306—both in Meltzer, *Sefer Horodenka*.

6. Testimony of Rozenkranz, in Poliakov and Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, p. 280; Sucher, "The Murder of the Jews of Horodenka," p. 306.

7. AŻIH, 301/1434; Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 6.

8. Ch.K. Kaufman, "In the Time of Murder," in Meltzer, *Sefer Horodenka*, p. 329; AŻIH, 301/2178.

9. GARF, 7021-73-11, pp. 12 and verso; Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 288; Shlomo Blond, *The Righteous Gentiles* (Israel: Shlomo Blond, 1983), pp. 142–143.

10. Prifer, "My Walk through Seven Levels of Hell," pp. 313–314; Kaufman, "In the Time of Murder," p. 329; and AŻIH, 301/2178.

11. RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 40–42, report by the commander of the 7th Company, Police Regiment 24, September 14, 1942; Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 6; GARF, 7021-73-11, p. 18.

12. Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), vol. 2, pp. 571–572. Bronisława Otwinowska was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem on September 28, 1989.

JANÓW LWOWSKI

Pre-1939: Janów Lwowski, town, Gródek Jagielloński powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ianov, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Janow, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Ivano-Frankove, Iavoriv raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Janów Lwowski is located 21 kilometers (13 miles) west-northwest of Lwów. In 1921, there were 490 Jews living in Janów. According to the population census of December 9, 1931, 650 Jews were living in the town. By the middle of 1941, it is estimated that there were more than 700 Jews in Janów.

Janów was occupied by units of the German 17th Army on June 28, 1941. A German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) ran the affairs of the town in July 1941. On August 1, authority in Janów was passed to a German civil administration. Janów initially became part of Kreis Lemberg-West (Grodek), within Distrikt Galizien. On April 1, 1942, the Kreis Lemberg-West was united with the Kreis Lemberg-Ost to form the larger Kreis Lemberg-Land. The Kreis was headed by a Kreishauptmann. In chronological order, this position was held by Wilhelm Stockheck (until September 1941); Otto Bauer (until March 1942); Dr. Werner Becker (until the start of 1943); and Baron Joachim von der Leyen (from the start of 1943). The Kreis was divided into several Landkommissariate, each headed by a Landkommissar. Janów belonged to Landkommissariat Grodek, which was headed by SS-Untersturmführer Josef Steyert.

The occupying authorities also appointed a lawyer named Dr. Kizyk as mayor in Janów and established a small Ukrainian police force.

In July 1941, the German military administration organized the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and ordered Jews to wear distinctive white armbands bearing the Star of David. Much of the Jews' property and valuables was confiscated. The Jewish population was registered and required to perform various types of forced labor.

During the first eight months of the occupation, while Dr. Kizyk remained mayor, the Jewish population lived in the town in relative peace. This quiet period ended in the spring of 1942. On several occasions the Jews of Janów were ordered to report to the market square, where selections were made for Jews to work in the peat bogs of Rzęsna Polska.¹ According to undated German registration figures, taken between the summer of 1941 and the fall of 1942, there were 635 Jews residing in Janów, and another 276 Jews were living in the surrounding villages.²

Members of the Security Police in Lwów frequently came to Janów and demanded contributions from the Judenrat. The Judenrat also had to bribe the manager of the sawmill with furniture for his apartment. Since the resources of the community were soon exhausted by these repeated demands, the Germans arrested the members of the Judenrat and deported them to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów, where they all died.³

In early May 1942, the Germans conducted the first anti-Jewish Aktion in Janów. The Jews were ordered to assemble on the market square on pain of death. Here around 100 able-bodied Jews were selected by Gestapo officials and taken away to the Janowska Street labor camp in trucks.⁴ It is likely that from there most of them were subsequently taken to other Jewish labor camps in Distrikt Galizien.

In the summer of 1942, probably in July, a ghetto was created in Janów for the rest of the Jewish population.⁵ All of the remaining Jews were moved onto one street, which became a ghetto.

In accordance with the order of the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, issued on November 11, 1942, on the establishment of ghettos in Distrikt Galizien,⁶ the Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land ordered on November 25, 1942, that the Jews of Janów would have to move to the ghetto (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in Gródek Jagielloński.⁷ One survivor recalls that the Jews were instructed they would have to leave the town, which was to become *judenrein*, and they would have to move to one of the few remaining designated places, where Jews were still permitted to live.⁸ Shortly after this announcement, the Germans then conducted a second Aktion in Janów,⁹ during which around 40 people were killed on the spot.¹⁰ The remaining Jews, probably around 500 people, were then moved to the ghetto in Gródek Jagielloński.¹¹ There they were killed, along with the local Jewish population, in two mass-shooting Aktions in late January and early February 1943.¹² A few of the younger Jews managed to evade the roundups and survived in the forests.

SOURCES The ghetto in Janów Lwowski is mentioned in Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 560; and in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond "Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia," "Epos," 2000), p. 496.

Relevant documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Janów Jews can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1944, 2526); DALO (R 37-5-27, R 24-3-156); GARF (7021-67-82); TsDAVO (4620-3-290); USHMM (e.g., RG-31.003M); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1944, testimony of Małgorzata Gottesmann.
2. DALO, R 37-5-27, Projekt der Sammelgemeinde des Rayon Janow, n.d.
3. AŻIH, 301/1944.
4. Ibid.; Thomas Sandkühler, "Endlösung" in Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944 (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 230.
5. "Ivano-Frankovo," in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 4, p. 496.
6. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
7. DALO, R 24-3-156, p. 40, Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land an die Landkommissare und Vögte, November 25, 1942.
8. AŻIH, 301/1944.
9. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7.

10. Report of the NKVD section head in the Ivano-Frankovo (Janów) raion, September 12, 1944, in GARF (7021-67-82, p. 52).

11. AŽIH, 301/2526, testimony, of Mania Trau (nee Rozendorn).

12. TsDAVO, 4620-3-290, pp. 4–8.

JARYCZÓW NOWY

Pre-1939: Jaryczów Nowy, town, Lwów powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Novyi Iarychev, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jaryczow, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Novyi Iarychiv, Kam'ianka-Buz'ka raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Jaryczów Nowy is located 24 kilometers (15 miles) east-northeast of Lwów. According to the population census of December 9, 1931, 926 Jews were living in Jaryczów Nowy. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were approximately 2,120 Jews in the town.¹

Following the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Jaryczów Nowy was occupied by detachments of the German 17th Army on June 30, 1941. In July 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. At the very start of the German occupation, local Ukrainians murdered 14 Jews; these Jews were allegedly killed for being Soviet activists. The Ukrainian rioters also beat and robbed much of the Jewish population, encouraged by the local Ukrainian Orthodox priest. Some time after this first Aktion, Ukrainians also played a role in burning down the synagogue and the Bet Midrash, together with the sacred objects inside.²

In July 1941, the German military administration ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Szul Indyk, and a small force of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) as an auxiliary organ of the Judenrat. The Jewish Police enforced the registration and marking of the Jews, who were all required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The German authorities confiscated considerable amounts of Jewish property, particularly any items of value. Jews were deprived of many basic rights. They were made to perform various kinds of compulsory labor including construction work on the road to Lwów (under the supervision of the Organisation Todt).

On August 1, 1941, authority over Eastern Galicia passed into the hands of a German civil administration. Jaryczów Nowy was incorporated into Kreis Lemberg-Land. The first Kreishauptmann was Wilhelm Stockheck, who controlled the area until the middle of September 1941. Otto Bauer succeeded him from September 1941 to March 1942; then Werner Becker from March 1942 to January 1943; and finally Baron Joachim von der Leyen from January 1943 until the liberation of the town.

The German authorities established a German Gendarmerie post and a Ukrainian police squad in the town. The

unit of the Security Police and SD based in Lwów directed the main anti-Jewish Aktions in the town, and it was assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police forces.

In Jaryczów Nowy there were frequent roundups of Jews during 1942. Jews capable of work were sent to labor camps in Winniki, Hermanów, Kurowice, and Polonice, where they were beaten, half-starved, and murdered.³ In the spring of 1942, probably in March, there were also roundups of older men and women incapable of work, whom the Germans then sent to be gassed at the Bełżec extermination camp.

On November 10, 1942, the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, issued an order that called for the formation of a ghetto in Jaryczów Nowy. The German administration established the ghetto at the beginning of December 1942. The authorities resettled all local Jews and all the Jews from the surrounding villages into the ghetto. Among those villages from which the Jews were transferred were Barszczowicze, Rudańce, Kukizów, Pikutowicze, and Jaryczów Stary.⁴ A few also came from other towns in the vicinity where no ghetto was established, such as Gliniany, especially if they had relatives in Jaryczów.⁵ More than 2,500 Jews altogether were confined within the ghetto, which existed for only one and one half months. When vacating houses assigned to the ghetto, the former non-Jewish inhabitants had destroyed the chimneys and broken the doors and windows, exposing the ghetto inhabitants to the winter cold. Anyone caught leaving the ghetto without permission could be shot.

The Jewish residents of the ghetto were permitted to draw water from the wells for only one hour per day and were not permitted to buy any food. The overcrowded conditions in partially destroyed houses with almost no food and water soon led to epidemics in the ghetto. According to one survivor account, a Ukrainian doctor named Mielnik warned the Germans that these epidemics would spread to the non-Jewish population if something were not done. This may have been the pretext for the liquidation of the ghetto that was organized by the Germans shortly afterwards.⁶

On January 15–16, 1943, a unit of the Security Police and SD from Lwów liquidated the ghetto with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police. Around 1,570 Jews were shot in the forest, and about 1,000 more were murdered at the site of the Jewish cemetery.⁷ Following the main massacre, more than 40 local Ukrainians assisted in searching the ghetto area for Jews in hiding. They killed many of them on the spot. In one bunker the murderers found 33 Jews, who were then taken to the cemetery to be shot.⁸ At the end of 1943, a German special unit (Sonderkommando 1005) used prisoners to attempt to remove the traces of the massacres by exhuming the bodies and burning them.⁹

SOURCES There is a yizkor book on the town, which focuses on the events of the Holocaust and the memory of the victims: Mordechai Gerstl, ed., *Hurbn Yaritshev bay Lemberg* (New York, 1948). A brief article on the Jewish community of the town can also be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jew-*

anti-Jewish Aktions in Jaworów were coordinated by a team of Security Police from Lwów with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police.

In July 1941, the German military administration ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired initially by Yoel Fuss, who was soon replaced by Sender Blum. There was also a Jewish Police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) that served to implement the orders of the Jewish Council. Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Jewish Council had to collect contributions of valuables demanded by the German authorities. All Jews had to be registered. Another main task of the Judenrat was organizing 400 Jewish forced laborers every day, who were engaged in road construction, general cleaning, collecting ammunition left by the Soviets in the forests, and work at the Soviet prisoner-of-war camp, where many prisoners died of starvation or were shot. On the construction sites, skilled Jewish craftsmen were paid 1 złoty per hour and received an extra loaf of bread each week.⁴

During the first eight months of the occupation, Jews lived in their own houses in the town, which were required to display the Star of David. Jews were banned from the main streets (Mickiewicza, Aleksandrowicza, and Krakowiecka), and there was a curfew for Jews after 6:00 P.M. Jews were exposed to arbitrary arrests and beatings by the Ukrainian police, and there were incidents of plunder and rape. Jews were denied the opportunity to make a living, and many suffered from hunger. Until the spring of 1942, the only large deportations were of several hundred able-bodied Jews to local forced labor camps (such as Jaktorów and Winniki).

In early April 1942, Landkommissar Josef Steyert appeared in Jaworów and ordered the chairman of the Jewish Council, Blum, to demolish the Jewish cemetery within two weeks. He also ordered Blum to hand over as “contributions” large amounts of silk, leather, and gold. Shortly afterwards, Blum suffered a heart attack, and he was replaced by David Badian, who was eager to carry out all of Steyert’s demands. A new head of the Jewish Police, Buzie Hahn, was also appointed.⁵

A month later, on May 5, 1942, the Germans carried out a deportation Aktion in Jaworów, during which about 500 Jews were sent to the labor camp in Płuhów. Some of those found to be unfit were murdered on arrival.⁶ Soon after this Aktion, on June 10, 1942, 442 Jews from Wielkie Oczy were resettled (some to Krakowiec and the majority to Jaworów) on Steyert’s orders.

Another deportation Aktion took place in Jaworów on November 7–8, 1942, when a team of Security Police from Lwów, together with German and Ukrainian police, and with the support of the Jewish Police, brutally seized 1,200 Jews, of whom about 200 were killed on the spot, the others being deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁷ Almost the entire Jewish Council was deported, and the Jewish hospital was also “cleared.” On November 9, the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police went in search of more Jews; about 200 Jews were dragged from various hiding places, and the Germans shot them at the Jewish cemetery.⁸

On November 10, 1942, the Germans established a ghetto in the southern part of the town, which was surrounded by a wire fence. About 600 remaining Jews initially entered the ghetto. On the two days following the ghetto’s establishment, about 20 Jews were shot for being caught outside the fence.⁹ On November 15, 1942, those Jews working for the Wehrmacht’s forestry office (who wore armbands with the letter “W”) were moved into a separate “block camp” outside the ghetto (initially only a few; later, 60 people), where they received considerably better treatment.¹⁰

Jews from the communities of Drohomys’l, Szkło, Bonów, Twierdza, and other villages were transferred into the ghetto during November but could bring with them very little in the way of possessions. By early December, the Jews from Mościska, Janów, Sądowa Wisznia, Krukienice, Hussaków, and Krakowiec had also been transferred into the Jaworów ghetto, bringing the total population to around 6,000 Jews by mid-December.¹¹ Since members of the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police occupied the best apartments and were responsible for assigning living quarters, the new arrivals were forced to live on the streets for three days. All of them were finally crammed into 80 small houses, with just over 70 people living in each house. The ghetto area extended from the marketplace to Alexandrowicz Street, circled around the Greek Catholic Church and the approaches to the synagogue. The ghetto had several gates, each guarded by a German patrol.¹² The extremely poor sanitary and hygienic conditions soon produced a typhus epidemic. The reconstituted Judenrat received permission to organize a hospital and tried to obtain rations for the Jews, but the rations distributed were well below subsistence level (about 300 grams, or slightly less than 11 ounces of bread per day). According to some sources, more than 1,500 people died of typhus and hunger during the ghetto’s existence. In early 1943, about 500 able-bodied Jews were rounded up and deported to the Janowska Street labor camp.¹³

On April 16, 1943, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. A team of Security Police from Lwów, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, shot and killed over 3,500 Jews; some 2,500 Jews had already been killed by noon, and the rest were murdered over the following days. Following the selection of those fit for work at the Jewish cemetery, those destined for death were collected in the burned-out synagogue before being taken off in trucks to be shot in the Porudno Forest. The ghetto area was largely destroyed by fire as the Germans and their collaborators drove out those in hiding.¹⁴ A few hundred Jews remained in the block camp for about a week or so after the Aktion. About 200 Jews who had emerged from hiding were shot a few days later, and some of the Jews from the block camp managed to escape. The rest (about 200) were transferred to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów at the end of April.¹⁵

According to the report of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission, 7,316 civilians were killed in the Jaworów raion from 1941 to 1944, including 4,900 people killed in Jaworów (of them, 4,400 were killed on April 16, 1943); 1,200 people were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp; and 1,200

people were sent to the Janowska Street camp. (The number of Jews sent to the Janowska Street labor camp was actually half this amount. The number of Jews shot on April 16, 1943, was also less. On the other hand, the figures for the Jaworów raion do not take into account Jews who died in the ghetto from hunger and disease.)¹⁶ Nearly all the victims were Jews.

Only about 20 Jews returned to Jaworów on the liberation of the town by the Red Army on July 20, 1944, having survived in hiding or in the forests with the Soviet partisans. According to survivor testimony, local Poles were generally more willing than Ukrainians to hide Jews from the Germans.

Bauer was killed by partisans in 1944. Becker worked in the German administration after 1945, and the investigation into his activities was closed in 1975; he died in 1991. Von der Leyen perished in 1945. The fate of Stockheck is unknown. The investigation into Steyert by the Zentralstelle Dortmund (ZSSSt-D) was closed in September 1964, as he was no longer fit to stand trial; he died in November 1964.

SOURCES Further information on the ghetto in Jaworów can be found in the book by Samuel Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow: The Tragic Chronicle of the Jaworow Jewish Community* [trans. from Yiddish by Samuel Kreiter] (New York: First Jaworower Independent Association, 1950).

Documentation regarding the destruction of the Jews of Jaworów can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/1612, 1613, 1616, 1912, 1913, and 4947); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 276); DALO (R 3-1-278 and 279); GARF (7021-67-79 and 84); USHMM; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/1616, testimony of Jonas Deer and Włodzimierz Hochberg; Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 7–8.

2. AŽIH, 301/1912.

3. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941; AŽIH, 301/1613, testimony of Rachela Scheer; and Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 8–9. The Jewish sources mostly mention only 12 victims.

4. AŽIH, 301/1912, 1616; and Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 9–10.

5. Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 12–13; AŽIH, 301/1611, testimony of Juda Mezler; and AŽIH, 301/1613, 1616.

6. Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 15–16.

7. GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 65. According to another account, 1,800 Jews were sent to Bełżec, and 250 were killed locally (see 7021-67-79, p. 61). Accounts by survivors also give varying numbers, e.g., AŽIH, 301/1616.

8. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŽIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7; Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 234. Another source indicates that 262 Jews were shot (GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 61).

9. GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 61; AŽIH, 301/4947, testimony of Chaja Antmann, April 11, 1945; and 301/1616; Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 24–25.

10. AŽIH, 301/1611, 1613.

11. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 7; and AŽIH, 301/4947.

12. Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” pp. 234–235; AŽIH, 301/1613; Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 24–26.

13. GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 61 AŽIH, 301/1616, mentions 1,500 deaths, as does Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, p. 26.

14. GARF, 7021-67-79, pp. 61, 65; Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 29–32.

15. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” p. 26, table 7; Druck, *Swastika over Jaworow*, pp. 33–35.

16. GARF, 7021-67-84, pp. 125–126.

JEZIERZANY

Pre-1939: Jezierzany (Yiddish: Oziron), town, Buczacz powiat, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ozeriany, Skala-Podol’skaia raion, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jezierzany, Kreis Czortkow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Ozeriani, Borsbchiv raion, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Jezierzany is located about 88 kilometers (55 miles) south-southeast of Tarnopol. According to the 1921 census, 1,302 Jews were living in the town. In 1939, the Jewish population is estimated to have been around 1,800.

On July 8, 1941, a Hungarian regiment entered Jezierzany. At that time, nationalist Ukrainians were in control of the town. In mid-July, the Ukrainian militia escorted a group of Jewish men into the forest with the intention of killing them, but Hungarian officers intervened, and the Jews were spared. However, a number of Jews were killed in neighboring villages, including in Piłatkowice and Szypowce, and surviving refugees from these villages fled to Jezierzany in search of help.¹ In the summer of 1941, a number of Jews who had been expelled eastward from Hungary also arrived in the town. Some stayed for a while, before they moved on to Borszczów and other towns. The Jews of Jezierzany did their best to assist them.

By September of 1941, authority had been transferred to a German civil administration. Jezierzany became part of Kreis Czortkow within Distrikt Galizien. At first, the Kreishauptmann was the former deputy Gestapo chief in Stettin, SS-Sturmabführer Dr. Gerhard Littschwager, and from April 1942, former Stadthauptmann (city mayor) in Lwów, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Hans Kujath.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the town were organized by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) based in Czortków. The heads of this office successively were SS-Obersturmführer Karl Hildemann (from October 1941 to October 1942), SS-Untersturmführer Hans Velde (from October 1942 to February 1943), SS-Sturmscharführer Heinrich Peckmann (from February to September 1943), and SS-Obersturmführer Werner Eisel (from September 1943). The German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) both took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

With the transfer of power to the Germans, the Jews were required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. All men aged between 14 and 60 had to perform forced labor on a regular basis, which was organized by the Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Jewish Police assisted in collecting contributions in money and goods demanded by the German authorities. During the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews also had to surrender their fur items of clothing for the Wehrmacht.

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, the Germans established a ghetto in Jezierzany in October 1941. Frieda Friedman (née Elberger) and her younger brother, Sam Elberger, were both forced to move from Szypowce to the ghetto in Jezierzany in the fall of 1941, where they found accommodation with relatives. They could take with them only the possessions they could carry in their hands. Jews were explicitly forbidden to leave the ghetto, but according to child survivor Sam Elberger, many people sneaked out at night “through holes in the fence” to procure extra food.²

Mikołaj Szczyrba, a local Polish inhabitant, mentions that in September 1941 the Germans ordered the Ukrainians to stop murdering the Jews in the villages and disarmed the Ukrainian villagers, tasking the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police to maintain order. At this time, many of the remaining Jews in the villages were ordered to move to Jezierzany, where a ghetto was then established.³

In December 1941, the German authorities sent 100 young Jews from Jezierzany to work in the labor camp at Borki Wielkie. More Jewish youths were sent in April 1942 to the camp at Hłuboczek, but the Judenrat did its best to remain in contact with these workers and supply them with extra food and clothing. Many people died in the labor camps from the harsh conditions there.

From April through June of 1942, more Jews were brought into the Jezierzany ghetto from surrounding villages, including the family of Max Hecht from Oleksińce. Hecht recalls the ghetto as having been unfenced but remarks that the Jews knew they were not permitted to leave its area. Jews still went out illegally to forage for food, but this became increasingly dangerous over time, as some of the local population would kill the Jews they found or turn them in to the German authorities.⁴

In the late spring of 1942, two Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany, who had been in Jezierzany for two years, appealed to the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków for some assistance. They no longer had adequate shoes or even a spare shirt to change, and they received from the Judenrat only their ration of 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day.⁵ The JSS branch office in Jezierzany, which from July 1942 was officially headed by Abraham Maiberger, was able to offer only a small amount of financial support to the needy Jews of the town.

In the summer of 1942, the Germans took over a collective farm in the vicinity of Jezierzany and established a plantation for kok-saghyz—a plant similar to tobacco, used for the production of synthetic rubber—using Jewish workers. This plantation became a form of forced labor camp for Jews,

which remained in existence into the summer of 1943, holding more than 200 Jews.

On September 26, 1942, German and Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto. Over the next two days they rounded up about 700 Jews, who were then deported by train to the Bełżec extermination camp. Max Schmerer of Zaleszczyki was caught in Jezierzany at the time of the roundup. With his mother and sister, he was taken to the collection point, where they were held for two days without food or water under very close guard. A number of small children and elderly people were shot on the spot during the roundup. On the third day, the assembled Jews were loaded into freight cars and deported. A few Jews managed to break out of the freight cars and made their way back to Jezierzany. Shortly afterwards in October, most of the remaining Jews in Jezierzany (about 600 people) were transferred to the ghettos in Tłuste or Borszczów in horse-driven carts, as Jezierzany was to become *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews).⁶

After this transfer, a small group of Jews stayed in Jezierzany for a while longer, to sort out remaining Jewish property. The Jewish houses of the town were mostly dismantled, and any valuable materials were sold to the local peasants. Some Jews who had escaped during the roundups survived in the nearby forests in bunkers. However, many of these escapees subsequently were captured and killed by local peasants or by the German and Ukrainian police.

When the Soviet army entered Jezierzany in April 1944, about 50 Jews emerged from hiding, but some fled again, as it appeared the Germans might return. At the end of the war, most of the survivors moved to postwar Poland and from there to Israel, the United States, or other countries in the West.

SOURCES The main published source used regarding the history of the Jewish community of Jezierzany and its fate during the Holocaust is Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 288–290. Additional information can be found in A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraińskiego ewreistwa 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskiy spravocchnik* (Kharkov: “Karavella,” 2001), pp. 240–241.

Documents and testimonies describing the fate of the Jews of Jezierzany can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/481; 301/3184, 4990); DATO; USHMM; VHF (# 3236, 25611, 45175); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3184, testimony of Mikołaj Szczyrba (a Catholic Pole); VHF, # 3236, testimony of Sam Elberger.
2. VHF, # 3236 and # 25611, testimony of Frieda Friedman (née Elberger).
3. AŻIH, 301/3184.
4. VHF, # 45175, testimony of Max Hecht.
5. AŻIH, 211/481, Emanuel Wegner und Marion Stern an das Jüdische Sozialamt Krakau, April or May 1942.
6. Ibid., 301/4990, testimony of Max Schmerer.

VOLUME II: PART A

KALUSZ

Pre-1939: Kałusz, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kalush, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kalusz, initially center of Kreis Kalusz then Kreis Stanislau, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kalush, raion center, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast', Ukraine

Kałusz is located 27 kilometers (17 miles) north-northwest of Stanisławów. According to the population census of 1931, 3,967 Jews were living in Kałusz. On the eve of World War II in 1939, there were about 5,000 Jews in the town. In July 1941, there were probably around 6,000 Jews living in Kałusz.¹

Following a period of Soviet occupation at the beginning of World War II, Hungarian troops occupied Kałusz on July 6, 1941. The Hungarians ordered the opening of all the shops, with signs identifying every “Jewish store.” They proceeded to loot the shops and ship everything back to Hungary. Local Ukrainian nationalists complained to the German commandant in Stanisławów that their allies were stealing “government property.” In the surrounding villages, Ukrainian nationalists murdered some Jews, causing others to seek refuge in Kałusz. Within two weeks the Germans took control of the town, replacing the Hungarians.²

A German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) briefly administered the town until the end of July. On August 1, 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Kałusz was initially the center of the Kreis Kalusz in Distrikt Galizien. Those appointed to the position of Kreishauptmann were Regierungsrat Dr. Friedrich Gercke (from August 1941 to March 1942; he died during the war) and Dr. Karl-Hans Broschegg (from March 1942 to July 1943).

The subdistricts of Kałusz, Wojniłów, Dolina, Bolechów, Rożniatów, Wygoda, and Perehińsko were incorporated into Kreis Kalusz. (In March 1942, Bolechów became part of the Kreis Stryj.) Altogether, according to the population census of December 9, 1931, there were 16,720 Jews living in these subdistricts.³

In July 1942, the Kreishauptmannschaft Kałusz was dissolved. The subdistricts of Kałusz and Wojniłów were incorporated into Kreis Stanislau. The remaining districts—Dolina, Rożniatów, Wygoda, and Perehińsko—were incorporated into Kreis Stryj.

The anti-Jewish Aktionen in the town were organized and carried out by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów. The post was headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger (from the end of July 1941 until November 1942) and by his deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Oskar Brandt (from November 1942). A German Criminal Police (Kripo) post, a German Gendarmerie post, and a Ukrainian police unit were established in Kałusz. These units participated in the extermination operations that were carried out.

On August 23–25, 1941, shortly after the transfer of power to the German civil administration, a Security Police detachment arrived in Kałusz from Stanisławów. In this first Aktion,

the detachment arrested and shot 380 Jews, mostly merchants and professionals.⁴ In September 1941, 50 more people were arrested and shot by the German Gendarmerie.⁵

In the summer of 1941, the German military administration ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), commanded by a Czech refugee named Memmelis; these served to enforce compliance with German regulations. The Jewish Police implemented the marking of the Jews with white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Germans confiscated vast amounts of Jewish property, including any items of value. The Jews were registered and required to perform assigned labor tasks.

At the end of 1941, an open ghetto (Jewish residential district) was created in Kałusz. Those living outside the defined area were forced to move into the ghetto, bringing whatever possessions they could carry and abandoning—or trying to sell for very little—heavier items such as furniture. Jews expelled from neighboring villages were also sent to the ghetto. People from places outside the ghetto were housed with families or in the synagogue, and living conditions became extremely crowded. A curfew was imposed, requiring Jews to stay off the streets after sunset, even within the ghetto. Two Jews who violated the order were shot on sight, a clear warning that the curfew had to be strictly observed.

The Judenrat was charged with meeting the daily quota for forced labor. Those assigned to work outside the ghetto received special identification cards and had some contact with the local population, providing possible access to extra food. Some Jews paid large bribes to get these jobs. Among the more desirable places to work were farms, sawmills, workshops, and various German firms operating in the area.⁶

As of April 1942, there were 6,300 Jews living in the Kałusz ghetto.⁷ That same month, the Security Police detachment from Stanisławów carried out another Aktion. They arrested and shot 800 Jews only because they were deemed unfit for labor.⁸ After this Aktion, there were 5,500 Jews remaining in the town.⁹

As the months dragged by, conditions in the ghetto deteriorated. Hunger increased, especially among the many poor who had nothing to trade for food. The Judenrat had nothing left to distribute. People keeled over in the streets, dying from starvation. Corpses were collected on a daily basis to be buried in mass graves in the cemetery. All communal activity ceased. Nevertheless, many people were sustained by a vitality that enabled them to overcome physical deprivation. The doctors in the ghetto, despite the lack of basic resources, nurtured many people through their illnesses.¹⁰

In August 1942, the number of Jews in Kałusz increased again as the Germans transferred more Jews into the town from nearby villages. A total of 209 Jewish families from the villages in the Perehińsko subdistrict—which included Perehińsko, Uhrynów, Jasieniów, Siwka, Jasień, Zawój, Berłochy, Piotrów, Nowica, Grabówka, and Kamień—were resettled to Kałusz.¹¹ Still more were brought in from the Rożniatów subdistrict. On Yom Kippur (September 21, 1942), a few dispirited

souls assembled in a secret place for an abbreviated prayer service.

After the Jews were concentrated in the town, the Security Police post in Stanisławów carried out a series of *Aktions* in the fall of 1942, during which part of the Jewish population was taken to Stanisławów and murdered there, while the others were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec. The final large *Aktion* probably took place in mid-September or mid-October 1942 (accounts differ).¹² Because of rumors circulating about another large transport, people frantically tried to hide in cellars and attics, mostly within the ghetto. At the start of the *Aktion*, Gestapo men and Ukrainian policemen entered the ghetto for a house-to-house roundup. About 1,200 people were captured and held near the railroad station. Most of those in hiding were discovered and also rounded up. The hunt continued for about 36 hours. Then the prisoners were brought to the rail depot and loaded into freight cars. The victims, including the Jewish Police and leaders of the *Judenrat*, were transported to the camp in Bełżec.¹³

Not everyone was captured during the two-day roundup. As their hunger increased, people slowly emerged from hiding. The Germans announced they would not be harmed. They ordered the establishment of another *Judenrat*, headed by Berish Geller. No one was sent out to forced labor, nor was any food distributed. At the end of October, or a few weeks later, the surviving remnant was shipped to Stanisławów. The Germans officially declared Kałusz to be free of Jews (*judenrein*).¹⁴ The Red Army liberated Kałusz on August 1, 1944. Fewer than a dozen Jewish inhabitants survived the occupation.

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of the town can be found in the following publications: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 452–455; Shabtai Unger and Moshe Etinger, eds., *Kalusz: Hayeha ve-burbana shel ha-kehila* (Tel Aviv: Kalusz Society, 1980).

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Kałusz are located in the following archives: AŻIH (301/671, 1381, and 4928); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-8); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 9; AŻIH, 301/4928, testimony of Mundek Kramer, May 20, 1945.
2. Unger and Etinger, *Kalusz*, p. 233; AŻIH, 301/4928.
3. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” p. 11.
4. GARF, 7021-73-8, p. 2; AŻIH, 301/1381, testimony of Dawid Halpern. Halpern gives the figure of 500 Jewish victims.
5. GARF, 7021-73-8, p. 4.
6. Unger and Etinger, *Kalusz*, pp. 236–238.
7. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 9.
8. Thomas Sandkühler, “*Endlösung*” in *Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz-Verlag 1996), p. 238.

9. See the document dated July 8, 1942, from the Jewish Social Self-Help Committee in Kałusz (Jüdisches Hilfs-Komitee), in the reports of the Jewish Social Self-Help Organization (Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe) in Kraków, AŻIH, 211/270.

10. Unger and Etinger, *Kalusz*, p. 239.

11. GARF, 7021-73-23, pp. 2, 6–17. As of March 1942, 663 Jews lived in Perehińsko. See Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 10.

12. There are contradictory accounts regarding the dating of the final liquidation *Aktion*. Unger and Etinger, *Kalusz*, p. 240, indicates that the ghetto liquidation took place in mid-October 1942. Other accounts date the liquidation on September 15–17, 1942: see AŻIH, 301/671 and 4928. According to M. Shpats, around 3,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec in a deportation *Aktion* on November 23–25, 1942. See GARF, 7021-73-8, pp. 9–10.

13. Unger and Etinger, *Kalusz*, p. 240.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 241. According to M. Shpats, about 500 Jews remained in the township of Kałusz. In December 1942, they were rounded up and brought to Stanisławów. See GARF, 7021-73-8, pp. 9–10.

KAMIONKA STRUMIŁOWA

Pre-1939: Kamionka Strumilowa, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kamenka Strumilovskaia, raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamionka-Strumilowa, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kam'ianka-Buz'ka, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Kamionka Strumilowa is located 39 kilometers (24 miles) northeast of Lwów. According to the Polish census of 1931, 3,283 Jews were living in the town. On the eve of World War II, this figure had risen to 3,964 Jews. In June 1941, the number of Jews in Kamionka Strumilowa was around 3,500.¹

German forces occupied Kamionka Strumilowa on June 29, 1941. At first a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town, but on August 1, authority was handed over to a German civil administration. Kamionka became the administrative center of Kreis Kamionka-Strumilowa within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreis included the subdistricts of Kamionka, Busk, Milatyń Nowy, Sokal, Radziechów, and Łopatyn. The Kreishauptmann was at first SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rebay von Ehrenwiesen; from June 1942, his deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Joachim Nehring.

The anti-Jewish *Aktions* in Kamionka were organized and carried out by the Security Police outpost in Sokal, which was subordinated to the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and the SD (KdS) based in Lwów. The Sokal outpost initially was run by SS-Sturmabführer Hans Block and, from May 1942 to October 1943, by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk. In Kamionka Strumilowa itself, there was a German Gendarmerie post and a Ukrainian police detachment, both of which actively participated in the anti-Jewish *Aktions*.

At the end of June 1941, antisemitic elements among the local Ukrainians organized a pogrom that lasted three days, resulting in the deaths of about 150 Jews. After the pogrom, posters appeared on the streets in which it was announced that the Germans had not killed the Jews.²

In July 1941, on the orders of the German military administration, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created, and the Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing a Star of David. The first head of the Jewish Council was Maks Friedhofer, a capable and well-respected man. Unfortunately, the Gestapo murdered him in Lwów after only a few weeks. His replacement, Meier Kleiner, was criticized for his personal greed. In accordance with German orders, he organized the collection of a large amount of Jewish property, especially valuables, retaining part for his own use.³

On November 10, 1941,⁴ a unit of the Security Police from Sokal carried out the first Aktion in Kamionka Strumiłowa, during which about 500 Jews from the intelligentsia were shot in the village of Obydów.⁵

In June 1942, 71 Jews from the villages of Żełdec, Dalnicz, Kłodno Wielkie, and Pieczychwosty in the Lwów district were resettled to Kamionka. At that time, 3,163 Jews were registered in Kamionka. The figure in April 1942 had been 3,189 Jews.⁶

On September 15, 1942, a Security Police unit from Sokal carried out a second Aktion in the course of which some 1,500 Jews were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec and about 300 Jews were murdered in the town.⁷ In the course of a third Aktion on September 21, 1942, around 600 Jews from Kamionka were killed in Zabuże; Jews from Radziechów, Chołojów, and Busk, some 2,000 in all, were shot along with them.⁸ The Jews were possibly shot instead of being deported because a train could not be allocated to send them to Bełżec.

After the third Aktion, a Jewish residential district, or open ghetto, was established on September 30, 1942; it existed for less than one month.⁹ On October 28, 1942, during the fourth Aktion, the open ghetto was liquidated, and 1,023 Jews were deported to Bełżec. After the deportation, more than 100 Jews were uncovered hiding in and around the ghetto and shot near the town. Fifteen Jews were retained to clean up the ghetto area, but they were also shot once this task was completed.¹⁰ Following the ghetto liquidation Aktion, the town was declared to be “free of Jews” (*judenfrei*), which was celebrated by a personal visit from the governor of Distrikt Galizien, Otto Wächter.¹¹

Only about 20 Jews managed to survive the German occupation, most of them hidden by local Poles.

Rebay von Ehrenwiesen was under investigation for a period after the war, but the case was closed for lack of evidence. Nehring was acquitted on August 24, 1981, by the state court. Block died in August 1944. Heyduk was sentenced to life imprisonment on July 13, 1949, by a court in Munich.

SOURCES An article about the persecution and destruction of Kamionka Strumiłowa's Jews can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas*

ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 455–457.

Documentation on the fate of Kamionka Strumiłowa's Jews during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/45, 4855, and 4926); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 14/1964); DALO; GARF (7021-67-84); RGVA (1323-2-292b); and YVA.

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trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 5; AŻIH, 301/4926.

2. GARF, 7021-67-84, pp. 11, 13; AŻIH, 301/4926 and 4855. Some sources, however, mention the participation of German forces.

3. AŻIH, 301/4926.

4. Verdict of LG-Stad, 10 Ks 9 Js 544/64 (29/78), in the case against J. Nehring, August 24, 1981.

5. GARF, 7021-67-84, p. 12; AŻIH, 301/45. According to another source, 300 people were shot; GARF, 7021-67-84, p. 13.

6. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 5.

7. AŻIH, 301/4926.

8. Verdict of LG-Stad, 10 Ks 9 Js 544/64 (29/78), in the case against J. Nehring, August 24, 1981; Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 5; AŻIH, 301/4855.

9. AŻIH, 301/4926.

10. Ibid. See the account by the Einsatzkommando, 5. Zug, SS-Pol. Rgt. 24, RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 29.

11. AŻIH, 301/4926.

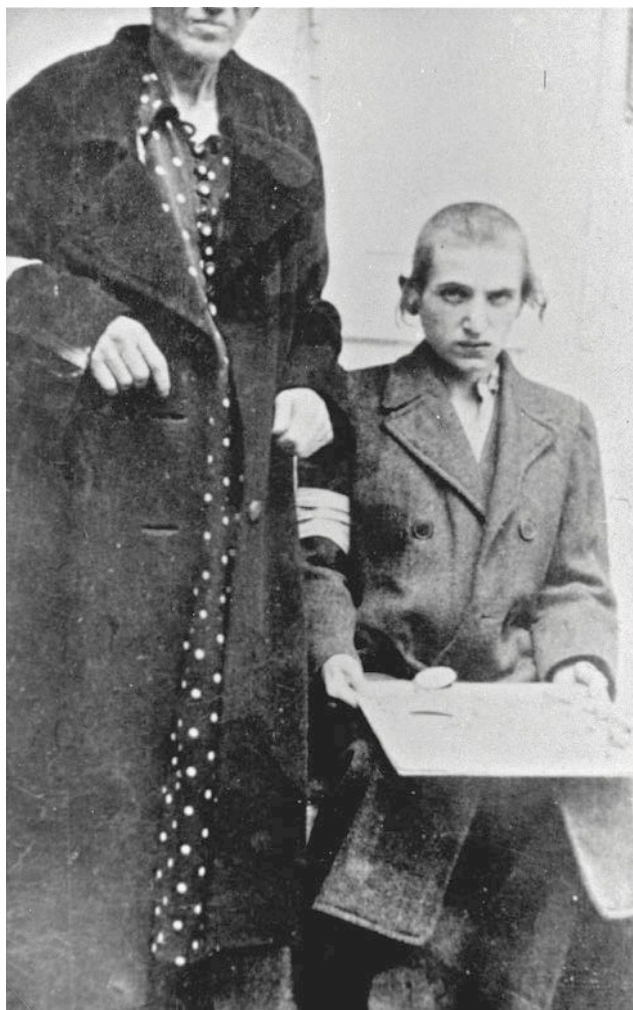
KOŁOMYJA

Pre-1939: Kołomyja, city, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kolomyia, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kolomea, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kolomyia, raion center, Ivano-Frankiv's'k oblast', Ukraine

Kołomyja is located 51 kilometers (32 miles) south-southeast of Stanisławów. In 1938, in so-called metropolitan Kołomyja (after the inclusion of the villages of Szeparowce, Diatkowice, Korolówka, and Wierbiąż Niżny), the Jewish population stood at 20,000.¹

By 1941, owing to a great influx of Jewish refugees, first from Germany and Austria, and later from Poland and Hungary, the Jewish population of Kołomyja reached about 30,000.²

On the night of June 21–22, 1941, the German air force bombed Kołomyja. The bulk of Jewish Communists, as well as many young people and students, tried to flee into the interior of the Soviet Union, and many of them succeeded. The vast majority of the Jewish population of Kołomyja stayed put for many reasons, among them lack of transportation, the absence of any call to leave from the Jewish leadership, and



The mother and son of the Kołomyja rabbi, n.d. Both perished in the Holocaust.

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the inability to imagine what would await them at the hands of the Germans.

On July 1, 1941, the last units of the Red Army left Kołomyja, and local Ukrainians established their own authority in the city. On July 3, Hungarian tanks entered Kołomyja and established a military occupation.

On Friday, July 4, 1941, the Ukrainians in Kołomyja organized an anti-Jewish pogrom. Jews were forced out of their houses, beaten, and humiliated. Then 300 Jews were forced to remove the Lenin statue from Piłsudski Square with their bare hands.³ Another group of Jews was forced into the city park to remove the statues of Stalin and Lenin. Jews were forced to stand facing a fence, and the Ukrainians were preparing to shoot them when a deputy mayor arrived and stopped this Aktion.⁴ Similar pogroms, in which hundreds of Jews were killed, took place in the small towns and villages in the vicinity of Kołomyja.⁵

In Kołomyja, the Ukrainians were unhappy with Hungarian rule. To prove to the Germans their own superior

organizational abilities, they prepared lists of the Jewish intelligentsia for forced labor. Zenon Pryhrodskij, the head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), prepared the lists.⁶ On July 16, 1941, a mobile Security Police unit from Stanisławów arrived in Kołomyja, and the local Ukrainians gathered 110 Jews from the list and led them towards the former village of Korolówka.⁷ The Jews were told to march with shovels, and at the rear of the column was a German car with a machine gun. Upon their arrival in Korolówka, the Jews were told to undress and to start digging ditches. Realizing what awaited them, most Jews stopped digging and started to pray or just lay on the ground. At the last moment, the commandant of the Hungarian garrison was informed about the intentions of the Ukrainians and the Germans. He arrived at Korolówka and stopped the Aktion.⁸

On August 1, 1941, Hans Frank declared the annexation of Eastern Galicia to the Generalgouvernement, and on that day the administration of Kołomyja was transferred into German hands.

The anti-Jewish repressions intensified. The new Kreishauptmann, Klaus Peter Volkmann, ordered all Jews aged 6 and older to wear armbands bearing the Star of David; he appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) supervised by the Gestapo and ordered all Jews between the ages of 12 and 60 to perform forced labor. The Jewish Council was ordered to conduct a census of all Jewish inhabitants in Kołomyja.⁹

At the end of September 1941, Volkmann and Peter Leideritz, the head of the Gestapo, appointed a chairman of the Judenrat for Kołomyja, which now also represented the surrounding towns: Kuty, Kosów, Jabłonów, Horodenka, Zabłotów, Śniatyń, and Żabie. Mordechai Markus Horowitz was appointed chairman of the Jewish Council. He was a respected pre-war industrialist in Kołomyja who accepted this position out of a sense of obligation towards the Jewish community. Horowitz believed that the Jews should fulfill all German orders quickly and fully, and he made sure that all the Jews complied.

The German authorities in general and the Gestapo in particular used the Jewish Council in Kołomyja as their tool to carry out their repressive policies. The duties of the Judenrat included the confiscation of valuables, organization of Jews for labor, and at a later date, assistance with the deportations of Jews from Kołomyja. Often it appeared that the Jewish Council was bending over backwards to fulfill the German demands.¹⁰

The Judenrat employed 300 people and consisted of six departments as follows:

1. A labor bureau (Arbeitsamt) was established to organize forced labor. A succession of well-known personalities headed this section of the Jewish Council, and it introduced special worker identification cards and permanent places of work.¹¹
2. A provisioning department (Beschaffungsamt) was in charge of the confiscation of goods from Jewish

homes, as well as the preparation of apartments for the Germans.

3. A supply department (Approvisationsabteilung), with Shayke Frisch as its head, was in charge of dividing up the meager provisions.
4. A housing department (Wohnungsamt) had to find living space for the large number of people brought to Kołomyja both before and after the establishment of the ghetto.
5. A registration department (Registrationsabteilung) employed five clerks who managed the files of the inhabitants of the Kołomyja ghetto, usually based on the ration cards. The files never reflected the true number of Jews in the city. After each Aktion, new ration cards were issued, each time in a different color. Many people preferred not to apply for new ration cards for their children and elders, to protect them from certain death.
6. A Jewish post office (Postamt), headed by Zindel Neuman, was established within the Judenrat, as Jews were not allowed to use the city post office. Jewish mail was distributed there, and outgoing mail was prepared for the German censor so the mail could go out.

The building of the Jewish Council became the center of all activities for Jews in Kołomyja. All labor details left from there, all barter took place there, and all information and rumors were exchanged in front of the Judenrat building.¹²

With time, Markus Horowitz, the chairman of the Jewish Council, moved into the Judenrat building, gave all his money to the Judenrat, and ate only in the soup kitchens. He even refused to ask for the release of his wife from a roundup. Horowitz used to say, “[G]ive them everything and you will stay alive.”¹³ Many believed that Horowitz slowly went insane, and he finally committed suicide in November 1942 together with his sister.

The Germans chose the eve of the Jewish New Year—September 21, 1941—to expel the Jewish population from the villages in the vicinity of Kołomyja, sending them to the city. The next three weeks passed under constant Gestapo terror, including the forced removal of gravestones from Jewish cemeteries to pave the roads with them.

On October 11, 1941, massive arrests were conducted according to lists prepared by the Ukrainians. Jewish teachers, rabbis, doctors, and lawyers were arrested by the SD, commanded by SS-Obersturmführer Leideritz. They were kept in the Kołomyja prison until the evening, when they were taken to the Szeparowce Forest and murdered there.¹⁴

On the next day, Hoshana Rabba, the last day of the Sukkot holiday, October 12, 1941—the Gestapo, with the help of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), dragged 3,000 Jews from synagogues, houses, and streets. They were taken first to the prison and later by truck to the Szeparowce Forest, 8 kilometers (5 miles) from Kołomyja, where they were shot.¹⁵ The Great Synagogue of Kołomyja was also burned down during this Aktion.

On Thursday, November 6, 1941, under the pretext of looking for collaborators with the Soviets, the German forces led by Leideritz, assisted by the Judenreferent (Jewish Affairs Officer) at the Gestapo, Ebersold, and Gestapo forces led by SS-Hauptscharführer Goedde, who later became a political Referent for the Kołomyja ghetto, surrounded the poorest part of the Jewish quarter in Kołomyja, along Mokra Street. During this and subsequent killing Aktions, more than 2,000 Jews were taken to the Szeparowce Forest and brutally murdered there. A Ukrainian, Chlipko of the Hilfspolizei, demonstrated how Jews could be killed without wasting ammunition. He ordered the naked Jews to lie on the ground with their heads over the edge of the ditch they had just dug, and with an axe, he started to chop off their heads. Ebersold ordered him to stop, and the rest of the victims were killed by shooting.¹⁶

On November 11, 1941, a few hundred more Jews were rounded up and murdered in Szeparowce.

On December 23, 1941, the Germans ordered the confiscation of all fur items in the possession of Jews, as well as any ski equipment, including sweaters and hats, in the so-called Fur Aktion (Pelzaktion).¹⁷

On the same day, December 23, 1941, all Jews with foreign passports had to come to the Gestapo building to register. All those who obeyed this order were imprisoned for the night. The next day these 1,200 Jews were murdered in the Szeparowce Forest. Only a few Jews were released and later taken to Lwów.¹⁸

On January 22, 1942, 400 of the most respected Jews in Kołomyja were caught and later killed in the Szeparowce Forest.¹⁹ Throughout February and March 1942, about 1,000 Jews per week were murdered in Szeparowce.

In March 1942, there were only 17,000 Jews left in Kołomyja. On March 23, the remaining Kołomyja Jews were confined within a ghetto, which was divided into three parts. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), consisting of 160 Jews, was established on March 26, 1942; they enforced German orders to move all the remaining Jews into the ghetto within 24 hours.

On April 3–6, 1942, the first deportation of some 5,000 Jews from Kołomyja to the Bełżec killing center took place. On September 7, 1942, an order was posted for all Jews to congregate at 6:00 A.M. on a large square. At the same time a roundup took place inside the ghetto, and all who were found in hiding were shot and killed. More than 10,000 people gathered in front of the Labor Bureau, trying to look their best. Then 1,300 people were selected to stay, deemed fit for labor, and the rest were slated for deportation to Bełżec. This Aktion was conducted by the Gestapo officer Prost, and Gestapo man Hallerbach was in charge of the confiscation of valuables from the deported Jews.²⁰

After the expulsion of the Jews from the small towns and villages, many who took cover subsequently emerged and were told by the Germans to go to the Kołomyja ghetto with a promise that they would be safe. On September 11, 1942, the Germans entered the ghetto at 4:00 A.M., rounded up 4,000

Jews, and deported them to Bełżec.²¹ During the four days between September 7 and September 11, 1942, 17,300 Jews from Kołomyja and its vicinity, including Śniatyń, Kosów, Kut, Zabłotów, and Horodenka, were deported to Bełżec and murdered there on arrival.

On February 2, 1943, the final destruction of Kołomyja's Jews took place; 2,200 Jews were brutally killed in the ghetto by beating, clubbing, or shooting. Leideritz allegedly competed with the head of the Gestapo in Stanisławów as to whose Kreis would be "cleansed of Jews" (*judenrein*) first. Leideritz won this murderous contest.

Out of about 70,000 Jews who lived in Kołomyja (25,000) and its vicinity, 60 percent were murdered in Kołomyja and the Szeparowce Forest, and 40 percent were taken to the Bełżec extermination camp and murdered there on arrival.

During the deportations from Kołomyja to Bełżec, Szaje Feder, who was deported twice and escaped from the train twice, testified that between 100 and 120 people were pushed into each train wagon. After each escape, Feder was caught by local Ukrainians, beaten, and delivered back to the Kołomyja ghetto.

There were between 17 and 20 Aktions in Kołomyja. More than 200 Jews managed to escape and survived in hiding.²² The Red Army liberated the area in March 1944.

Peter Leideritz was the head of the Gestapo in Kołomyja from the fall of 1941 until January 1944. He personally directed most of the Aktions. Leideritz was extradited to Poland in 1947, tried, sentenced to death, and executed. Klaus Peter Volkmann (b. 1913) served as a Kreishauptmann in the Generalgouvernement and was Hans Frank's representative in Kołomyja until July 1942, when he was demoted for corruption. After the war, he changed his name to Peter Grubbe and worked as a journalist on foreign affairs for major German newspapers. He was never tried for war crimes.

SOURCES The following publications also contain information regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Kołomyja: Dr. Dov Noy and Mark Schutzman, eds., *Sefer Zikaron Li-Kehilat Kolomeyah Veba-Sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kolomeyah veba-sevivah ba'arets uva-tefutsot, 1972); Shlomo Bickel, ed., *Pinkas Kolomey* (1957; New York: Rausen Bros., 1979); and Tuvia Friedmann, ed., *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher in Kolomea: Vor dem Wiener Volksgericht: Dokumentensammlung* (Haifa: Institute of the Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes, 1986).

Documents dealing with the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Kołomyja can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1219, 1398, 1774, 2579); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 277/60); DAI-FO; USHMM; and YVA (O-3/2141, 2145, 2147; and 1504/43).

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NOTES

1. YVA, O-3/2141, Jakub Heger testimony.
2. AŻIH, 301/2579, Anna Blecher Moritz testimony.
3. Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 274.
4. AŻIH, 301/1398, Szaje Feder testimony.
5. Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 274.

6. YVA, O-3/2141, Jakub Heger testimony.

7. Ibid., 1504/43; Calel Neider mentions a list of 115 Jews, prepared by Ukrainians.

8. Ibid., O-3/2141. According to Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, this Aktion took place on July 24, 1941, and 2,000 Jews were dragged from their homes and gathered in the city park; 150 Jews taken from the Ukrainian list were sentenced to death for spitting on two German officers and put together with 20 other prominent Jews on a truck to Korolówka to be shot. They were saved by the Hungarian commandant at the last moment.

9. Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 276–277.

10. YVA, 1504/43.

11. Ibid., O-3/2141.

12. Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 280–281.

13. YVA, O-3/2141.

14. Ibid., O-3/2147, Edward Rotner Rudnicki testimony.

15. AŻIH, 301/1219, Wolf Hacker testimony.

16. Ibid., 301/1774, Salomon Schachter testimony.

17. Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 288.

18. YVA, 1504/43.

19. Ibid.

20. AŻIH, 301/1398.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.; Noy and Schutzman, *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 308.

KOMARNO

Pre-1939: Komarno, town, Rudki powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Drogobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Gorodok raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Komarno is located about 38 kilometers (24 miles) southwest of Lwów. The Jewish population of Komarno was 2,004 in 1921, comprising 25 percent of the total. According to the population census of December 1931, 2,390 Jews were living in Komarno.

Following the outbreak of war on September 1, 1939, Komarno was briefly occupied by the Germans. In the two weeks of occupation, Jews had to perform hard labor accompanied by physical abuse, and several were murdered. At the end of September, the town came under Soviet rule, and the Jewish Communist Eliezer Freiwilg was appointed mayor. Hundreds of Jewish refugees from western Poland arrived in Komarno and received some assistance from the local Jewish community. Many of these refugees were exiled to Siberia by the Soviets.

Forces of the German 17th Army recaptured Komarno on June 29, 1941. Immediately the Ukrainian police went on a rampage against the Jewish community; a group of Jews was put in prison and forced to remove the corpses of Ukrainians killed by the retreating Soviets, wash the corpses, and then rebury them. Also, Jews were kidnapped daily by Ukrainians and forced to perform degrading chores.¹

Initially, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. On August 1, 1941,

power was transferred to a German civil administration. Komarno became part of Kreis Lemberg-Land, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was initially Wilhelm Stockheck (August 1941–September 1941); succeeded first by Otto Bauer (September 1941–March 1942); then Werner Becker (March 1942–January 1943); and finally Baron Joachim von der Leyen (from January 1943). A German Gendarmerie post and a unit of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) were established in Komarno.

In the summer of 1941, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was subsequently assisted by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). The Jews of Komarno were registered and required to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. A large amount of Jewish property was confiscated, including any items of value. The Judenrat was headed initially by Dov Balaban; its other members included Tzvi Weiser, Henach Sobel, Eliezer Glanz, and Raphael Koch. The Judenrat was forced to provide a certain quota of Jewish forced laborers to the German authorities. The Ukrainian police cut off the beards of observant Jews as an act of public humiliation. The Germans also prohibited the Jews from assembling to pray in the synagogue or prayer house during the High Holidays.

The Germans organized the first mass shooting of Jews in Komarno on October 24, 1941. German and Ukrainian police went from house to house and arrested the heads of many families, especially any professionals or community leaders, together with a few women. More than 200 people were arrested and were placed in the local prison. In the early hours of the next day the Germans and Ukrainian police escorted them into a nearby forest and shot them using machine guns. The bodies were thrown into a pit, where some were buried alive. The surviving Komarno Jews learned of the mass murder a few days later.²

A short time after the murder of the intelligentsia, the remaining Jews of Komarno were ordered to move to the center of town near the market, thus establishing a de facto open ghetto. The Jews were only permitted to leave their residential area for one or two hours per day to visit the market. Despite strict prohibitions, the Jews continued to buy food illegally from local peasants at inflated prices. In late 1941 or in early 1942, the German authorities murdered the head of the Judenrat, Balaban, for failing to meet a large contribution they had demanded. Balaban was succeeded as Judenrat head by Henach Sobel.

In April 1942, a Jewish resident of Komarno, named Mandel Koch, wrote to the central office of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Kraków, complaining about the members of the JSS branch in Komarno. He wrote that daily children and the elderly were dying of hunger and that despite subventions received, the only aid being delivered was three spoonfuls of watery soup per day. He accused the JSS committee of having no philanthropic experience, lacking initiative, and only being interested in the special passes they received, which might save their own lives.³

According to undated German registration figures, taken at some time between the summer of 1941 and the fall of 1942, there were 2,328 Jews residing in Komarno and another 51 Jews living in the surrounding villages.⁴ It is likely that the Jews from the surrounding villages were mostly concentrated by the Germans in Komarno, before the end of November 1942.

In accordance with the order of the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger, of November 10, 1942, on the establishment of ghettos in Distrikt Galizien,⁵ the Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land ordered on November 25, 1942, that the Jews of Komarno would have to move to the ghetto (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in nearby Szczerzec.⁶

Immediately after this, at the end of November 1942, an Aktion was carried out in Komarno. Several hundred Jews were rounded up and deported to the Bełżec extermination camp by train. Similar Aktions were carried out at this time also in the nearby towns of Rudki and Szczerzec. Altogether about 1,600 Jews from these three places were deported to Bełżec in late November 1942.⁷

After this Aktion, only a few hundred Jews remained in Komarno confined to a small ghetto consisting of about a dozen houses. These Jews were composed of some selected workers and others who had emerged from hiding after the Aktion. Shortly afterwards, in December 1942, these remaining Jews were transferred to the newly established ghetto in Rudki. Many of these Jews died of hunger and typhus in Rudki during the winter of 1942–1943.⁸ Security Police and SD from Lwów, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, liquidated the Rudki ghetto on April 9, 1943, when most of the ghetto's inmates were shot in ditches in the forest near Brzezina.⁹

Komarno was recaptured from the Germans on July 7, 1944, by the Soviet army. Only a handful of Komarno's Jewish community, whom Christians hid, survived the Holocaust.

SOURCES Published sources on the Jewish community of Komarno and its fate during the Holocaust include Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 478–481; and Barukh Yashar, *Bet Komarna: Korot ha-ir ve-toldoteha, me-hivasdab ve-ad hurbanah, rabaneha, gedoleha, va-admoreha, isbeha, bayehem, vi-khilyonam* (Jerusalem: B. Yashar, 1965). Additional information can be found in Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), p. 651; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 338.

Relevant documentation on the destruction of the Jews of Komarno can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/552; 301/527); DALO (R 37-5-27; R 24-3-156); GARF (7021-58-21); USHMM (Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], 211/552); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 478–481.
2. *Ibid.*, gives a total of 240 victims GARF; 7021-58-21, p. 255, gives the figure of 470.
3. USHMM, Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), 211/552.
4. DALO, R 37-5-27, Projekt der Sammelgemeinde des Rayon Janow, n.d.
5. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
6. DALO, R 24-3-156, p. 40, Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land an die Landkommissare und Vögte, November 15, 1942.
7. GARF, 7021-58-21, pp. 197–213; AŻIH, 301/527; Thomas Sandkühler, “*Endlösung*” in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 234.
8. AŻIH, 301/527.
9. *Ibid.*; GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 200; Berenstein, “*Eksterminacja*,” table 7.

KOPYCYŃCE

Pre-1939: Kopyczyńce (Yiddish: Kopitshintze), town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kopychintsy, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kopyczynce, Kreis Czortkow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kopychyntsi, Husiatyn raion, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Kopyczyńce is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) south-southeast of Tarnopol. In 1931, there were 2,590 Jews living there.

German troops occupied Kopyczyńce on July 7, 1941. In August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Kopyczyńce became part of Kreis Czortkow, within Distrikt Galizien. Initially, SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Gerhard Littschwager held the position of Kreishauptmann in Czortków. At the end of April 1942, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Hans Kujath took over the position.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Kopyczyńce were organized and carried out by a branch of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Czortków. The following individuals, in turn, were in charge of this unit: SS-Obersturmführer Karl Hildemann (October 1941–October 1942), SS-Untersturmführer Hans Velde (October 1942–February 1943), and SS-Sturmscharführer Heinrich Peckmann (February–September 1943). Kopyczyńce itself had an office of the Criminal Police (Kripo), which was subordinated to the Security Police in Czortków. There was also a Gendarmerie post, as well as a detachment of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). All these forces played an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

On July 7, 1941, German soldiers killed several Jews in Kopyczyńce. For several days after July 11, 1941, Einsatzkommando 6, under the command of SS-Standartenführer Dr.

Kroeger, was active in the town.¹ Most likely, it was this unit that shot 7 Jews, who were accused of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities. In addition, 21 Jews who had been prisoners of the Soviets were also shot.²

On July 12, 1941, the German occupation authorities ordered the Jews to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Jewish men were assigned to perform hard labor and were subjected to physical abuse and humiliation by the Ukrainian policemen. Without special permission, Jews were forbidden to leave the town. They were forced to mark their residences with the Star of David, and they were allowed to shop at the market only between 11:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. Later, in August 1941, a contribution of 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of gold and several tens of thousands of zloty was imposed on the Jews of Kopyczyńce. In spite of meeting this large contribution, the Germans burned down the local synagogue, including the Torah scrolls, at the end of the month. The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Kopyczyńce. It was headed first by J.J. Zellenmeyer and then by Herman Roller. The Judenrat was responsible for passing on the regulations and instructions of the German authorities to the Jewish population and ensuring their enforcement. From around November 1941, the executive arm of the Jewish Council was the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), consisting initially of about 15 to 20 men, which was led in turn by David Loker, Josele Shmeterling, and Maurice Roller.³

In November 1941, the Germans started to round up and deport able-bodied Jews from Kopyczyńce to work in various forced labor camps. On November 8, 1941, about 200 Jews were sent to the Kamionki labor camp near Tarnopol. In the winter of 1941–1942, more Jews were sent to the labor camp in Borki Wielkie; in late March 1942, 150 Jews were sent to the camps in Kamionki and Hłuboczek Wielki; in May 1942, 50 Jewish women were sent to work on the kok-saghyz plantations in the Jagielnica area; and in June 1942, another group of Jews was transferred to the labor camp in Stupki.⁴

In the spring of 1942, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) was established in Kopyczyńce, with Herman Roller appointed as chairman and engineer Jakob Silberstein acting as the main organizer. The JSS received support, including some medical supplies from the organization’s headquarters in Kraków. It established a soup kitchen to provide meals to the needy and a medical clinic for walk-in patients, as well as a facility for disinfecting clothes returned from the camps. For a time, it was possible for the Jews of Kopyczyńce to send food, clothing, and letters to those deported to the labor camps and occasionally even obtain the release, with bribes or replacements, of those who had fallen sick.⁵ In total, between November 1941 and October 1942, around 500 Jews were sent to various labor camps, and further roundups for the camps continued into the spring of 1943.⁶ Living conditions in these camps were harsh, and a number of inmates died from hunger, sickness, or due to the brutality of the guards.

Despite the repeated deportations, the number of Jews in Kopyczyńce did not decline. In March 1942, a number of Jews

from surrounding villages and smaller towns were resettled to Kopyczyńce, at the same time that the Jews of nearby Husiatyń were forced to relocate, mainly to Probuźna. Therefore, in June 1942, reportedly 3,123 Jews were living in Kopyczyńce.⁷ Then in August 1942, another 200 Jews were resettled to Kopyczyńce from Czortków.

At this time no formal ghetto existed in Kopyczyńce, as some Jews continued to reside on the town's outskirts interspersed among non-Jews. However, Jews could not leave the town without permission and faced the death penalty for violating this order. Indeed, the main chronology in the yizkor book uses the term *ghetto* to describe living conditions for Jews in Kopyczyńce more or less from the start of the occupation.

On September 30, 1942, a deportation Aktion was carried out in Kopyczyńce. In its course, around 50 Jews were killed on the spot, and more than 1,000 Jews were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec.⁸ The Aktion was conducted by a Security Police detachment from Czortków with the help of the German Gendarmerie, Ukrainian police and fire brigade, and also the Jewish Police. One month after this Aktion, in October 1942, the remaining Jews from Chorostków, Probuźna (including many Jews originally from Husiatyń), and the surrounding villages were transferred to Kopyczyńce. They were given until October 20 to complete the resettlement. As a result, the number of Jews in Kopyczyńce increased again to 2,915, making the overcrowding situation worse, with 10 to 15 people sharing each room, and the inevitable spread of disease. More than 200 Jews died from disease, cold, and starvation in the winter of 1942–1943.⁹

On December 1, 1942, in accordance with the order of November 10, 1942, issued by the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, Kopyczyńce was declared to be a “Jewish residential area” (Jüdischer Wohnbezirk, or ghetto).¹⁰ According to evidence from the yizkor book, however, no major change in the residential pattern of Jews appears to have taken place at this time.

In the winter of 1942–1943 and the early spring of 1943, the Jews in Kopyczyńce suffered from occasional arrests and killings conducted by the Gestapo from Czortków and the Ukrainian police but were spared another major Aktion until April. They drew some solace from news of the German defeat at Stalingrad but lived in constant fear for their lives. Most prepared hiding places in attics, cellars, and behind false walls, in expectation of the next large Aktion.

On April 15, 1943, the Security Police and their local collaborators broke into Jewish houses, ripping them apart to find those in hiding. Altogether around 500 Jews were shot, some in the streets; the bulk of them were forced to kneel down next to a mass grave near the railway station, where they received one bullet from behind. Many victims were buried while still alive.¹¹

After this Aktion, the Germans ordered that all Jews living on the periphery of the town were to be resettled into a more compact ghetto before May 1, 1943. No sooner was this implemented than a new decree ordered that all the

Jews would soon be resettled to the Tłuste ghetto. Thanks to a large bribe, this order was soon rescinded, but then most of the surviving Jews in Buczacz were instructed to move either to the Kopyczyńce or to the Tłuste ghetto between May 15 and May 30. Every day many carts with impoverished refugees arrived from Buczacz, bringing the total number of Jews in the Kopyczyńce ghetto to around 5,000. With this new influx came also fear of a further Aktion.¹²

On June 3, 1943, the Germans and their collaborators liquidated the ghetto. Many of the Buczacz Jews were still sleeping in the streets or in only improvised accommodations, with no place to hide; they fell easily into the clutches of the murderers. In total, on this day the Security Police detachment from Czortków, assisted by Ukrainian policemen, shot more than 2,000 Jews.¹³ The Ukrainian and German policemen then conducted sweeps, hunting for Jews who had escaped and those in hiding. All the Jews they were able to catch were collected together and then shot in groups over the ensuing days up to June 11; according to the yizkor book, in total nearly 4,000 people were killed within just eight days.¹⁴

At this time, around 1,000 Jews remained alive. On June 12, 1943, the remains of the ghetto were surrounded with a wooden fence. Three days later an order was given that all the Jews must move to Czortków within two days. About 400 people obeyed this instruction, but they were all murdered in an Aktion there shortly afterwards. Then on June 18, 1943, a small remnant ghetto was established, containing about 350 people. A few other surviving Jews were sent to small agricultural labor camps in the vicinity. The last date to move into the small ghetto was June 25, 1943. The small ghetto was finally liquidated on July 20, 1943. The Ukrainian police was sent ahead to pull Jews out of the bunkers, as the Germans feared bitter resistance.¹⁵ A few Jews escaped into the countryside, where they sought aid from local peasants or tried to make contact with Soviet partisans. Some, however, were denounced by those they turned to for help or their neighbors, as the Germans offered rewards of a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of sugar or a liter (a quart) of brandy for turning in Jews. Only around 65 Jews from the town are believed to have survived through the German occupation.¹⁶

SOURCES The main published source used in preparation of this entry is the yizkor book, edited by Avraham Beker, *Kehilatyim (Husiatin ve-Kopitsintsa)* (Tel Aviv: Hutz La-Or ay Ir-gun Yotsei Husiatin Ha-Galitsayit be-Yisrael, 1977). Other relevant publications include Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 486–489; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 345–346.

Documentation and testimonies describing the fate of the Jews of Kopyczyńce during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (211/569, 301/409, 301/5531, 302/50); DATO; GARF (7021-75-107); USHMM (e.g.,

Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], RG-50.002*0035); VHF (e.g., # 5381, 27193, 34860); YIU (# 156); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1253, O-3/2235).

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NOTES

1. N-Doc., NOKW 2272, AOK 17/Ic-A.O., Tätigkeitsbericht 15.5. bis 12.12.1941 (Aufzeichnungen v. 11 und 12.7.1941).
2. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 192; Beker, *Kehilatayim*, p. 230.
3. Beker, *Kehilatayim*, pp. 235–236.
4. Ibid., pp. 235, 238–239, 241.
5. Ibid., pp. 239–241; AŽIH, 211/569, pp. 8–9, 29; VHF, # 34860, testimony of Edmund Brenman.
6. AŽIH, 211/569, p. 45, JUS Kopyczyńce (the JSS had by this time been renamed JUS) to the JUS Central Office in Kraków, October 10, 1942.
7. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŽIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 3.
8. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 194.
9. Beker, *Kehilatayim*, p. 247; VHF, # 5381, testimony of Morris Grinberg; AŽIH, 211/569, p. 45.
10. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
11. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 194; Beker, *Kehilatayim*, pp. 252–254.
12. Y. Cohen, ed., *Sefer Buczac: Matsevet Zikaron Le-kehila Kedosha* (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 267 (testimony of E. Khal-fan), p. 277 (testimony of I. Gilbert); Beker, *Kehilatayim*, p. 258.
13. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 194.
14. VHF, # 27193, testimony of Eva Halpern; Beker, *Kehilatayim*, pp. 258–260.
15. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 194; Beker, *Kehilatayim*, pp. 261–262.
16. USHMM, RG-50.002*0035, interview with Zygmunt Gottlieb, February 21, 1989.

KOSÓW

Pre-1939: Kosów, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kosov, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kosow, Kreis Kolomea, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kosiv, raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Kosów is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) south-southeast of Stanisławów. In September 1939, when German forces invaded Poland from the west, there were about 3,700 Jews living in Kosów.

Following a period of Soviet rule, detachments of the Hungarian army occupied Kosów on July 1, 1941. Initially a Hungarian military commandant ran the town. In August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Kosów became part of Kreis Kolomea, within Distrikt Galizien. From August 1941 to July 1, 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Kołomyja was Klaus Peter Volkmann. He was then

succeeded by SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Gorgon, who held the position until July 26, 1943.

The Aktions against the Jewish population in Kosów were mostly organized and carried out by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) based in Kołomyja, which was headed by SS-Obersturmführer Peter Leideritz, his deputy SS-Obersturmführer Erwin Gay, and the Jewish Affairs Officer (Judenreferent), SS-Hauptscharführer Robert Frost. In Kosów, a German Gendarmerie post was established, along with a precinct of the Schutzpolizei and a local Ukrainian police detachment, which took an active part in all the anti-Jewish Aktions.

During the first days of occupation, the Ukrainian mayor, Boyechko, established a regime of forced labor for Jews, and the Ukrainian militia beat and robbed Jews with impunity. Towards the end of July, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by Chayim Zvi Steiner. With the transfer of authority to the Germans, the position of the Jews did not improve. Forced labor continued, including arduous work repairing roads and constructing bridges. In addition, there was a demand from Kreishauptmann Volkmann for furniture to equip a villa for his personal use, and he also issued an order for the Jews to surrender all gold and personal valuables.

Just before Rosh Hashanah (September 22, 1941), more than 300 Jewish refugees arrived in Kosów from Hungary and the Carpathian region of Ukraine. They received aid from the local community, and most tried to return home, assisted by bribes, although a number were turned back at the Hungarian border. In September 1941, the Ukrainian and German security forces arrested 8 Jews, accusing them of being Communists, and 7 of them were subsequently killed.¹

On October 16–17, 1941, a mass killing Aktion was carried out against the Jewish population. In the course of these two days, a Security Police unit from Kołomyja, headed by SS-Obersturmführer Erwin Gay, assisted by the Ukrainian police under the command of Dershchitski, shot 2,088 Jews, including some Jews brought in from the surrounding countryside, into two ditches on the “mountain” near the Moskalowka Bridge. The synagogue was also burned down.²

Following the mass killing Aktion, Ukrainians and Poles robbed Jewish houses, and the remaining Jews who had survived in hiding were forced to move into a separate Jewish residential area (Jüdischer Wohnbezirk), establishing an open ghetto. The streets designated as belonging to the “Jewish quarter” were changed several times, each time causing part of the Jewish population to move. In November 1941, Ukrainians murdered all the Jews in the neighboring village of Riczka, but until Passover in early April 1942, there were no further Aktions in Kosów.³

On April 24, 1942, another Aktion took place. Around 1,000 Jews were resettled to Kołomyja. The Germans and local Ukrainians robbed many of them on the way. Some of them managed to return (illegally) to Kosów in May and June of 1942.⁴ According to one source, after this Aktion a “ghetto” was established in Kosów for the remaining 1,200 Jews (including their families) who worked for the Wehrmacht or other

German offices. This number had been increased with the aid of bribes to the Germans. About 200 of the men permitted to remain suddenly acquired “wives,” through fictitious marriages performed by Rabbi Mosche Schizel, Reb Schimschon, and Jehoschua Gertner, thereby enabling these women to remain in Kosów. Jews were required to wear white armbands (signifying their work status) and were permitted to leave the ghetto only in groups, to go to their workplaces outside. There was a marketplace near the ghetto, but sneaking out to visit the market was punishable by death. As a result, there was hunger in the ghetto, and a number of people died of starvation.⁵

On September 7, 1942, under the pretext of a registration, the Jews were gathered in the sports stadium. After 56 artisans were selected out of the group, the remaining 500 people were sent off to prison. Some who were found in hiding were shot on the spot. On the very same day, Jews from the settlement of Kutu were also brought into Kosów.⁶ On September 8, 1942, all the Jews of Kosów and those from Kutu (some 1,500 in total) were transported to Kołomyja. From there, they were deported along with Jews from other nearby settlements to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁷

After this Aktion, a few hundred Jews remained illegally in Kosów as refugees in hiding. The Jewish artisans were resettled into a special prison, which was guarded by Ukrainian policemen. These Jews were used to sort out the remaining Jewish property from the vacated Jewish houses. At the end of September 1942, some of the Jews in hiding were offered an amnesty if they resettled to Kołomyja. However, this was only a ruse, and they were all killed shortly afterwards. In October the municipality began to demolish the Jewish houses. By the end of October 1942, only about 240 Jews remained in Kosów, 40 of them legally.⁸ The Security Police carried out the last “cleansing Aktion” on October 31 and November 1, 1942. Some of the Jews were shot on the spot, while the others were taken to Kołomyja and shot there.⁹

In total, more than 100 Jews managed to survive from Kosów. A few Jews managed to hide with the aid of sympathetic local inhabitants, including Kataryna Kalel, Lopatynski, Lukaniak, and Husatynski. Other survivors made their way across the border into Romania. The Red Army recaptured the area in September 1944.¹⁰

SOURCES The following publications contain information regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Kosów: E. Kresel, ed., *Sefer Kosow: Galicia ba-mizrah* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Kosow and Vicinity in Israel, 1964); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 481–486; and D. Gertner and J. Gertner, *Home Is No More: The Destruction of Kosow and Zabie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2000).

Documents dealing with the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Kosów can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/134, 2186, 4929, and 4930); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 277/60); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-11); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/134, testimony of J. Gertner. According to another source, 15 Jews were arrested at about this time and were never heard of again; see 301/2186, testimony of Ire Sztajgman.

2. Gertner and Gertner, *Home Is No More*, pp. 79–98; AŽIH, 301/134 and 301/4930, testimony of Markus Engler; Verdict of the regional court (Landgericht) in Darmstadt on July 28, 1967, in the criminal case against Haertel and others, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 26 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2001), Lfd. Nr. 657, pp. 434–436. See also BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 277/60, concluding report, June 17, 1963. According to another source, as many as 2,700 Jews were shot; see GARF, 7021-73-11, p. 108.

3. AŽIH, 301/4930.

4. Ibid., 301/134.

5. Ibid., 301/2186; this source explicitly mentions a ghetto in Kosów but does not mention any physical barrier. See also 301/4930; Gertner and Gertner, *Home Is No More*, pp. 108–112.

6. On the fate of the Jews in Kutu during the Holocaust, see Martin Rudner, *Kutu: Echoes of a Vanished Heritage* (Ottawa: M. Rudner, 1993).

7. AŽIH, 301/134. See also Bericht des Kompanieführers 7./Polizeiregiment 24, Wessermann, an den Kommandeur der Ordnungspolizei Galizien: “Umsiedlungsaktion” in Ostgalizien, September 14, 1942, published in Peter Long-erich and Dieter Pohl, eds., *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden: Eine umfassende Dokumentation des Holocaust 1941–1945* (Munich: Piper, 1989), pp. 216–221.

8. Gertner and Gertner, *Home Is No More*, p. 145.

9. AŽIH, 301/134. See also Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungs-initiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), pp. 248–249.

10. AŽIH, 301/4930; Gertner and Gertner, *Home Is No More*, p. 146.

KOZOWA

Pre-1939: Kozowa, town, Brzeżany powiat, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kozova, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kozowa, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Kozova, raion center, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Kozowa is located 34 kilometers (21 miles) southwest of Tarnopol. According to the census of 1931, 1,570 Jews lived in Kozowa. On the eve of World War II, the town had about 1,600 Jews. In the fall of 1939, many refugees from western Poland arrived in the town, so the number of Jews increased considerably.

The town was occupied by German troops on July 4, 1941. Until August 1941, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. On July 5, the Ukrainians started to assign Jews to forced labor, which included cleaning toilets and other degrading work. The same day, a group of Ukrainians killed four Jews who had been Komsomol members under the Soviets.¹

In the summer of 1941, the Jews were subjected to a number of antisemitic measures. Jews were forbidden to walk on the pavements or buy food from non-Jews. The numerous Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) beat and humiliated the Jews on a daily basis. To restore order, the Jews bribed the Ukrainian leaders and provided a quota of Jewish forced laborers daily. The laborers performed menial tasks for the Germans based in Kozowa and were used for cleaning the streets, construction work, and other tasks.²

In August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Kozowa was incorporated into Kreis Brzezany, within Distrikt Galizien. The position of Kreishauptmann in Kreis Brzezany was occupied first by Hans-Adolf Asbach (from November 1941 until the start of 1943) and then by Dr. Werner Becker.

In Kozowa a squad of German Gendarmerie took over responsibility for the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police. At this time the number of Ukrainian policemen was reduced; some of them were disarmed. The Jews were instructed to form a Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Dr. Izydor Sobel as its head. At its first meeting the Judenrat established the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), headed by Kopel, which initially had 20 members. Kopel was later replaced by the engineer, Gelb, who was a refugee.

German officials made demands for monetary contributions and also large quantities of tea, coffee, pepper, and other items to be handed over at short notice. According to the survivor Jeanne Fischer, the Judenrat made every effort to accommodate the German demands for money, jewels, furs, and even people. At first the Jews thought that if they gave the Germans all their possessions, they might be safe.³

On August 20, 1941, Jews were ordered to wear white arm-bands bearing a blue Star of David. At the same time Jews were forbidden to leave the town without a special permit.

In early October 1941, during the week of Yom Kippur, 10 German Gestapo men arrived in Kozowa and conducted a selection. The craftsmen were sent to one side, and then 300 Jews were taken away on trucks. They were shot in the forest near the village of Komarówka (about 6 kilometers [4 miles] west of Kozowa).⁴ Shortly after this Aktion, the German authorities started to send Jews away to forced labor camps. In 1941–1942, altogether more than 500 young Jews from Kozowa were sent to various camps, including those in Zborów, Hłuboczek, Jagielnica, Jezierzany, Kamionki, Borki Wielkie, and Tarnopol. Conditions in the camps were very bad, but the Jews of Kozowa sent some extra food to help those sent there. Some impoverished Jewish refugees were paid to go to the camps in place of local Jews from Kozowa.

In March 1942, 2,595 Jews were living in Kozowa. By April, after many of the Jews from nearby villages were moved to Kozowa, the Jewish population had increased to 2,853; it decreased, however, to 2,691 in June 1942, probably following further transports to labor camps.⁵ In the summer of 1941–1942, there was a shortage of food, and 1 or 2 Jews died every day of hunger in Kozowa.

On September 21, 1942, the German authorities carried out a deportation Aktion in the town. On that day the Jewish Police, acting on orders from the German Security Police (Sipo), rounded up some 500 people, mostly the elderly, women, and children, who were transported to Brzezany, and from there, together with other Jews, they were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Then on November 8, 1942, the Sipo based in Tarnopol, headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Herman Müller, conducted a second Aktion in Kozowa in which around 1,000 Jews were deported by train to Bełżec. About 200 of these Jews managed to jump from the trains, and most of these escapees returned to Kozowa.⁶

Kozowa is not mentioned in the order of the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger, issued on November 11, 1942, on the establishment of ghettos in Distrikt Galizien. However, at the local level, the Kreishauptmann in Brzezany decided to permit Jews to continue residing in Kozowa, and in late November 1942, a ghetto was established there. Some of the Jews in Kozowa had to move into the ghetto from outside, leaving behind most of their possessions.⁷

Around this time, another 400 or so Jews were brought in from nearby villages, including 200 from the village of Kozłów, as Jews were now only permitted to reside in certain designated locations. This raised the number of Jews in the ghetto to almost 2,000. The ghetto was located on two sides of the market square and in the alleys leading onto it. It was not enclosed, but signs reading “Jüdischer Wohnbezirk” were put up around its borders, and the houses were also marked with the Star of David. In December 1942, another 400 Jews were brought into the ghetto from Brzezany. Due to the intense overcrowding, with about 8 to 10 people sharing a small house, an outbreak of typhus soon resulted, which was hard to contain, as there were no doctors and no medicine. In December 1942, the Gestapo shot 18 Jews sick with typhus. Altogether in the winter of 1942–1943, around 300 Jews died of the disease.⁸

In the spring and early summer of 1943, the Sipo from Tarnopol, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, conducted three Aktions against the Kozowa ghetto. On April 9, a Sipo detachment under Müller’s command shot 100 Jews at the Jewish cemetery. Then on April 17, 60 SS men and 80 Ukrainian policemen surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were dragged out of their hiding places and were assembled on the market square, where a selection was conducted. Altogether more than 1,000 Jews were then led, in rows 4 abreast, to the execution site just outside the town. According to Jakob Milder’s testimony, Rabbi Mendele tried to console the Jews on the way, and the younger ones went to their deaths singing the “Hatikvah” (a Zionist song). The pits were dug by 60 Jews being told they would be sent to a labor camp, but all were shot when the work was done. The Jews were forced to stand on a plank over the pits to be shot, and many fell in only wounded. SS-Sturmbannführer Müller personally shot many Jews with his revolver.⁹

After this Aktion, around 1,000 Jews remained, and the area of the ghetto was reduced to just one side of the market

square. Some Jews in the ghetto planned to escape to the forests, and a few obtained weapons, but there was little time to organize resistance before the next Aktion. Many sought shelter with peasants in the surrounding area or prepared bunkers in the forest, but some were betrayed or killed by those they turned to for help. In early June, Kreishauptmann Becker visited Kozowa, and word went around that the town would soon be made “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*).

On June 12, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. They rounded up and killed the 400 Jews they found in the ghetto, as some 600 had managed to escape. Most of the escapees were subsequently captured and killed by the Germans or Ukrainian partisans, and a few died of hunger and cold.¹⁰ In total, more than 4,500 Jews from the former Kozova raion were murdered. Some 2,500 Jews were shot, and around 1,500 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Several hundred more Jews were sent to forced labor camps, where most died from the severe conditions or were murdered, and hundreds more died of starvation and disease in and around Kozowa.¹¹

When the Red Army drove the Germans from the area in July 1944, only around 80 Jews from Kozowa remained alive; most of them left for Poland and then the West soon after the end of the war.

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jewish population of Kozowa during the Holocaust include the following: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 457–459; and Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 2. The Kozowa ghetto is also mentioned in Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); and *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 165.

Documents and testimonies describing the fate of the Jews of Kozowa can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR 797-66); DATO (R 274-2-102a, p. 309); GARF (7021-75-487); VHF (e.g., # 340, 3006, 3068, 6268); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1687, M-1/E/1388).

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NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/1388, testimony of Jakob Mildniener.
2. Ibid.
3. VHF, # 6268, testimony of Jeanne Fischer.
4. YVA, M-1/E/1388. GARF, 7021-75-487, p. 4, testimony of J.S. Volf, mentions an earlier killing of 270 Jews in August 1941.
5. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja.”
6. YVA, M-1/E/1388.
7. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942. See

also Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung*, p. 244, citing BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR 797/66; Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 458; VHF, # 6268.

8. YVA, M-1/E/1388.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. According to the materials of the ChGK (GARF, 7021-75-487, pp. 1, 1a), the then-Kozova raion suffered the loss of about 9,500 Jews: 5,855 Jews were shot, 1,600 Jews were deported to Bełżec, and 2,000 Jews were sent to labor camps. In our opinion, these figures are considerably exaggerated (by some 5,000 victims).

LUBACZÓW

Pre-1939: Lubaczów, town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Lubachev, raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Lubaczow, Kreis Rawa Ruska, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1998: Lubaczów, powiat center, województwo podkarpackie, Poland

Lubaczów is located 80 kilometers (50 miles) west-northwest of Lwów. In 1931, the Jewish population of the town was 2,040.

Following a brief but violent German occupation in September 1939 and a longer period of Soviet rule, the Germans reoccupied Lubaczów on June 25, 1941. At first the town was run by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur). In August 1941, however, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Lubaczów was incorporated into Kreis Rawa Ruska, within Distrikt Galizien. An outpost of the Criminal Police (Kripo), which reported to the Criminal Police headquarters in Rawa Ruska, as well as a post of the German Gendarmerie and a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police were based in Lubaczów. The Aktions against the Jewish population in Lubaczów were organized and carried



The main synagogue in Lubaczów, 1938.
USHMM WS #19726, COURTESY OF ANNA AND JOSHUA HEILMAN

out by the Security Police outpost in Sokal, headed in 1941–1942 by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk.

The day after their arrival, the Germans ordered all Jews to assemble in the marketplace in the early hours of the morning. Nobody was excluded; men, women, children, and even the sick and elderly were chased to the market, where the Germans announced a series of anti-Jewish restrictions. Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing armbands and to mark their homes and businesses with the Star of David; they were instructed to avoid any contact with the non-Jewish population, and they were forbidden to leave the town limits on pain of death.

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Lubaczów. Its main tasks were to provide the Germans with quotas of workers for all kinds of hard labor and to collect the contributions that they frequently demanded. In August 1941, the Germans arrested 30 Jewish intellectuals in Lubaczów. A contribution of valuables and precious materials had to be delivered within 36 hours if their lives were to be spared. The Judenrat managed to collect and pay the requested amount in time. Nevertheless, the Germans killed all the hostages, allegedly because they had been hiding weapons.¹ In December 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews to surrender any fur items, conducting extensive searches for concealed items for several weeks.² In March 1942, 100 Gypsies and 7 Jews were killed in the nearby Bałaj Forest.³ From this time on, train transports of Jews headed to the Bełżec extermination camp began to pass regularly through the town. The Jews of Lubaczów gradually became aware of their intended fate.

In the spring of 1942, a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), headed by Majer Schnitzer, was established in Lubaczów. Immediately the JSS had to face the needs of a community of 2,270 people, most of whom were severely impoverished. Although no Jewish residential area was created during the early stages of the occupation, most Jewish homes had been located in a single area, which had suffered severe damage during the fighting in June 1941. The shortage of housing led to severe overcrowding. Soon the JSS set up an isolation hospital to deal with epidemics and provided some form of welfare aid for about 40 percent of the Jewish population. A public kitchen, however, which had been run by the Judenrat up until April 1942, had to be closed, owing to lack of funding.⁴ In May 1942, the Jewish population increased by some 2,000, when Jews from 20 nearby villages were moved into the town.

On October 8, 1942, the Germans announced the establishment of an open ghetto in the eastern part of the market square and on Piłsudski Street by October 10. It was to contain more than 3,000 Jews in a small group of houses already densely populated by Jews. Many Jews had to relocate and were able to take with them only a small portion of their possessions.⁵ One inhabitant of the ghetto wrote at this time that even if they survived the next transport, “it would be impossible for us to exist much longer, because all our belongings are gone and sooner or later we will die from hunger.” Non-Jewish acquaintances had refused to hide this family because of the high risks involved.⁶

Shortly after the establishment of the ghetto, the Germans conducted an Aktion during which about 2,000 people were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. At the beginning of December 1942, in accordance with the order issued by SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger on November 10, the Lubaczów ghetto was officially recognized as one of the few remaining places in Distrikt Galizien where Jews could reside, and it then was enclosed.⁷ As a result, before the end of November 1942, nearly 2,000 Jews from Oleszyce arrived in Lubaczów to beat the deadline. According to one source, about 1,000 of these Jews were deported to Bełżec from Lubaczów before the end of November. At the end of 1942, hundreds of Gypsies were brought to Lubaczów. Together with a number of Jewish workers whose task was to dig a mass grave, the Gypsies were taken to a nearby forest and murdered.⁸

The enclosed ghetto existed less than two months. In December, there was a severe epidemic of typhus, with about 25 Jews dying per day. The Germans viewed the epidemic as a reason to liquidate the ghetto. On January 5, the Germans collected all finished and unfinished items from the Jewish tailors and shoemakers, thus starting rumors of an impending Aktion and prompting several hundred Jews to flee. On the next day, the Jews were driven into the market square, where many were shot indiscriminately.⁹ On January 8, 1943, the Security Police, assisted by Ukrainian policemen, conducted another Aktion. They shot hundreds of sick and elderly Jews in the town, burying them in the Jewish cemetery.¹⁰ According to one survivor account, the remaining 2,000 Jews were deported to the Sobibór extermination camp; local Polish sources, however, indicate that more than 2,000 Jews, apparently brought from the Lubaczów ghetto, were shot by the Gestapo from Rawa Ruska and the Ukrainian policemen in defensive trenches dug by the Soviets in 1940, about 600 meters (1,969 feet) south of the village of Hryńków.¹¹ Many of those who escaped from the ghetto found shelter in Oleszyce. Informed of this, the Security Police descended on the town and shot 174 Jews uncovered there on January 14, 1943. Another group was shot there on February 13, 1943.

On July 21, 1944, the Red Army drove the Germans from Lubaczów. In the ensuing weeks, only 19 Jews who had survived the German occupation returned. Of those who survived, 1 had lost his foot to frostbite, and another had hidden hunched up in a tiny attic for almost two years.¹²

SOURCES Further information on the history and fate of the Jewish population of Lubaczów can be found in the following publications: Maurie Hoffman, *Keep Yelling: A Survivor's Testimony* (Richmond, Victoria, Australia: Spectrum Publications, 1995); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 294–295; Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); and *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo przemyskie* (Warsaw: Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 1985), pp. 56–58.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish community in Lubaczów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1132 and 1174; 211/642); DALO; IPN; USHMM (RG-15.019M reels 10 and 17; and Acc.1997.A.0124 [JSS], reel 32, 211/642); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Hoffman, *Keep Yelling*, pp. 29–33; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 10; VHF, # 27279, testimony of J. Remer.
2. AŻIH, 301/1174, testimony of F. Kamer.
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 10.
4. Ibid., Acc.1997.A.0124 (JSS), reel 32, 211/642.
5. Hoffman, *Keep Yelling*, p. 83; AŻIH, 301/1174. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, p. 107, dates the establishment of the ghetto in September 1942.
6. Norman Salsitz, with Stanley Kaish, *Three Homelands: Memories of a Jewish Life in Poland, Israel, and America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2002), pp. 126–127, letter from an inmate of the Lubaczów ghetto, dated October 10, 1942.
7. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
8. *Rejestr miejsc i faktów*, pp. 57–58; AŻIH, 301/1174.
9. AŻIH, 301/1174, and 301/1132, testimony of J. Herzig.
10. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, p. 109; this protocol prepared in Lubaczów on September 18, 1945, indicates that around 950 Jews were buried in two mass graves in the Jewish cemetery but dates the Aktion (erroneously) in January 1942.
11. AŻIH, 301/1174, indicates that the Jews were sent to Sobibór, as the camp in Bełżec had already been closed down by this time. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 17, p. 108; this protocol prepared in Lubaczów on September 19, 1945, mentions two mass graves at this site, one holding 1,750 Jews and the other 2,600, both containing the bodies of Jews from the Lubaczów ghetto.
12. Hoffman, *Keep Yelling*, pp. 194–195.

LWÓW

Pre-1939: Lwów, city, powiat and województwo center, Poland; 1939–1941: L'vov, raion and oblast' center, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Lemberg, center of Kreis Lemberg-Land and Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: L'viv, oblast' center, Ukraine

Lwów is located about 341 kilometers (212 miles) southeast of Warsaw. On the eve of war in 1939, there were 109,500 Jews living in the city, comprising one third of the total population.

The Soviet Union occupied Lwów from September 1939 to June 1941. Tens of thousands of Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland arrived in Lwów in late 1939. By January 1940, the urban Jewish population had reached about 180,000; then it declined owing to the deportation of many refugees to eastern regions of the Soviet Union. Approximately 150,000 Jews were living in the city just prior to its capture by the Ger-



German police publicly humiliate Jews on Lacki Street in Lwów, 1941.
USHMM WS #73218, COURTESY OF IPN

mans in late June 1941, and only an estimated 1 percent survived the German occupation, either within the city or in the surrounding countryside. After the Soviets returned in 1944, the city remained in the Soviet Union until 1991. Present-day Lwów (Ukrainian L'viv) is the largest city in western Ukraine.

The German 1st Mountain Division and the Nachtigall Battalion of Ukrainian nationalist legionnaires entered Lwów on June 30, 1941. The Soviet security forces (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, NKVD) murdered several thousand prisoners before evacuating the city, and the Jews were blamed for this atrocity as well as for collaboration with the Soviets in general.¹ Einsatzgruppe C and a hastily mustered local Ukrainian militia incited a pogrom during which somewhere between 2,000 and 5,000 Jews were murdered. Einsatzgruppe C, with assistance from a Ukrainian police force drawn from the militia, shot an additional 2,500 to 3,000 Jewish men just after the end of the pogrom in the first days of July.²

In late July 1941, a pogrom known as the “Petliura Days” broke out, in connection with the fifteenth anniversary of the death of Simon Petliura, a Ukrainian leader who was assassinated in Paris in 1926 by a Jewish anarchist. Over 1,000 Jews were killed, again with heavy involvement of the Ukrainian militia. One day after this pogrom, the German authorities began extorting a large contribution from Lwów's Jews. Additional smaller-scale Aktions took place throughout the summer. The SS conducted mass executions in the woods to the east of Łyczakowska Street, in the Lesienice Forest to the west, or in the so-called Sands (Piaski) near the Janowska Street cemetery.

In September 1941, discussions concerning the establishment of a ghetto began between the Generalgouverneur Hans

Frank, the governor of Distrikt Galizien, Karl Lasch, and Lwów mayor Hans Kujath. By the end of October, the decision to proceed with the ghetto was justified on the basis of Lwów's strategic and ideological importance as a gateway to the east. Between November 12 and December 15, 1941, Jews were required to relocate to the specific areas that would belong to the ghetto, while Poles and Ukrainians were required to leave those areas. Jews were not allowed to take most of their belongings, while non-Jews were. The ghetto was based in the Zamarstynów and Kleparów districts, which already had large Jewish populations. The German authorities ordered about 80,000 Jews to move into the area designated for the ghetto, where about 25,000 were already living. This meant that about one third of Lwów's inhabitants were to leave their residences. Suspended in December, when 20,000 Jews had not yet moved into the ghetto, this first move towards ghettoization was accompanied by systematic looting of the victims, who had to pass through designated bottlenecks into the ghetto. Several thousand of them were murdered systematically, including, for the first time in Lwów, women and children.

According to Mauricy Allerhand, this first wave of dislocation led to "unheard-of exploitation by the . . . Ukrainian and, in exceptional cases, also the Polish population." Non-Jews who obtained an official "order" for an apartment to be vacated by Jews extorted money for letting them take their movable property with them. Another scam was to use such an order to demand payment for not having it enforced. Jews were often forced to vacate their apartments within as little as 15 to 30 minutes, causing them to lose most of their movable property.³

The ghetto was not sealed until November 1942, significantly later than originally planned. German reports attribute the delay to outbreaks of typhus and to fear that resettlements would spread the disease to the non-Jewish population. Jewish leaders also appealed for a delay.⁴

The resettlement hiatus ended with the first large-scale deportation from Lwów, in March 1942. Over 15,000 Jews

were taken to the Bełżec extermination camp northwest of Lwów. In May 1942, the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Distrikt Galizien, Friedrich Katzmann, took over responsibility for Jewish affairs. Since Katzmann had already become heavily involved in deportations, civilian officials were familiar with his frequent demands for harsher measures against the Jews. In Lwów, the German authorities enforced an "incremental ghettoization" in May 1942 by demanding the wearing of armbands and the possession of work certificates, without which Jews could not move about on Lwów's streets.

The Security Police organized a second major Aktion in August 1942, which claimed about 42,000 Jewish lives within two weeks. The Jews were murdered either within the city, at Bełżec, or in the SS-run Janowska Street forced labor camp on the northwestern edge of the city. Before the Aktion, there were around 90,000 Jews still alive in Lwów, but afterwards the German authorities estimated that only about 50,000 remained, and Katzmann ordered all Jews still outside the ghetto to enter it immediately. He posted public notices announcing the "establishment of a closed Jewish residential district" on August 21, before the August Aktion was completed. The Jews were given until September 7 to move into the ghetto, under the direction of the Jewish Council (Judenrat).⁵ However, the erection of the wooden fence continued into the fall, and it was not until November 10, 1942, that Katzmann declared the ghetto closed. On September 1, 1942, however, while the Jews were being driven into the ghetto, SS-Sturmbannführer Erich Engels publicly hanged the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Landesberg, and 10 Judenrat officials in reprisal for the killing of a Security Police officer. Thereafter the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was in control of the reconstituted Judenrat.

The boundaries of the ghetto were formed by the Pełtew River to the north, Kleparowska Street to the east, Zamarstynów Street to the west, and Rappaport and Szpitalna Streets to the south. Jewish, Ukrainian, and German police units guarded the ghetto gates. The main gate stood where Pełtewna Street met the southern edge of the ghetto.

The Lwów Judenrat was established in late July 1941.⁶ Dr. Józef Parnas, a lawyer, was the first of four Judenrat chairmen, all of whom were either murdered by the Germans or died of illness. He was succeeded by Drs. Adolf Rotfeld, Henryk Landesberg, and Eduard Ebersohn. The Judenrat's first community publication outlined 23 departments in various locations throughout the city. These offices administered the distribution of rations, housing, and health care and also bore responsibility for filling labor quotas and meeting German demands for "contributions." A ban on schooling, public worship, and other cultural activities severely restricted the activities of the educational and cultural divisions, although teaching and worship continued secretly, and underground publications were produced.⁷

In November 1941, the Jewish Police was established in connection with the first resettlements into the ghetto. Witnesses suggest that the number of Jewish Police may have reached 750 in the spring of 1942.⁸ Originally seen by the Jewish community as members of a militia to help the Judenrat



Jews gather at an outdoor market in the Lwów ghetto, 1941–1942.
USHMM WS #61143, #COURTESY OF IPN

maintain order and sanitation in the ghetto, the policemen gained a tarnished reputation as collaborators, implementing the orders of the Gestapo. In their primary task of filling labor and deportation quotas, they had the power to either send people to their deaths or give them a momentary reprieve (for which policemen occasionally took bribes). Witnesses attest to at least one attempt within the Jewish Police to organize a resistance group.

Among non-Jewish local civilians, Ukrainians received higher-status work opportunities than Poles. This Nazi racial hierarchy provided the foundation for the Germans' "divide and rule" approach to occupation. Thus, while the majority of the Criminal Police were Poles under the command of Captain Jan Balicki, a separate Ukrainian police division was established under Major Volodymyr Pitulej. The Ukrainian Auxiliary Police played a key role in carrying out anti-Jewish measures, including the killing and deportation Aktions.⁹

Jews worked in numerous private firms that were run by either local civilians or Germans and were located outside the ghetto, as well as for the German army and the Ostbahn railway company. Emphasis lay on enterprises that contributed to the war effort, such as clothes manufacturing and construction. The largest private German firm belonged to a Berlin industrialist, Schwarz, who employed about 3,000 Jews. Shortly before the ghetto was closed, approximately 10,000 Jews from Lwów were working for the Wehrmacht.¹⁰ The SS ran two forced labor camps: the very large camp on Janowska Street and a smaller camp on Czwartaków Street. The Organisation Todt ran the comparatively small Persenkowka camp.

The German labor office (Arbeitsamt), led by Richard Nitsche, conducted a series of registrations to review the employment status and productivity of Jewish workers. A missing work permit was a death sentence. On the other hand, the Lwów labor office and the armaments command (Rüstungskommando) were aware that the German war effort faced an increasing shortage of non-Jewish workers who were proficient and available to replace Jewish workers and that deportations of Polish and Ukrainian workers to the Reich exacerbated these shortages.¹¹ However, Jewish labor restrictions tightened on SSPF Katzmann's command.

With the exception of organized resistance during the ghetto's liquidation, acts of resistance in the Lwów ghetto occurred on an individual and small-group basis. The relatively late development of organized resistance in Lwów can be attributed to two main factors: the weakening of the Jewish community during the 1939–1941 Soviet occupation and the persistence of antisemitism within the extremist wings of the Ukrainian and Polish nationalist movements. Of the Polish and Ukrainian underground organizations, Żegota, the Polish Council for Aid to Jews, gave the most assistance to Lwów's Jews. The Lwów branch of Żegota began its work in late 1942.¹²

Pistols and rifles could be procured at a price from Italian and Hungarian soldiers and from willing locals. In late 1942, a group of young Judenrat officials organized underground military training courses but did not create a military detach-

ment. Reprisals followed any act of violence towards a German official.

Individuals attempted to escape deportation by jumping from the trains into the forest, where their lives depended on finding a partisan unit or a peasant who would protect them. Guards attempted to put an end to this practice by ordering the deportees to strip before leaving on the transport. The so-called jumpers (*shpringer*) continued to leap to at least momentary freedom. Some joined work detachments by passing as Poles. Other jumpers tried to escape multiple times, only to return to the ghetto after failing to find help.

Resisters included Jews who hid and Poles and Ukrainians who risked their lives to protect them.¹³ Survivors recall occasions during Aktions when a Polish or Ukrainian neighbor deliberately told policemen that no Jews remained in the apartment building. Some survivors hid for longer periods in the city, while others went to the countryside and hid in peasants' homes. The head of the Greek-Catholic Church, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, reported the mass murder of Jews to the Vatican, spoke out against Ukrainian involvement, and led an operation hiding about 150 Jews. Eleven Roman-Catholic monasteries in Lwów are known to have sheltered Jewish children. Another form of resistance was the practice of passing as an Aryan. As the liquidation of the ghetto drew near, and as local Poles and Ukrainians foresaw Germany's ultimate defeat, more local non-Jews helped the few remaining Jews by supplying them with false papers or by hiding them. On the whole, however, assistance to Jews remained an exception among the non-Jewish population.

Deportations from the ghetto continued during the winter of 1942–1943. In January 1943, according to official German figures, 24,000 Jews were still alive inside the ghetto, though their real number was probably somewhat higher. After another mass-shooting Aktion, killing at least 10,000 of the ghetto's inhabitants, the German administration transformed the ghetto into a work camp (known as the *Judenlager*, or *Julag*). The Judenrat was dissolved and its members mostly killed, with some being incarcerated in the Janowska Street labor camp. SS-Hauptsturmführer Josef Grzymek oversaw the Julag from mid-February 1943 until its liquidation in June 1943. A commander known for his extreme cruelty, Grzymek made daily personal inspections of the Julag. He also ordered orchestra performances, the single permitted "cultural" activity.

By May 1943, after continual selections and killings, the Julag (ghetto remnant) had probably more than the 12,000 registered inhabitants. It was liquidated by German and Ukrainian police in June 1943. Some Jews escaped into the sewers, while others fired guns and threw grenades from bunkers. Many committed suicide. Several German policemen were killed. After being driven out of the bunkers by fire, the remaining Jews were taken to the Janowska Street labor camp, and after selections, many were shot. Some victims may have been deported to Sobibór. In November 1943, about 3,000 remaining inmates of the Janowska Street labor camp were killed, together with 2,000 Jewish forced laborers

for the Ostbahn. The camp itself, now temporarily inhabited by several hundred non-Jewish inmates, continued to exist.

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Lwów ghetto and the fate of Lwów's Jews during the Holocaust include the following: Philip Friedman, "The Destruction of the Jews of Lwów," in Ada June Friedman, ed., *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), pp. 244–321; and Eliakhu Iones, *Evrei L'vova v gody vtoroi mirovoi voyny i katastrofy evropeiskogo evreistva 1939–1944*, ed. Svetlana Shenbrunn (Moscow: Rossiiskaia biblioteka Kholokosta, 1999). Published memoirs include those by Jacob Gerstenfeld-Maltiel, *My Private War: One Man's Struggle to Survive the Soviets and the Nazis* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1993); Rabbi David Kahane (who survived with help from contacts of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi), *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, trans. Jerzy Michalowicz (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990); and Joachim Schoenfeld, *Holocaust Memoirs: Jews in the Lwów Ghetto, the Janowski Concentration Camp, and as Deportees in Siberia* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1985).

Documentation on the destruction of Lwów Jewry during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AAN (Records of the Lwów mayor's office, Collection 540); AŻIH (e.g., Collections 211, 229, and 301); BA-BL (R 58); BA-L; BA-MA (RH 28-1, RH 53-23, RW 23); DALO (R 12, R 31, R 35, R 37, and R 2042); GARF; IPN; USHMM (e.g., RG-15.069M, RG-15.070M, RG-31.003M, Acc.1995.A.1086); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-MA, RH 28-1/20 and RH 28-1/266 (1. Gebirgsdivision).
2. BA-BL, R 58/214, p. 191, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941.
3. USHMM, RG-15.069M (AŻIH), 229/3, pp. 1 ff., 229/22, p. 3, and 229/53.
4. BA-MA, RH 53-23/33 through RH 53-23/38 (Oberfeldkommandantur 365, monthly reports of the Chief Medical Officer); DALO, R 2042-1-55 (Aktenvermerk, January 10, 1942, regarding postponement of resettlements).
5. Anordnung über die Bildung eines geschlossenen jüdischen Wohnbezirks in der Stadt Lemberg, gez. Katzmann, Lemberg, August 21, 1942, reproduced in Schoenfeld, *Holocaust Memoirs*, after p. 112.
6. DALO, R 31-1-1 (Mayoral decree, July 27, 1941).
7. Ibid., R 35-12-50 (Publication of the Judenrat, January 1, 1942); Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, pp. 13–25.
8. Iones, *Evrei L'vova*, pp. 134, 140.
9. For detailed Ukrainian police reports of involvement in Aktions, see USHMM, Acc.1995.A.1086, reels 2 and 3.
10. BA-MA, RH 53-23/38 (Oberfeldkommandantur 365, September 1942).
11. USHMM, RG-31.003M, reel 1 (requests from private enterprises for Jewish labor); BA-MA, RH 23/13 (Rüstungskommando Lemberg), and RH 53-23/38-39 (Oberfeldkommandantur 365).
12. For Żegota reports from Lwów, see USHMM, RG-15.070M, reel 4.
13. For trials and death sentences of local civilians who hid Jews, see *ibid.*, Acc.1995.A.1086, reel 29.

MIKOŁAJÓW

Pre-1939: Mikołajów (Mikołajów nad Dniestrem), town, Żydaczów powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Nikolaev, raion center, Drogobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Mikołajów, Kreis Stryj, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Mykolaiv, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Mikołajów is located approximately 38 kilometers (24 miles) south-southwest of Lwów. According to the census of 1931, 559 Jews were living in the town.¹ In mid-1941, it is estimated that the Jewish population may have exceeded 600.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 2, 1941. Initially a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town, but in August 1941 a German civil administration took over. Mikołajów became part of Kreis Stryj, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann from 1941 to 1944 was Regierungsrat Dr. Wiktor von Dewitz.

In Mikołajów itself, there was an outpost of the German Gendarmerie that reported to the Gendarmerie office in Stryj. The local Gendarmerie post was also responsible for a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). These forces took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In the summer of 1941, on the orders of the occupation authorities, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, headed by a lawyer named Salcberg. At the same time, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was created to act as the executive arm of the Judenrat. The Jews were required to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David and were registered. Much of the Jews' property was confiscated, especially any valuable items, and the Jews had to meet German demands for large contributions. In addition, Jews had to perform various kinds of forced labor, including work in the stone quarries.

In August or September 1941, groups of Jewish men were rounded up and sent to the Carpathian forests for hard labor, where they suffered from severe hunger. A few young men managed to escape from the camp. Jewish craftsmen in Mikołajów were exempted from forced labor, as they were working directly for the Germans.

On June 10, 1942, 614 Jews were registered in Mikołajów. Of these people, 305 were used in various kinds of labor.² In early September 1942, a so-called deportation Aktion was conducted in the town. In its course, 500 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp, and several dozen Jews were killed on the spot.³

On October 7, 1942, the Kreishauptmann ordered the concentration of all remaining Jews of the Kreis in the Stryj ghetto by the end of the month. Exceptions were only granted for Jewish doctors and pharmacists, waste collectors working for the Kremin Company, and Jews working for the local council. However, these specialist Jews who were to remain in some locations after the end of October were "under all circumstances to be housed in barracks."⁴

After the September deportation Aktion, a Jewish work group of approximately 100 people remained in Mikołajów, of which 57 were employed by the local council, and that probably included a few Jewish physicians, dentists, and a pharmacist. This entire group was contained within a small fenced area, which is described in some sources as a form of remnant ghetto.⁵ These Jews were shot in two Aktions on February 5 and June 12, 1943.⁶ In total, more than 200 Jews were shot in Mikołajów in 1942 and 1943.⁷

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Mikołajów can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 322–324. The existence of a ghetto in Mikołajów is mentioned in *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 73.

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews in Mikołajów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2574); DALO (R 1952-1-63); GARF (7021-58-22); TsDAHOU (57-4-235, p. 7); USHMM (RG-31.003M [DALO]); and YVA.

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystryktach Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 10.
2. DALO, R 1952-1-63, p. 36.
3. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 32. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 322–324, however, date the first deportation Aktion to Bełżec from Mikołajów in April 1942.
4. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 92, Runderlass Kreishauptmann Stryj an alle Vögte, October 7, 1942, as cited by Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 243; and Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 352.
5. DALO, R 1952-1-63, pp. 49ff., Landgemeinde Mikolajow, Verzeichnis ueber die in Mikolajow verbliebenen Arbeitsjuden, October 26, 1942; Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” p. 356; TsDAHOU, 57-4-235, p. 7.
6. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 32.
7. Ibid.

MIKULIŃCE

Pre-1939: Mikulińce, town, Tarnopol powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mikulintsy, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Mikulince, Kreis Tarnopol, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Mykulyntsi, Terebovlia raion, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Mikulińce is located 16 kilometers (10 miles) south of Tarnopol. According to the 1931 census, 1,770 Jews were living in

Mikulińce. Under Soviet rule in 1939–1941, the Jewish population increased to about 2,300, following the influx of Jewish refugees from western and central Poland, some of which were then deported to the Soviet interior.¹

German armed forces occupied Mikulińce on July 4, 1941. A German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) ran the town’s affairs until August 1941, when authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Mikulińce was incorporated into Kreis Tarnopol, within Distrikt Galizien. Gerhard Hager was appointed as Kreishauptmann in Tarnopol, a position he held until April 1942, when Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen succeeded him.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the region were organized and carried out primarily by members of the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnopol. The Sipo-Aussendienststelle was headed from the end of July to October 1941 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne; and from October 1941 until May 1943, by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller. In Mikulińce itself, a German Gendarmerie post and a unit of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) were established.

On the night of July 4, 1941, the first Jews were murdered in Mikulińce. On July 5, local Ukrainian residents and antisemites staged a pogrom in the town; 12 Jews were murdered, and many Jews were beaten and robbed. On July 6, Ukrainian antisemites attempted to organize a massacre of Jews who had been herded to the river to help remove the ruins of a bridge, but these plans were thwarted by the intervention of a German officer, who sent everyone home as it was getting dark. A short time later, a group of Jews was murdered by Ukrainian policemen and buried in a grave for livestock, which the Jews themselves had to dig. Additionally, 18 Jews, including professionals, wealthy businessmen, and former public officials, were shot for having allegedly collaborated with the Soviet authorities in 1939–1941.²

In the summer of 1941, the German authorities ordered the Jews to wear distinguishing armbands and to surrender all gold and any other valuables. A Judenrat was established, headed by the attorney Jagerndorf, which had to collect money from the Jews to pay contributions demanded by the Germans and also supply a daily quota of forced laborers.

At the end of 1941, the Jews were ordered to destroy the synagogue and demolish the tombstones in the cemetery, so the materials could be used for resurfacing the roads. In December 1941, the Jews were ordered to surrender all furs and other items of warm clothing for the German army. Then, in the spring, Jews were ordered to surrender all foodstuffs. German policemen arrived from Tarnopol at this time. They robbed Jewish homes and murdered Jews indiscriminately.

In the first half of 1942, groups of young and able-bodied Jews were rounded up with the aid of the Judenrat and sent to various forced labor camps, including those in Kamionki, Stupki, and Hłuboczek Wielki. Other Jews assigned to farms around Mikulińce received food for their work and were able to return home occasionally to visit their families.

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, a fenced ghetto was not erected in Mikulińce, but at some time before the summer of

1942, all the Jews had to move to a separate section of town (an open ghetto) near the Sart River. Jews were forbidden to leave the limits of the town without permission.

A large part of the remaining Jews were rounded up in a major Aktion at the end of August 1942, when around 1,200 Jews were deported from Mikulińce via Tarnopol to the Bełżec extermination camp. During the roundup, the German and Ukrainian police killed about 80 elderly and infirm Jews on the spot. They also searched all the Jewish houses, shooting any Jews they found in hiding or that tried to escape. The Jewish deportees were held under close guard for hours without food and water in extreme heat, at first on the market square, and then in the freight cars, before the train departed.³ The Aktion was carried out by detachments of the Security Police and the Schutzpolizei from Tarnopol, assisted by Ukrainian policemen. Local non-Jews plundered the empty houses.

Some Jews evaded the Aktion by hiding successfully or were absent working on farms when it took place. Therefore, approximately 600 Jews remained in Mikulińce, and the Germans then forced some of these Jews to work clearing out remaining property from the Jewish residences. In early October 1942, all the Jews in Mikulińce were ordered to leave the town by October 15, as it was to become “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*).⁴ It was intended that most of these people should move to the Tarnopol ghetto, but as this ghetto was overcrowded, some Jews resettled to other places where Jews were still permitted to reside, including Trembowla, Kopyczyńce, Kozowa, Zbaraż, and Podhajce.⁵ Following the transfer, the Jews from Mikulińce shared the fate of the other Jews in these ghettos.

A few Jews survived by hiding during the Aktions and finding shelter with non-Jewish inhabitants. The Polish farmer Karol Sygnatowicz gave shelter to two Jews from Mikulińce for a number of months after the liquidation of the Trembowla ghetto in the spring of 1943.⁶

SOURCES Information regarding the destruction of the Jewish population of Mikulińce can be found in the following publications: “Mikulince,” in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 324–326; and Hayim Preshel, ed., *Mikulince: Sefer yizkor* (Israel: Be-hots’at Irgun yots’e Mikulintsah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1985).

Documents describing the fate of the Jews of Mikulińce can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1421, 1422, 1423, 4212, 4841, 4842); DATO; GARF (7021-75-103); USHMM; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1421, testimony of Izydor Zeiler.

2. Ibid.; Nisia Schweizer-Horowitz, “My Town during the Second World War,” in Preshel, *Mikulince*. According to ChGK materials, around 200 Jews were shot in July 1941 for their collaboration with the Soviet authorities; see GARF, 7021-75-103, p. 8. This figure, however, seems too high.

3. AŻIH, 301/1421, dates the Aktion on August 29, 1942. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 634, p. 39, gives August 29 or August 30. See also Schweizer-Horowitz, “My Town during the Second World War”; AŻIH, 301/1423, testimony of Klara Szrenzel, 4212, 4841.

4. AŻIH, 301/1423.

5. Schweizer-Horowitz, “My Town during the Second World War”; AŻIH, 301/1421, 1423, 4841.

6. AŻIH, 301/1421, 1423.

MOŚCISKA

Pre-1939: Mościska, town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mostiska, raion center, Droboych oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Mosciska, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Mostys’ka, raion center, L’viv oblast’, Ukraine

Mościska is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) west of Lwów. According to the population census of December 9, 1931, there were 2,328 Jews living in Mościska.

In mid-September 1939, the Red Army occupied Mościska, which was soon annexed to the Soviet Union. Under Soviet rule, most businesses were nationalized and Jewish organizations closed down. In June 1941, there were about 3,500 Jews in the town. This figure includes a number of refugees who arrived from western and central Poland in the fall of 1939.¹

Forces of the German 17th Army occupied Mościska on June 23, 1941. In July 1941, a military commandant’s office (Ortskommandatur) administered the town. On August 1, 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Mościska was initially incorporated into Kreis Sadowa Wisznia, which, in April 1942, was included within Kreis Lemberg-Land. In 1942, Kreis Lemberg-Land was headed by Kreishauptmann Dr. Werner Becker. In Mościska itself, the Germans established a Gendarmerie post and a Ukrainian police force recruited from local inhabitants. The deportation and killing Aktions against the Jewish population were carried out by the Security Police from Lwów, with the assistance of the Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei).

Shortly after the start of the occupation, a wave of anti-semitism gripped the town. Local residents vented their fury in a pogrom during which many Jews were beaten and robbed and a number murdered.² In July 1941, the German military administration created a Jewish Council (Judenrat) under the leadership of Julek Katz, which had to meet German demands for money and valuables. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) assisted the Judenrat in the implementation of German demands. The Jews were registered and ordered to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. Jews were deprived of many basic rights and were obligated to perform heavy forced labor for little or no pay.

In May 1942, the Germans rounded up several hundred able-bodied Jews in Mościska and sent them either to the

Janowska Street camp in Lwów or to the camp at Jaktorów for forced labor.³ A few of these Jews subsequently were released from Jaktorów in return for a substantial bribe organized by members of the Judenrat in coordination with other Jewish Councils in the region.⁴

By the early summer of 1942, the Germans had established an open ghetto (*Judenviertel*) in Mościska. Several hundred Jews from the surrounding villages were resettled there. They were permitted to bring with them only their personal clothing. There was terrible overcrowding in the open ghetto, with 15 people having to share a room. The buildings in the ghetto were very dilapidated, and there was insufficient light and water. Jews in the ghetto received news about the killing of Jews in Lwów but hoped that they would not be affected, as they tried to meet all the German demands. According to one account, no children were born in the ghetto.⁵

On October 12–13, 1942, a large so-called deportation Aktion took place, and about 2,000 Jews were taken to the Bełżec extermination camp. The person in charge of this Aktion was SS-Obersturmführer Friedrich Hildebrand from the staff of the SS- und Polizeiführer in Lwów. The Security Police forces from Lwów were assisted by the Order Police in Mościska, commanded by Neumann, and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, commanded by Bem, known as a brutal murderer of Jews. Those Jews who tried to hide were hunted down. The German and Ukrainian police shot about 500 Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Mościska.⁶ About 1,000 Jews survived the deportation Aktion, including the members of the Judenrat and their families and others who emerged from hiding. Several hundred Jews fled to the surrounding countryside around this time, but many were betrayed by local peasants who were largely hostile or in fear of the death penalty imposed by the Germans on those who hid Jews. Remaining property from those deported was collected and sorted. The more valuable items were sent to Germany; the remainder was sold very cheaply to the local non-Jewish population. The ghetto existed for about another five weeks after the Aktion. The inmates suffered from terrible hunger, as the Ukrainian guards at the ghetto gate did not permit any food to be brought in. A number of Jews died from typhus and/or starvation. The Germans and their collaborators continued to exploit the Jews for forced labor and regularly took out groups of Jews arbitrarily and shot them.⁷

In December 1942, all the Jews who remained in the Mościska ghetto were resettled into the Jaworów ghetto, which became the collecting point for the remaining Jews in the area.⁸ Some of them died of hunger and disease. The ones who remained alive were nearly all shot in April 1943 during the liquidation of the Jaworów ghetto.

SOURCES An article on the history of the Jewish community in Mościska can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 317–319.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Mościska can be found in the following archives:

AŻIH (301/673 and 4947); DALO (R 24-1-123); GARF (7021-58-30); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7.
2. AŻIH, 301/673, testimony of Lidia Grunberg.
3. Ibid., 301/4947, testimony of Chaja Antmann.
4. DALO, R 24-1-123, pp. 104–127.
5. AŻIH, 301/4947.
6. AŻIH, 301/673; Sta. Bremen, 29 Ks 1/66, Anklage gegen Fritz Hildebrand, December 28, 1965, pp. 35–36. See also Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 387; Arad dates the deportation Aktion on October 10, 1942. AŻIH, 301/4947, dates the Aktion on September 24, 1942.
7. AŻIH, 301/4947.
8. Ibid.

MOSTY WIELKIE

Pre-1939: Mosty Wielkie, town, Żółkiew powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mosty Velikiye, raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Mosty Wielkie, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Velyki Mosty, Sokal' raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Mosty Wielkie is located about 44 kilometers (27 miles) north of Lwów. The Jews lived mainly around the market square in the center of town, whereas the Poles and Ukrainians lived mainly on the outskirts. According to the 1931 census, 1,266 Jews were living in Mosty Wielkie. By the middle of 1941, there were probably around 1,400 Jews residing there.

Units of the German 17th Army occupied Mosty Wielkie on June 29, 1941, and in July a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) controlled the town. On August 1, 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Mosty Wielkie was incorporated into Kreis Lemberg-Land, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was initially Wilhelm Stockheck (August 1941–mid-September 1941); then Otto Bauer (mid-September 1941–March 1942); Werner Becker (March 1942–January 1943); and finally, Baron Joachim von der Leyen (from January 1943).

A German Gendarmerie post and a unit of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) were established in the town. The Security Police post in Lwów was responsible for organizing most of the anti-Jewish Aktions carried out in Mosty Wielkie, assisted by the Gendarmerie and local Ukrainian policemen. The Ukrainian mayor, Wasyl Strąćicki, was also notable for his hostility to the Jews.¹

On July 6, 1941, the local residents of Mosty Wielkie took advantage of the antisemitic mood prevailing in town and carried out a pogrom during which 19 Jews were burned to death in the synagogue.²

On July 22, 1941, the Germans conducted an Aktion in Mosty Wielkie in which around 100 people (mainly Jews) were shot as alleged Soviet activists. The mass shooting was conducted by a detachment of the German police assisted by local Ukrainian policemen.

In the summer of 1941, the German military administration ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Jews were obliged to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. A large amount of Jewish property was confiscated, including especially any items of value, such as gold or silver. Jews also were required to perform forced labor for little or no pay. Subsequently the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was established, to serve as the executive organ of the Judenrat, to assist in the enforcement of German demands and regulations.

In the spring of 1942, the Festungspionier-Beutestab 3 of the Wehrmacht, which was headquartered in Lwów, created outposts (Aussenstellen) in Mosty Wielkie and the neighboring village of Sielec Zawonie. The task of the Festungspionier-Beutestab was the collection of military hardware and munitions that had been left behind after the retreat of Soviet forces in the summer of 1941. In Mosty Wielkie the local overseer was the captain of the military-engineer division, Hauptmann Johann Kroupa from Vienna. He supervised three to five soldier-engineers, and to carry out their work, they used Jewish forced labor. Kroupa was keen to employ Jews to perform a variety of jobs, and Jews were attracted to Mosty Wielkie and Sielec Zawonie from the surrounding area by the relatively good conditions there. Kroupa even provided fictitious work permits to some of the Jews; more than 2,000 Jews (including 1,200 women) were working in different capacities in Mosty Wielkie for the Wehrmacht. There were also around 500 Jews (nearly all men) working in Sielec Zawonie.³ The head of the Judenrat, Herman Gruber, who previously had been the head of the Jewish community in Witków Nowy, steered bribes towards Kroupa in recognition of his favorable attitude.

An open ghetto ("Jewish residential district") was established in Mosty Wielkie, at some time between the summer of 1941 and the summer of 1942, into which the town's Jews, along with those from surrounding villages, were resettled.⁴ *Pinkas ha-kehillot* dates its establishment in early August 1942, noting that it was unfenced and unguarded.

The transfer into the ghetto is described by the Jewish survivor Haskell Frostig. He notes that at a certain time the German authorities ordered all the Jews to move into one side of town. Most of the houses in this area were already occupied by Jews. Those Jews who were forced to relocate were not able to take with them all of their possessions. Subsequently Jews had to pay a bribe for permission to leave the ghetto to exchange their remaining clothes and other items with the local peasants for food. Frostig notes that subsequently the "ghetto" was surrounded with barbed wire and that the men were separated from the women and children by a partition.⁵

Between October and November 1942, on the orders of the German authorities, a large part of the town's Jewish

population was relocated to Sokal and Żółkiew.⁶ Some were murdered there, while others were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec.

According to the conclusions of the German court in Bremen, in the fall of 1942 the open ghetto in Mosty Wielkie, which consisted of around 30 small houses, was surrounded with a barbed-wire fence more than 2 meters (6.6 feet) high and converted into a forced labor camp. This also meant that men and women were segregated within the camp, which was split into two parts by an internal barbed-wire fence. The camp came under SS control, subordinated to the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF), SS-Brigadeführer Friedrich Katzmann.

Katzmann appointed SS-Obersturmführer Willi Schulze to run the camp in Mosty Wielkie, which was also responsible for the subcamp in Sielec Zawonie. Schulze appointed Harmaz, a Jew whom he had handpicked from the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów, as the elder (starosta) of the Mosty Wielkie camp. A Jewish security service was also established. Under the watch of Ukrainian policemen, the Jews had to line up each day in columns and be led back and forth to various labor sites (to the laundry, the brush factory, the sawmill, the railway construction site, the administration office of the Wehrmacht, and other sites), which were often unguarded.

Pinkas ha-kehillot indicates that a separate ghetto continued to exist until the beginning of February with contacts retained to the labor camp, as the latter was fenced but not effectively guarded. However, in light of Frostig's testimony and the description given by the German court, it is possible that this is a reference to the two sections of the labor camp that were separated from each other by a fence. Mosty Wielkie was not listed as one of the towns where Jews were permitted to continue residing in the November 10, 1942, decree issued by the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF), SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger.⁷ Therefore, those not in the labor camp would have been forced to leave Mosty Wielkie by December 1, 1942, although certain exceptions to this rule did occur elsewhere in Distrikt Galizien.

In January 1943, the Festungspionier-Beutestab, for economic reasons, decided from February 1, 1943, onwards to reduce by half the payments to the SSPF for the exploitation of Jewish labor. In response, Katzmann ordered the execution of half of the workers in the Mosty Wielkie camp, including all the women, the elderly, and men who were sick or infirm. For this operation, Katzmann chose SS-Obersturmführer Friedrich Hildebrand from his personal staff. The Aktion was carried out on February 10, 1943. In the morning, 20 to 30 Jews were taken into the nearby woods, where they were forced to dig mass graves. In the afternoon, Security Police from Lwów, assisted by the local Ukrainian policemen, shot at least 1,150 Jews, or half the workforce of Mosty Wielkie. This is the date recorded by *Pinkas ha-kehillot* also as the liquidation of the ghetto.

Captain Kroupa attempted to save the lives of a group of workers by hiding them. However, these Jews were discovered and shot. The Nazis then court-martialed Kroupa for protecting the Jews.

On May 1, 1943, the forced labor camp in Mosty Wielkie was liquidated. The remaining prisoners were taken to Rawa Ruska, where they were murdered in the summer of 1943. Of the Jewish population of Mosty Wielkie, only a few dozen managed to survive the war, including some who had escaped into the Soviet interior at the time of the German invasion.

At the court proceeding in Bremen on May 12, 1967, Friedrich Hildebrand was sentenced to life in prison. Willi Schulze served as a witness at the trial.

SOURCES Publications on the persecution and destruction of the Jews in Mosty Wielkie include the following: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 313–317; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 26 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2001), Lfd. Nr. 653; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 500–501. The existence of a ghetto in Mosty Wielkie is mentioned also in *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 101.

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: AŻIH (301/2780a-d and 301/4971); DALO (R 3-3-279); GARF (7021-67-78); VHF (e.g., # 8897, 36389); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2780.
2. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystryktie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7.
3. Verdict of LG-Brem, 29 Ks 1/66, May 12, 1967, published in *JuNS-V*, vol. 26, Lfd. Nr. 653, p. 249; AŻIH, 301/2777.
4. Verdict of LG-Brem, 29 Ks 1/66, May 12, 1967, published in *JuNS-V*, vol. 26, Lfd. Nr. 653, p. 249.
5. VHF, # 36389, testimony of Haskell Frostig.
6. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 7.
7. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

NADWÓRNA

Pre-1939: Nadwórna, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Nadvornaia, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Nadworna, Kreis Stanislau, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Nadvirna, raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

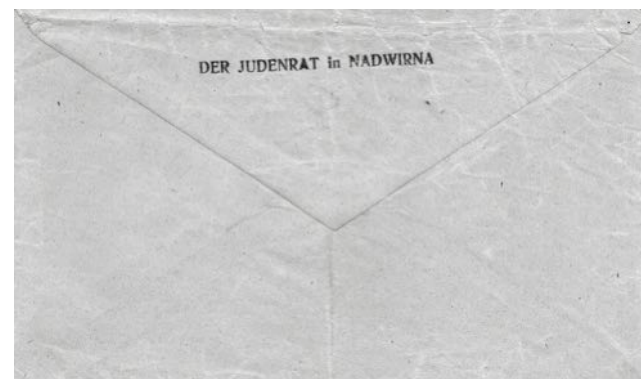
Nadwórna is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of Stanisławów. In 1936, the Jewish population of Nadwórna of 4,500 represented almost 40 percent of the town's residents.¹

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

The Hungarian army occupied Nadwórna on July 1, 1941, as a result of an agreement with Germany. At the beginning of September 1941 and in conjunction with its occupation of southeastern Galicia, Hungary expelled 1,000 “nonresident” Jews (nominal citizens of Poland who had resided in Hungary for generations) to Nadwórna. At the same time, Hungarian authorities issued an order for all Jews to wear an armband with a Star of David. The Jews of Nadwórna attempted to negotiate protection from pogroms with the Hungarian authorities to no avail. In the middle of July 1941, the local Ukrainian population instigated a pogrom in which Jews were beaten and humiliated, and dozens were murdered. Dr. Michal Starer, leader of the Jewish community, was among the victims. The Ukrainians forced Jews to exhume corpses from a Soviet-era mass grave, wash them, and then drink the wash water.²

Though Nadwórna formally became part of Distrikt Galizien in the German Generalgouvernement on August 1, 1941, the Germans did not actually take over administration of the area until early September. They immediately started to confiscate furniture, furs, and other valuables from Nadwórna's Jews. Even under German rule, the local police station was manned entirely by Ukrainians and Poles and headed by a local Ukrainian, Kohuciak. The Germans established a Judenrat: Dr. Maximilian Schall was nominated to be the chairman and Izak Szapira was his deputy and in charge of supplies.³

On October 6, 1941, the first day of the Sukkot holiday (the Feast of Tabernacles), at 7:00 A.M., Gestapo forces from Stanisławów and Tatarów, aided by the local Ukrainian population, Ukrainian policemen, and men of the German Order Police, began the first Aktion in Nadwórna. The Ukrainians, armed with iron bars and clubs, stormed through the city, raiding Jewish homes, and forcibly assembled most of the Jewish population in the market square in front of a church. In the square, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger (head of the Security Police in Stanisławów), his deputy SS-Untersturmführer Oskar Brandt, SS-Hauptscharführer Ernst Varchmin (head of the Sipo and SD in Tatarów), and SS-Oberscharführer Heinrich Schott (Judenreferent) supervised the actions of the local



The reverse of an envelope from the Nadwórna ghetto, bearing the stamp, “THE JEWISH COUNCIL in NADWIRNA,” n.d.
COURTESY OF EDWARDVICTOR.COM

police.⁴ Half of Nadwórna's Jewish population was forced onto trucks and taken to the nearby Bukowinka Forest. They were made to undress, lined up at the edge of a World War I trench, and gunned down.⁵ At 7:00 P.M., Heinrich Schott returned to the market square to announce that the mass grave had been filled and that the Aktion was over. Altogether, more than 2,000 Jewish men, women, and children, mostly Jews from Nadwórna and some Jewish Hungarian deportees, were murdered on that day.⁶

German historian Dieter Pohl, in an article on Hans Krüger, writes:

Following the September discussions in Lwow, Krüger began to make preparations for the large-scale massacre of Jews in Stanisławów. In order to condition his Security Police for the task awaiting them, he first organized a mass murder on October 6, 1941, in the nearby town of Nadwórna as a kind of "dress rehearsal." This massacre in Nadwórna, which claimed the lives of 2,000 men, women, and children, marked the actual beginning of the "Final Solution" in the Generalgouvernement.⁷

Judenrat members and their families, as well as "essential" workers for the war-related industries, were preserved. Many Jews hid during the Aktion and thereby saved themselves for a short while. During the Aktion, Krüger offered Jews an opportunity to pay for their release, though payment did not guarantee safety. After the massacre, surviving Jews received permission to bury the victims in the mass grave in Bukowinka. Members of the local population confiscated the homes of those killed, and the valuables were claimed by the Germans.

Following the October massacre, a period of six months of relative calm ensued. However, in April 1942 the Germans established a ghetto in Nadwórna that was sealed on April 30. It was divided by a fence into two sections: "A" was for Jews with an *Ausweis* (work permit) and "B" for those not deemed "essential to the war effort." For a bribe of 2,000 to 3,000 złoty, it was possible to obtain an *Ausweis* from local officials. A ghetto inhabitants were fed at their workplace and received ration cards, while the inhabitants of the B ghetto, including children orphaned by the October killings, received no rations. Some children sneaked out of the ghetto to find food. The Jews of the A ghetto worked in the oil refinery, at the "Skolengasse" agricultural cooperative, and in other service roles. In addition to the ghettos, a *Lager* (work camp) was built at the local sawmill in which 137 "essential" workers lived and worked under the supervision of a German, Weber, who was married to a Jewish woman.⁸

In May and June 1942, more than 100 Jews were brought into the Nadwórna ghetto from the surrounding villages (73 from Pasieczna, 24 from Strymba, 20 from Bitków, and others from Oślaw Biały [1921: Jewish population 187] and Zielona [1921: Jewish population 112]). During the summer, Gestapo officials in Nadwórna continued shooting individual Jews arbitrarily. Owing to severe food shortages and overcrowding,

mortality was very high. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report (ChGK), some 800 Jews died in the ghetto of disease and starvation.⁹

In September and October of 1942, groups of Jews from Nadwórna were rounded up and sent to Stanisławów to be murdered soon afterwards, mostly by shooting. SS-Sturmbannführer Helmut Tanzman of Lwów ordered regular executions to keep the ghetto in Stanisławów small. By November 1942, there were only about 300 Jews remaining in Nadwórna. A small number of individuals managed to escape from Nadwórna to Hungary.¹⁰ The Millbauer brothers produced false "Aryan" papers in the ghetto, which made some escapes possible.

On Sunday, November 8, 1942, the final liquidation of the Nadwórna ghetto and work camp took place. The Ukrainian police and Kripo surrounded the sawmill and detained the Jewish workers. Judenrat members and the remaining Jews in the ghetto were arrested. A few days later, all of Nadwórna's remaining Jews were deported to the Jewish cemetery in Stanisławów, where they were shot and killed.¹¹

The Soviet army liberated Nadwórna on July 26, 1944. Only a few individual local Jews survived by hiding in forests or escaping to neighboring Hungary.

Hans Krüger was arrested by the Canadian military in Holland but released soon afterwards. He proceeded with his business and political career until 1968, when he was sentenced to life in prison. He was released in 1986 and died in 1988 at the age of 79.

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by Israel Carmi (Otto Kramer), *Nadworna; sefer edut ve zikaron* [in Hebrew, English, and Yiddish] (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at ha-irgunim shel yotse Nadwornah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-berit, 1975), includes the testimony of Schaje Schmerler and other relevant information on the Jewish community of Nadwórna. A short article on the town can also be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 328–331.

The testimonies of Izak Szapira and Estera Seibald can be found in YVA; the trial of Hans Krüger in Münster can be found in StA-Mü (LG-Münst, 5 Ks 4/65); part of the documentation for this trial can also be examined at BA-L (ZStL 208 AR-Z 398/59). Additional documentation is located in AŻIH (301/3345); and GARF (7021-73-10); with copies also at USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 14) and in YVA.

Teresa Pollin

NOTES

1. *Davar*, March 9, 1936, Tel Aviv, Palestine, in Nadworna yizkor book.

2. YVA, O-3/3066, testimony of Estera Seibald given in July 1967 [in Polish] (Estera Seibald was married to Dr. Michal Starer and divorced him in 1939).

3. Ibid., O-33/1501, testimony of Izak Szapira [in Hebrew], witness at the trial of Hans Krüger, August 1966.

4. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 28 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 675a, pp. 281–284.

5. YVA, O-33/1501.

6. Ibid., O-3/3066. For further details of the Aktion, see StA-Mü, Verdict of LG-Münst 5 Ks 4/65, May 6, 1968, (Fall 2), published in *JuNs-V*, vol. 28, Lfd. Nr. 675a, pp. 281–308. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report (GARF, 7021-73-10, p. 264), 3,859 Jews were killed in Nadwórna on that day.

7. Dieter Pohl, “Hans Krüger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanisławow Region (Galicia),” *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 239–265.

8. YVA, O-3/3066; testimony of Schaje Schmerler in Carmi, *Nadwórna*, pp. 8–27; A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraïnskogo evreïstva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Kharkov: Karavella, 2001), p. 218, gives the date of June 27, 1942, for the sealing of the ghetto.

9. Kruglov, *Katastrofa*, p. 218; GARF, 7021-73-10, pp. 267, 272–280; *JuNs-V*, vol. 28, Lfd. Nr. 675a, pp. 525–548. Also see BA-L, ZStL 208 AR-Z 398/59, private letter of the Landkommissar in Nadwórna dated May 4, 1942; this letter gave the figure of 7,000 Jews in his area of jurisdiction.

10. YVA, O-3/3066.

11. Ibid. A. Kruglov, *Entsiklopediia kholokosta: Evreïskaia entsiklopediia Ukrainy* (Kiev: Evreïskii sovet Ukrainy, Fond “Pamiat’ zhertz fashizma,” 2000), pp. 74–75, does not list any deportations to the Bełżec extermination camp directly from Nadwórna in 1942.

NARAJÓW

Pre-1939: Narajów (Yiddish: Nariav), village, Brzeżany powiat, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Naraev, Berezhany raion, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Narajow, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Narayiv, Berezhany raion, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Narajów is located 65 kilometers (40 miles) west of Tarnopol. According to the 1921 census, there were 775 Jews living in Narajów, accounting for 26.3 percent of the total population. On the eve of World War II, there were about 600 Jews living in Narajów.¹

In September 1939, the Polish army retreated from the area, and for a short while there was an interregnum, during which nationalist Ukrainians conducted attacks against the Jews. Then units of the Red Army occupied Narajów and restored order. Under the Soviet regime from September 1939 until the end of June 1941, Jewish communal organizations were closed down, and some Jewish businesses were nationalized.

At the start of July 1941, German forces occupied Narajów. Almost immediately they forced the Jews to perform hard and degrading labor. Ukrainian policemen kidnapped Jews from the streets, cut off their beards, and beat them. They especially tortured Jews who were accused of collaborating with the Soviet authorities.²

Until August 1941, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) governed the village; then authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Narajów became part of Kreis Brzezany, in Distrikt Galizien. Anti-Jewish Aktions were organized and carried out in the

village until the end of March 1942 by the outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów, headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger. From April 1942 on, the Aktions in the region were organized by the Sipo outpost in Tarnopol, which was headed from October 1941 to May 1943 by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller.

In the summer of 1941, the occupation authorities required the Jews to wear armbands bearing the Star of David and to hand over all their gold and valuables. Jews were forbidden to leave the confines of the village and from trading with non-Jews. Immediately, food shortages started and prices escalated. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created in the village, headed by the community worker, Torno, and including the rabbi Hersh Groswaks. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was also established; the policemen wore red armbands bearing the letters “OD.” The occupation authorities used the Judenrat to collect “contributions” and to organize forced labor assignments. Jews were forced to clean the streets and German dwellings. Several Zionist leaders were arrested and were not heard from again.³

Around October 1, 1941, the Germans conducted a first anti-Jewish Aktion in Brzeżany. According to one source, a number of Jews from Narajów were also shot at this time.⁴ In October 1941, several hundred Jews were moved to the village from Buczacz, bringing the number of Jews in Narajów to 1,100. The Jewish population then rose to 1,400 in April 1942 when Kreishauptmann Hans-Adolf Asbach sent an additional 300 Jews to Narajów from the capital of the Kreis in Brzeżany.⁵

Starting in the winter of 1941–1942 and continuing into the summer, a number of younger Jewish men and women were rounded up in Narajów and sent to work in various forced labor camps in the region. On September 21, 1942, at the time of Yom Kippur, the Germans conducted the first deportation Aktion in the village. As rumors were circulating at this time of a deportation Aktion in Brzeżany, many Jews fled to the woods to avoid being arrested. Then German Security Police, assisted by the Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, rounded up several hundred Jews in Narajów and transported them on trucks to Brzeżany. From there they were subsequently deported by train to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁶

After this Aktion, the remaining 500 or so Jews were moved into an open ghetto (*Judenviertel*) in Narajów.⁷ In November 1942, the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) for the Generalgouvernement, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, restricted the number of towns in Distrikt Galizien in which Jews could reside (within Jewish residential areas or ghettos) to around 30, including Brzeżany but not Narajów.⁸ As a result, most Jews in Narajów were forced to move to Brzeżany by early December, although a few necessary workers remained, together with a number of Jews in hiding. The Germans conducted another large deportation Aktion from Brzeżany on December 4–5 during which several hundred Jews from Narajów were probably also deported to Bełżec.⁹

Narajów was now officially “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*), but at least 100 Jews continued to reside there, many of them

illegally. In mid-December 1942, the German Security Police official Willi Hermann of the Tarnopol Gestapo came to Narajów and, together with the Ukrainian police, organized a hunt for Jews. As a result, more than 70 Jews were collected in the house of Mendel Herc, next to the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police station. Hermann then selected all the women, children, and elderly and shot them at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁰

The fate of the few remaining Jewish workers in Narajów is not known, but by the spring of 1943, there were probably no more Jews residing there. A few Jews managed to escape to the surrounding countryside and hide with non-Jewish acquaintances. Ukrainian nationalist partisans as well as the Ukrainian police continued to hunt them down, however, until the end of the German occupation. According to one account, in March 1944, a bunker was discovered by Ukrainian partisans near Narajów, and they murdered the 51 Jews who had been hiding there.

At the end of the occupation, only just over a dozen Jews from Narajów emerged from hiding, to be joined by a few dozen more who had survived the war in the Red Army or in the Soviet interior.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Narajów can be found in the following publications: “Narajow,” in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 332–333; and Menachem Katz, ed., *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva: Toldot kehillot sbenebrevu* (Haifa: Association of Former Residents of Brzezany, Narajow and Vicinity, 1978).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/879); BA-L (B 162/4135); DATO; GARF (7021-75-370); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.084M [301/879]); VHF (e.g., # 2356); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. “Narajow,” in Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 332.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 111 n387.

5. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967): 18 (table 2); Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, p. 24 [English].

6. BA-L, B 162/4135 (208 AR-Z 76/1961, vol. 6), pp. 1066–1067, statement of Szymon Ehre, January 27, 1966, and p. 1083, statement of Sima Kwodi (née Hochberg), January 28, 1966. The latter witness states that only about 350 Jews were taken.

7. Ibid., B 162/4135, pp. 1081–1082, Kwodi statement.

8. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942;

AŻIH, 301/879, testimony of Mojżesz Kin, mentions moving from Narajów to Brzezany at some time in the fall of 1942.

9. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” p. 18 (table 2); Katz, *Brzezany, Narajow ve-baseviva*, pp. 328–329.

10. BA-L, B 162/4135, pp. 1068–1069, Ehre statement, and pp. 1086–1088, Kwodi statement.

PODHAJCE

Pre-1939: Podhajce, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Podgaitsy, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Podhajce, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Pidbaitsi, raion center, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Podhajce is located 45 kilometers (28 miles) southwest of Tarnopol. The 1931 census recorded 3,129 Jews living in the town. Under Soviet rule, from September 1939 until July 1941, most businesses were nationalized, and all political activity was suppressed. A number of wealthy Jews were exiled to Siberia. At the end of June 1941, just prior to the arrival of the Germans, an attempted uprising by some of the members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was quashed by the Soviet People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD).

Podhajce was occupied by German forces on July 4, 1941. It was under military administration until August 1, 1941, when authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Podhajce became a part of Kreis Brzezany, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann in Brzezany from November 1941 to early 1943 was Hans-Adolf Asbach; he was succeeded by Dr. Werner Becker. Subordinated to the Kreishauptmann in each Kreis were several Landkommissare. The Landkommissar in Podhajce was Johannes Tkaczyk.

Anti-Jewish Aktions in Podhajce were organized and carried out by the branch office of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnopol, which was headed by SS-Sturmabführer Hermann Müller, from October 1941 to May 1943, and by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger, from June 1943 to March 1944. The German Criminal Police (Kripo) and Gendarmerie both had offices in Podhajce, as did the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). All these forces played an active role in implementing the anti-Jewish measures and Aktions.

On July 13, 1941, just nine days after the occupation of the town, antisemitic Ukrainian nationalists launched a pogrom in the course of which many Jews were beaten and robbed. That same month, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established under the chairmanship of L. Lilienfeld, and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was formed as an executive organ of the Judenrat. On August 10, 1941, a “contribution” of 500,000 rubles and additional valuables was imposed on the Jews. In addition, the Jewish Council had to make available to the German and Ukrainian administration daily a large quota of Jews to perform various types of forced labor. The Jewish community also had to supply

newly arrived German officials with furniture, clothes, and dishes.

The period from August 1941 until September 1942 remained relatively quiet for Podhajce's Jews. There were no killings and only occasional selections of young and healthy Jewish men for labor camps. For example, from the fall of 1941, the Jewish Council received repeated demands, which resulted in the selection of several hundred young Jews to be sent to labor camps, including those in Borki Wielkie, Kamionki, and Hłuboczek Wielki. The members of the Jewish Council maintained contact with them, supplying them with food and clothing. They also tried to get released those who fell sick.

On September 21, 1942 (Yom Kippur), a detachment of the Security Police from Tarnopol, together with the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police, carried out a deportation Aktion in Podhajce. During the Aktion, more than 1,000 Jews were arrested and deported by train to the Bełżec extermination camp, and about 50 Jews were shot in the Jewish cemetery. A few Jews managed to escape from the moving cattle cars. Those who managed to avoid the bullets of the escorting guards made their way back to Podhajce.¹

After the September 1942 deportation Aktion, a ghetto (Jewish residential area) was established in Podhajce.² The ghetto consisted of a number of houses on a few narrow streets in the poorest part of town, between Halishka Street and Bjejonska Street. At this time Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto for a few hours, once a week, to visit the market with a police escort. All the Jews wore armbands, but some removed them and sneaked out of the ghetto to barter items for food with the local peasants. The ghetto was very overcrowded, with several families being forced to share each small dwelling. This overcrowding soon led to the spread of typhus.³ Anticipating the next Aktion, many Jews prepared bunkers inside the ghetto or sought hiding places in the surrounding forests. In a second Aktion, on October 30, 1942, more than 1,200 Jews were deported to Bełżec, and several dozen Jews were killed on the spot. Reportedly, there were cases of Jews who had to suffocate their infants to prevent the child's crying from revealing their hiding places to policemen searching the ghetto.

In the fall of 1942, the Jews from the neighboring villages were resettled into Podhajce, including from the nearby village of Zawałów.⁴ One witness recalled that the Judenrat in Zawałów announced that everyone would be resettled. The Jews then traveled for two hours in horses and carts to the Podhajce ghetto, escorted by Jewish Police.⁵

According to the decree issued by the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Jewish residential area in Podhajce was officially converted into an enclosed ghetto by December 1942.⁶ By this time, the ghetto was enclosed by a wooden fence topped with barbed wire, and those Jews with specialist labor tasks for the Germans were moved into a separate labor camp outside the ghetto. There were about 2,500 Jews in Podhajce at this time. In the winter

of 1942–1943, there were daily deaths from hunger and disease in the ghetto. On April 12, 1943, 40 to 50 sick Jews were shot in the Jewish cemetery.⁷

On June 6, 1943, a detachment of Security Police from Tarnopol, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, liquidated the ghetto. The labor camp was also liquidated around this time. That day, 1,070 Jews were shot in two pits near the village of Stare Miasto.⁸ To lure out of hiding those Jews still in the ghetto, it was announced that they would all be resettled to Tarnopol. The Jews collected with the help of this ruse—750 in all—were shot by the Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police on June 8. The mass shooting took place near the village of Zahajce.⁹ Only 21 Jews, who were on a list prepared by the Judenrat, were selected out from the group and escorted to Tarnopol by Ukrainian policemen.¹⁰

After the liquidation of the ghetto, the Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police carried out systematic searches for hidden Jews. The Jews who were caught were then shot in the Jewish cemetery. In all, some 300 additional Jews were shot in the Jewish cemetery in the months following July 1943.¹¹

Several hundred Jews were able to escape from the ghetto and hide in the woods. Some were killed in 1943–1944 by detachments of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). When Podhajce was finally liberated on July 21, 1944, only about 50 Jews returned.

Altogether, probably around 2,500 Jews died of hunger or disease or were killed in Podhajce and the surrounding area between 1941 and 1944. At least 2,200 more were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.

The ghetto youth organized a group whose main purpose was to gather ammunition for self-defense and to send people out of the ghetto to the forest. They planned to build bunkers in the forests near the village of Zawałów. After many difficulties, the group, led by Israel Zilber, obtained some pistols and rifles, and some managed to escape in time. In December 1943, Zilber's group assisted Jews who were hiding in the forest and tried to supply them with food.

Some Jews were saved by members of a Christian sect that observes Saturday as the Sabbath, who lived near Podhajce. Among those who helped and rescued Jews while risking their own lives was Lev Blicharvski.

Hermann Müller was sentenced to life in prison on July 15, 1966, in Stuttgart. He died in 1988. Johannes Nowotsch, the former chief of the Gendarmerie post in Podhajce, was sentenced to five years in prison.¹²

SOURCES Information regarding the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Podhajce can be found in the following publications: A. Milch, "Moje przeżycia podczas wojny," *Fun letstn churbn* (Munich), no. 3 (1946); *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 13 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972); M.Sh. Geshuri, ed., *Sefer Podhaysah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Podhaysah vehasevivah be-Yisrael, 1972); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 410–414—a translation can be found on JewishGen; A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraińskiego*

evreistva 1941–1944. Entsiklopedicheski spravochnik (Kharkov: Karavella, 2001), pp. 258–259; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 604–605.

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: AŻIH (301/4722); BA-L (ZStL 208 AR-Z 294/59, 208 AR-Z 76/61, 208 AR 797/66); BWSL (EL 317 III, Bü 1408); DATO; GARF (7021-75-10); LG-Hamb ([90]4/75); USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 8815, 16377, 22069); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Milch, “Moje przeżycia podczas wojny,” pp. 65–66; Verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 7/64, in the case against Paul Raebel and others, July 15, 1966, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 634, pp. 39, 81; GARF, 7021-75-10, p. 48.

2. Geshuri, *Sefer Podbaitasab*, p. 244; BA-L, B 162/4136 (ZStL 208 76/61), p. 1323, testimony of Hella Epstein, March 9, 1966. Some sources, however, date the establishment of an open ghetto from the spring of 1942; see VHF, # 8815; testimony of Mathilda DeMayo (born 1921).

3. Geshuri, *Sefer Podbaitasab*, p. 244; VHF, # 8815; and # 22069, testimony of Minne Blumenfeld (born 1914).

4. Milch, “Moje przeżycia,” pp. 65–66.

5. VHF, # 22069.

6. Police Decree issued by HSSPF Krüger of the Generalgouvernement, November 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein et al., eds., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344–345.

7. GARF, 7021-75-10, pp. 52, 55.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 211.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 1; LG-Hamb (90) 4/75, verdict of May 17, 1976.

10. BA-L, B 162/4136, p. 1328.

11. GARF, 7021-75-10, p. 1.

12. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 41 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), Lfd. Nr. 832.

PRZEMYŚLANY

Pre-1939: Przemyślany, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Peremyshlany, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Przemyślany, Kreis Zloczow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Peremyshlany, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Przemyślany is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east-southeast of Lwów. In June 1941, there were probably at least 2,600 Jews in Przemyślany, including a number of Jewish refugees who had arrived from western Poland in the fall of 1939.

German forces occupied Przemyślany on July 1, 1941. At first, a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) ran the town, but in August 1941 power was transferred to a German civil administration. Przemyślany became part of Kreis

Zloczow, within Distrikt Galizien. Regierungsassessor Hans Mann became the Kreishauptmann. Dr. Otto Wendt replaced him at the beginning of 1943. The Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei (Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD, KdS) in Lwów and the Kriminalkommissariat (Criminal Police office) in Złoczów, which was headed by Otto Zikmund, organized the anti-Jewish Aktions in Przemyślany.

An outpost of the Kriminalpolizei (Kripo) and a German Gendarmerie post were established in Przemyślany. Locally, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) was formed, which also played an active role in all the measures taken against the Jews.

Local Ukrainian nationalist antisemites carried out a pogrom on July 4, 1941. An unknown number of Jews were burned alive in a synagogue, and many Jews were assaulted and robbed.¹

During the summer of 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed in Przemyślany on the orders of the German authorities; it had to ensure that all Jews were registered and wearing the required armbands bearing the Star of David. The German authorities confiscated a considerable amount of Jewish property and most valuable items. The Jews were required to perform forced labor for little or no pay.

On November 5, 1941, the first Aktion was carried out in Przemyślany. The German forces shot around 400 Jews who were unable to work.² The shooting was probably carried out by a detachment of Security Police from Tarnopol, assisted by a Gendarmerie unit that had arrived from Distrikt Warschau.

At some time during 1942, Kreishauptmann Mann ordered the formation of a “Jewish residential district” (Jüdischer Wohnbezirk—an open ghetto) in Przemyślany. Jews living outside the designated area had to move into more cramped conditions within it, and it also became a collecting point for Jews from the smaller surrounding communities. The ghetto comprised much of the town but did not include the main square, on which both the German police headquarters and the Judenrat building sat. Jews were only permitted to leave the Jewish residential district if the authorities directed them to perform specific tasks outside.³

A contemporary diary, written by Samuel Golfard, describing events in the open ghetto gives the impression that everyday control was in the hands of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police, but periodically the Germans and their Ukrainian auxiliaries would come in during the Aktions and deportations to wreak havoc.⁴ In May 1942, another Aktion was conducted in Przemyślany, which claimed more than 100 Jewish lives.⁵

In September 1942,⁶ the German Security Police organized a large-scale deportation Aktion. Nearly two thirds of the Jews of Przemyślany—almost 3,000 people—were seized and deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec. The German Gendarmerie, Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and Jewish Police also participated in the Aktion.

After this deportation Aktion, additional Jews from nearby villages and towns, including Gliniany and Swirz, were resettled to Przemyślany.⁷ According to the Gliniany yizkor

book, the Jewish Council in Gliniany tried to bribe German officials in Złoczów to establish a ghetto in Gliniany to avoid the cruel fate of resettlement. This was denied, but when the Jews left Gliniany for Przemyślany and other nearby ghettos, Ukrainians robbed them of their property on the way.⁸ Other Jews even returned to the Przemyślany ghetto after jumping from the railcars destined for Bełżec.

In early November 1942, the Germans conducted another smaller Aktion in Przemyślany, concurrent with a large Aktion in Złoczów. According to the Samuel Golfard diary, Złoczów fell short in its quota by about 200 victims, and the Jews of Przemyślany had to make up this deficit.⁹

According to the order issued on November 10, 1942, by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Jewish ghetto in Przemyślany was to be transformed after December 1, 1942, into an enclosed area, completely isolated from the outside world.¹⁰ The Jews concentrated in the ghetto suffered from a severe shortage of water, as only two wells were available to them. Many Jews prepared bunkers or other hiding places, in anticipation of the next Aktion.

Several sources refer to a further deportation Aktion on December 5, 1942. According to the Golfard diary, the Aktion occurred after two months of relative “peace” in which the Jews from the countryside were brought in:

The number of Jewish militiamen parading with their rubber truncheons was increased fivefold. The trapped Jews of the vicinity paid fantastic sums to the Jewish Council and the militia for living quarters knowing that they were getting shelter for a few days only. “We are paying slaughter fees,” they said with tears in their eyes. At last, all were crammed into narrow, dirty huts, into spat-upon holes. After the ghetto had been sealed, an SS commander named Ludwig arrived from Lwów on an inspection tour. He surveyed the fenced-in ghetto with satisfaction, saluted the Jewish militiamen guarding the exit, and then drove away. Two days later a massacre took place in which 2,400 people perished, 600 of whom were killed on the spot in the ghetto.¹¹

Meyer Kanner, who only arrived in the ghetto on December 2, just as it was sealed, went to hide in a bunker packed with people after only three days, as soon as the Aktion started. He and his family remained there for two to three days and then escaped to the woods, as they believed that the town would be completely “cleansed” of Jews.¹² In fact the ghetto was reduced in size but continued to exist for several more months. The specialist workers, who had been issued with distinctive armbands bearing the letters “R” and “W,” were transferred to enclosed barracks outside the ghetto. During the winter of 1942–1943, a few hundred Jews died in the ghetto from hunger and disease. On May 22, 1943, the ghetto was liquidated, and 2,000 people were shot inside the ghetto or in

the woods nearby. This Aktion lasted for more than a week, as the Germans repeatedly searched the ghetto in an effort to uncover all the hiding places.¹³ This final Aktion was carried out by a company of the 1st Battalion, Police Regiment 23, assisted by the Ukrainian police.¹⁴

On March 21, 1943, a Jewish labor prison camp was established in Przemyślany, similar to the one in Kurowice.¹⁵ SS-Unterscharführer Karl Kempka became the commandant of the camp. The prisoners worked in quarries and on the construction of roads. The camp was liquidated on June 28, 1943.¹⁶ Then 250 women were shot, and 200 men were sent to the camp in Kurowice.¹⁷

A few of the escapees from the ghetto survived in the surrounding forests or in hiding with local peasants until the arrival of the Red Army in 1944. However, many were captured and killed by the German and Ukrainian police in the months after the liquidation of the ghetto.

Otto Zikmund was extradited to the Soviet Union in 1949, where he was tried. He died in prison.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Przemyślany during the German occupation can be found in the following publications: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 440–443; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 620–621; and *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), Lfd. Nr. 1224, pp. 307ff.

In addition, there is a manuscript describing events in Przemyślany, the Golfard diary in Wendy Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Golfard and the Holocaust in Galicia* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2011).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/808, 1136, 1701, 2482, and 5753); DALO; GARF (7021-67-82); USHMM (e.g., RG-17.003M, reel 98); VHF (e.g., # 9289, 26616, 50384); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/5753, testimony of Józef Kolabiński.
2. Ibid.
3. BWSL, Ludwigsburg, EL 317 III, LG-Stutt, Ks 5/65, statement of L.M. on April 29, 1963, as cited by Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944. Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens*, 2nd ed. (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag 1997), pp. 157–158, dates the formation of an “open ghetto” in early 1942. Survivor testimonies generally date its formation at some time between March and October 1942; e.g., VHF, # 9289, testimony of Regina Peterseil; # 50384, testimony of Yetta Lewinter.
4. Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Golfard*.
5. AŻIH, 301/5753.
6. Ibid., 301/2483 and 5753.

7. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 12. There were 411 Jews living in the village of Swirz in January 1942 and around 1,600 Jews in Gliniany by June 1942.

8. *Hurbm Gliniane* (New York: Emergency Relief Committee for Gliniany and Vicinity, 1946), pp. 260–261.

9. Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Gelfard*. The dating of the Aktion is from the verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 5/65, April 29, 1968, against Roeder et al., published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 671, p. 704.

10. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 442.

11. Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Gelfard*.

12. VHF, # 26616, testimony of Mayer Kanner, dates the “ghetto liquidation” in January 1943.

13. Iu. Shuk’meister, *Sovest’ i beschest’e* (L’vov, 1984), p. 71; *AŻIH*, 301/2482.

14. Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung*, pp. 257–258.

15. E. Iones, *Evrei L’vova v gody vtoroi mirovoi voyny i katastrofy evropeiskogo evreistva 1939–1944* [trans. and ed. from Hebrew by S. Shenbrunn] (Moscow, 1999), p. 231. According to another source, the camp was created at the end of 1942. See Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 12.

16. Tatiana Berenstein, “Praca przymusowa ludności żydowskiej w tzw. dystrykcie Galicja,” *BŻIH*, no. 69 (1969): 45.

17. Iones, *Evrei L’vova*, p. 231. See Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 12.

RADZIECHÓW

Pre-1939: Radziechów, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Radekhov, raion center, L’vov oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Radziechow, Kreis Kamionka Strumilowa, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Radekhiv, raion center, L’viv oblast’, Ukraine

Radziechów is located about 65 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of Lwów. According to the 1921 population census, 1,977 Jews were living in the town. By the middle of 1941, there were probably around 2,100 Jews in Radziechów.

German forces entered Radziechów on June 24, 1941, just two days after the start of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Initially, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. At the start of the German occupation, four Jews, who were alleged to have been Soviet activists, were tortured and murdered.

In August 1941, power was transferred into the hands of a German civil administration. Radziechów was incorporated into Kreis Kamionka Strumilowa, within Distrikt Galizien. The first Kreishauptmann was SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rebay von Ehrenwiesen. He was succeeded in June 1942 by his deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Joachim Nehring.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Radziechów were organized and carried out by the branch of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Sokal, which was subordinated to the Kommandeur der Sipo und des SDs (KdS) in Lwów. The Sipo-Aussendienststelle in Sokal was headed from October

1941 to May 1942 by SS-Sturmbannführer Hans Block; and from May 1942 to October 1943, by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk.

A German Gendarmerie post and a detachment of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) were established in Radziechów itself. They both played an active part in the roundup and deportation of Jews from Radziechów.

In the summer of 1941, the number of Jews in Radziechów increased, due to the arrival of around 500 Jews from the village of Chołojów. These Jews from Chołojów had lost their homes to German bombardments.¹ In August 1941, the German authorities ordered the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Radziechów, which was headed by Albert Kranz. Much Jewish property was seized or confiscated from the Jews of Radziechów, especially any items of value. All Jews were required to register with the authorities, and they had to perform forced labor. In the fall and winter of 1941–1942, a number of able-bodied Jews were sent away to work in forced labor camps, including the camp at Pluhów.

Information regarding the ghetto in Radziechów is somewhat contradictory. According to the recollections of survivor Mark Halpern, an open ghetto was established there at the beginning of 1942. All the Jews were forced to live together on one or two streets. There was no fence, and there were no guards around the ghetto, but the Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto area. The Jews wore armbands and lived in overcrowded conditions—some people had to sleep on the floor. There was no schooling for the children, and Halpern also does not recall any medical care. The Jews of Radziechów were able to obtain some flour or potatoes by purchase or barter from the local population. He recalls that the food was smuggled in at night.²

In the summer and fall of 1942, the Jews from many of the surrounding villages were concentrated in Radziechów in a series of resettlement operations.³ Sonia Kaplan was among them. She recalls that the Germans “cleared out a couple of streets and Jews from the surrounding area congregated here as well.” Sonia and her family were allotted one room to live in—and everyone was afraid of the word *Aktion*. Sonia and her brother dug a hole under the floorboards to hide when that day came. When the Aktions finally started, Sonia and her brother hid in that hole and survived the roundup.⁴

Starting in the fall of 1942, Jews were deported from Radziechów in successive large-scale Aktions. During the first Aktion on September 15, 1942, about 1,400 Jews were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec.⁵ According to testimony given at the Eichmann trial by Dr. Wells, part of his family was taken in 1942 just before Yom Kippur (September 21) from the village of Stojanów to Radziechów: “There they sat at the railway station for two days and two nights without any food . . . and then they were packed into railway wagons and sent away to Bełżec.”⁶

On September 21, 1942, around 500 Jews from Radziechów were taken to Kamionka Strumilowa, where they were shot together with Jews from other places, including Chołojów and Busk.⁷ A description of how the men were rounded up can be

found in the town's yizkor book. Leon Shrage reports that after the first Aktion in Radziechów, the remaining Jews, both old and young, hid themselves in cellars or outside the town. When the Jews no longer came to work, the German authorities announced on placards that all Jews should assemble at the square on Yom Kippur to have their identity cards stamped. Anyone caught without such a stamp thereafter would face the death penalty. The Jews were unsure what to do, and about 480 people reported as requested. They were then escorted out of the town in a marching column guarded only by five Ukrainians and four Germans. According to Shrage, word went around the column for the Jews to overpower their guards and scatter, as they feared they were being taken to their deaths; but the rabbi, who was in the column, argued against it, urging his fellow Jews to have faith that God would protect them. Shrage then managed to escape from the column as it left the town.⁸

Joseph de Shrage, whose sister, father, and brother were among those escorted out of town that day, reports that the column was marched about 48 kilometers (30 miles), picking up additional Jews from other places on the way. His family members managed to bribe one of the guards and escaped. The others were shot into a large pit near Kamionka Strumiłowa. Some of the victims were only wounded, and Joseph de Shrage subsequently learned about the killing from one of the Jews who managed to climb out and escape.⁹

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, the Germans only established a ghetto in Radziechów at the beginning of October 1942. This is confirmed by Joseph de Shrage, who notes that at around this time, after the first two Aktions, they "started to make a ghetto in Radziechów."¹⁰ The ghetto contained Jewish craftsmen who had been selected out from the deportations and also other Jews who had been brought to Radziechów. Shortly after the ghetto's establishment, on October 7, 1942, 1,000 more Jews from Radziechów were deported to Bełżec.¹¹ Around this time a number of Jews from Witków Nowy were also brought to Radziechów.

Sonia Kaplan recalls that after the roundups life in the ghetto deteriorated rapidly. The Germans decided that the ghetto area was too big and reduced it by half. Sonia and her family now had to live in a kitchen, which they shared with 20 other people. The only thing people cared about was food. People were dying from starvation. The ghetto was enclosed by a wooden fence and a gate, which was guarded. There was no soup kitchen in the ghetto, and the only people who ate were those who dug out beets for the Germans outside the ghetto. Those who could not work (the young, old, and sick) had no food and were dying daily.¹²

After the three large Aktions, most of the remaining 500 Jews in Radziechów were resettled to the recently established ghetto in Sokal at the end of October 1942.¹³

Around 100 Jews then remained in Radziechów, charged by the Germans with sorting former Jewish property. The Germans shot this last group in the Poczaków Forest on March 15, 1943.

A number of Jews fled from Radziechów during the Aktions and sought shelter in the surrounding countryside.

Many of these Jews were subsequently denounced or caught by German patrols. Some survived with the aid of non-Jewish local acquaintances. Sala Bernsohn managed to survive two liquidation Aktions hidden in a shelter and then obtained Aryan papers and moved to Lwów.¹⁴

The Soviet army drove the Germans from the region in July 1944.

SOURCES Publications on the history of the Jewish population of Radziechów include G. Kressel, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Radikbov* (Tel Aviv: Society of Radikbov, Lopatyn, and Vicinity, 1976); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 496–498. The ghetto in Radziechów is also mentioned in Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 289; and in *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 111.

Relevant documentation concerning the destruction of the Jews of Radziechów can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/826, 1688, 4115, and 4855); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR 1340/67); DALO; GARF (7021-67-82); VHF (e.g., # 955, 16070, and 44393); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 5.
2. VHF, # 44393, testimony of Mark Halpern.
3. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 5.
4. VHF, # 955, testimony of Sonia Kaplan.
5. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 5.
6. Eichmann Trial, Session No. 23, May 2, 1961, as cited on www.nizkor.org.
7. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 5; Urteil LG-Stad, August 24, 1981 (10 Ks 9 Js 544/64 [29/78] gegen J. Nehring); AŻIH, 301/4855.
8. Leon Shrage, "Meyne iberlebnishn," in Kressel, *Sefer zikaron le-kehillot Radikbov*, pp. 100–104.
9. VHF, # 16070, testimony of Joseph de Shrage.
10. Ibid.
11. Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 385.
12. VHF, # 955.
13. GARF, 7021- 67-82, p. 82.
14. AŻIH, 301/4115, testimony of Sala Bernsohn.

RAWA RUSKA

Pre-1939: Rawa Ruska, town, Niemirów powiat, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Rawa-Ruskaia, raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rawa Ruska, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Rawa-Rus'ka, Zhovkva raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Rawa Ruska is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) north-northwest of Lwów. There were 7,120 Jews in Rawa Ruska on the eve of World War II.

German forces occupied Rawa Ruska in late June 1941, during the first days of the German invasion. Due to war operations, 125 houses were destroyed and others severely damaged; 400 Jewish families were rendered homeless.¹

In July 1941, a military commandant's headquarters (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. On August 1, 1941, Rawa Ruska became the center of Kreis Rawa Ruska, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was Dr. Hans-Walter Zinser until March 1942, and then in April, Gerhard Hager succeeded him. There was also a German Gendarmerie post in Rawa Ruska, a Criminal Police (Kripo) outpost, and a detachment of local Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). The Kripo outpost was subordinate to the Sicherheitspolizei-Aussendienststelle (Sipo outpost) in Sokal, which was headed by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk. Generally, a squad of Security Police from Sokal, with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, carried out the anti-Jewish Aktions in Rawa Ruska.

In early July 1941, more than 100 Jews were arrested and shot as alleged Communists. In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures was implemented in Rawa Ruska: Jews were required to wear distinctive armbands bearing the Star of David; those aged between 16 and 60 were compelled to engage in forced labor for low pay; they were forbidden to leave the town; and they were subjected to systematic robberies and beatings. As in other large towns, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created in Rawa Ruska almost immediately, headed initially by a German Jew named Schweitzer. Additionally, the occupiers ordered the creation of a Jewish Council for the Kreis (Kreisjudenrat), which could give orders to the other Jewish Councils in neighboring settlements. In total, some 22,000 Jews resided in Kreis Rawa Ruska, including the communities of Lubaczów, Niemirów, and Uhnów. The first head of the Judenrat, Schweitzer, is accused by some survivors of abusing his power, robbing people and sending them to their deaths. He was killed and replaced soon after the arrival of Kreishauptmann Hager in 1942.²

In November 1941, the Judenrat reported that there were 7,400 Jews residing in the town, including a number of refugees from Lwów and other places. Some 4,500 Jews were in need of social assistance, which consisted mainly of a soup kitchen that drained most of the community's remaining financial reserves. In addition, the Judenrat had to meet heavy contributions that the German authorities demanded and also pay the large number of forced laborers.³ In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to surrender their fur clothing to the Germans, and several hundred able-bodied Jews were deported to forced labor camps. Jews suffered from hunger and cold, and some died.

The systematic destruction of the town's Jews began in the spring of 1942. The first Aktion took place on March 19, 1942,⁴ when approximately 1,000 Jews were arrested on the streets and from their homes and places of work and were de-

ported to the Bełżec extermination camp, which was located about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) northwest of Rawa Ruska.⁵

In late July 1942, a second anti-Jewish Aktion took place in the city. The first company of German Police Battalion 133 and 60 Ukrainian Auxiliary Police from Lwów, as well as the local Judenrat and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), took an active part in the Aktion, along with the local Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen.⁶ During the Aktion, another 2,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec; along with them were deported hundreds of Jews from Niemirów and Uhnów.⁷ The considerable number of trains containing Jews passing through Rawa Ruska in the summer of 1942, and the proximity to Bełżec itself, meant that the local community soon received a clear impression of the fate of the Jews throughout Distrikt Galizien.

A few weeks after the second Aktion, in August 1942, the Germans began to concentrate the Jewish population in Rawa Ruska, designating three streets in the poorest section of the town as an open ghetto (*jüdisches Wohnviertel*). In this area there was no electricity and only two wells.⁸ Then, in late September and early October 1942, Jews from Magierów, Niemirów, Uhnów, Potylicz, Lubycza Królewska, and other nearby places were transferred into the Rawa Ruska ghetto.⁹ In addition, a number of Jews who had escaped from the trains heading to Bełżec also sought refuge there. As a result, the number of Jews in the ghetto probably rose to around 10,000 or more.¹⁰

Abraham Schall, a survivor from Niemirów, has described the transfer to Rawa Ruska: "At the end of September, the Judenrat was instructed that all the Jews had to move to Rawa Ruska . . . by the following evening. We could take with us anything we wanted . . . but the people were plundered by the Gestapo and Ukrainian militia on the way. Nobody dared to remain in Niemirów. Two girls, who were discovered there after the deadline, were brought to Rawa Ruska and immediately shot."¹¹

Despite the new influx, the area of the ghetto was not increased at all. This led to tremendous overcrowding, with two or three families, between 20 and 30 people, living in each room. Together with the severe lack of food, water, warm clothing, and medicine, the appalling living conditions soon led to a large-scale outbreak of typhus in the ghetto. About 10 to 20 people died daily from the disease. In late 1942, probably at the start of December, the ghetto was declared closed. Jews were no longer permitted to leave the ghetto to go to their places of work. Fearing a further Aktion, many Jews prepared bunkers and other hiding places.¹²

In December 1942, the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Distrikt Galizien, SS-Brigadeführer Friedrich Katzmann, used the severe typhus epidemic as a pretext for liquidating the ghetto. The liquidation Aktion took place on December 7–11, 1942, with the assistance of a squad of Security Police from Sokal, the German Gendarmerie, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and the operational squad of the 5th Company of Police Regiment 24. In the report of June 30, 1943, prepared by SSPF Katzmann, the circumstances of the ghetto's liquidation are described as follows:

The Rawa Ruska Jews, fearing an evacuation, hid those who were ill with typhus in holes in the ground. When the evacuation was set to begin, it was discovered that 3,000 Jews, sick with typhus, were lying around in the ghetto. All police officials, who had been vaccinated for typhus, had to be called upon immediately to destroy the source of the infection. Thus, we were able to destroy this source of the plague, losing only one person in the process.¹³

During the liquidation Aktion, at least 5,000 Jews were shot on the spot, 2,500 were deported to Bełżec in four trains, and several hundred young Jews were deported to various labor camps.¹⁴ The operational squad of the 5th Company of Police Regiment 24 alone shot 750 Jews during the “cleansing” of the ghetto territory, according to its report dated December 12, 1942.¹⁵

After the liquidation of the ghetto, approximately 60 Jews were left alive in the town, housed in a separate barracks outside the ghetto, to bury those killed. Of those sent to the labor camps, some were returned to the town three weeks later; they were employed in collecting, organizing, and sorting property from Jewish houses and cleaning the territory of the former ghetto. Aside from these “legal” Jews, about 250 to 300 illegal Jews were hiding in the ghetto; the legal Jews provided them with food. The Germans shot many of the illegals on sight. In March 1943, they shot the burial team, and the remaining 100 or so legal laborers stayed in the ghetto until June.¹⁶ The first head of this remnant ghetto or labor camp (from mid-December 1942 until mid-February 1943) was SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Grzimek, who, from February 19, 1943, was the head of the Jewish camp (*Judenlager*) in Lwów.

On May 1, 1943, the remaining 300 to 400 Jewish inmates from the liquidated labor camp in Mosty Wielkie, which was located 37 kilometers (23 miles) east of Rawa Ruska, were transferred to Rawa Ruska. Here they were accommodated in 10 barracks and were employed in repairing and building roads. In June 1943, the Germans shot all of these Jews, together with the others remaining in Rawa Ruska, as Kreis-hauptmann Hager refused to provide them with food. The Germans even lured the remaining illegal Jews out of hiding with a false promise to send them to the labor camp at Potylicz if a specific sum of money was collected. Most sources date the final massacre of the remaining Jews around June 8–10, 1943, at a mass grave in the forest near the village of Borowe, just to the west of Rawa Ruska.¹⁷ Local inhabitants were requisitioned to fill in the graves; blood streamed out, and the ground continued to heave for some time after the shooting. Some witnesses recall that one group of victims was blown up with dynamite, scattering body parts around the vicinity.¹⁸

On January 29, 1949, SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Grzimek, head of the Jewish labor camp in Rawa Ruska, was sentenced to death in Poland; he died in prison in 1950. On July 13, 1949, former SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk was sentenced to life in prison in Munich, Germany.

SOURCES Information regarding the persecution and destruction of the Jewish population of Rawa Ruska can be found in the following publications: A.M. Ringel and Y.Ts. Rubin, eds., *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Ravah-Ruskah veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Ravah-Ruskah veba-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1973); J. Iszchulow, “Zagłada Żydów w mieście i powiecie Rawa Ruska,” *BŻIH*, no. 102 (1977); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 498–503—an English translation is available via jewishgen.org. There is also a short survivor testimony published in Rima Dulkinienė and Kerry Keys, eds., *With a Needle in the Heart: Memoirs of Former Prisoners of Ghettos and Concentration Camps* (Vilnius: Garnelis, 2003), pp. 84–87.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 211/896, 301/4950a and 4950b, and 302/71); BA-BL (e.g., R 58/1002); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, AR-Z 3/63); DALO (R 28-1-4, R 3-1-279); GARF (7021-67-80); RGVA (1323-2-292b); USHMM; YIU (e.g., nos. 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 142); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 211/896, Judenrat Rawa Ruska to the JSS in Kraków, November 24, 1941.

2. Yehushe Volfus, “My Experiences,” in Ringel and Rubin, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Ravah-Ruskah*, pp. 230–247.

3. AŻIH, 211/896, Judenrat Rawa Ruska to the JSS in Kraków, November 24, 1941.

4. Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report for the Rava Russkaia raion, September 24–30, 1944, published in *L'vivshchyna u Velykii Vitchyzniani viini (1941–1945 rr.)* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1968), pp. 134–139.

5. AŻIH, 301/4950b. According to other sources (e.g., Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987], p. 384), the first Aktion took place in Rawa Ruska on March 20, 1942, when 1,500 Jews were deported.

6. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944. Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997), p. 224. The Aktion took place between July 27 and July 29, 1942.

7. AŻIH, 301/4950b. According to other sources (Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 384), the second Aktion took place in Rawa Ruska on July 29, 1942, when 1,200 Jews were deported together with 800 from Niemirów.

8. AŻIH, 301/4950b.

9. See Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 8.

10. AŻIH, 301/4950b, gives the figure of 15,000, which is probably too high. BA-BL, R 58/1002, Schenk report, May 15, 1943, gives what was probably the official figure of 8,000.

11. AŻIH, 301/4950a, testimony of Abraham Schall.

12. Ibid., 301/4950a and 4950b; 302/71, testimony of Zelda Ginzburg, who erroneously dates the establishment of the ghetto to 1941; and Khayim Shpaster, “The End of My Town

Rave,” in Ringel and Rubin, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Ravah-Ruskah*, pp. 254–265.

13. *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal*, vol. 37 (Nuremberg, 1948), pp. 404–405, Doc. L-018.

14. The ChGK report of September 24–30, 1944 (see note 4 above) estimates much higher numbers of victims.

15. RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 6.

16. AŽIH, 301/4950b.

17. Ibid.; Thomas Sandkühler, “*Endlösung*” in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz-Verlag, 1996), p. 236. According to the ChGK, some 1,500 corpses were found at the site (see note 4).

18. YIU, nos. 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 142.

ROHATYN

Pre-1939: Rohatyn, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Rogatin, raion center, Stanislav oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rohatyn, Kreis Brzezany, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: raion center, Ivano-Frankivs’k oblast’, Ukraine

Rohatyn is located 61 kilometers (38 miles) north of Stanisławów. On the eve of war in 1939, the Jewish population was 3,282.¹

Rohatyn was occupied by German forces in early July 1941; more than 3,000 Jews remained in the town. Initially Rohatyn was governed by a German military commandant’s office; then in August 1941, a civil administration took over. Rohatyn became part of the Kreis Brzezany, in Distrikt Galizien, within the Generalgouvernement. From November 1941 until January 1943, the head of the Kreis (Kreishauptmann) in Brzezany was Hans-Adolf Asbach; he was replaced by Dr. Werner Becker.

Until the end of March 1942, the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów, headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger, organized large-scale anti-Jewish Aktions in Rohatyn. From April 1942, responsibility for Rohatyn was transferred to the Sipo-Aussendienststelle in Tarnopol, which from October 1941 was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller. In June 1943, he was replaced by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger. There was also a post of the German Criminal Police (Kripo) and German Gendarmerie in Rohatyn, as well as a Ukrainian police unit. All these units participated in the various anti-Jewish Aktions.

At the end of July 1941, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 12 people. Its members were mainly former members of the Jewish community administration (kehillah), including its head, Shlomo Pomerantz, and the head of the newly formed Jewish Police, Meir Weiser. The Judenrat sought to prevent the continuous seizure of Jews from the streets for forced labor by the Ukrainian militia and the theft of Jewish property. In August 1941,

the German authorities ordered the Judenrat to collect and deliver a fine of 1 million zloty. In the same month, they also ordered the concentration of the Jews into a specific quarter of town, creating a “Jewish residential district” (open ghetto). The ghetto was in the poorest part of town, enclosed by the Gnila Lipa River, the stream running into the river, and the marketplace. All streets leading into the ghetto were blocked off, and only two exit points were open, manned by the Jewish Police. There was terrible overcrowding, with each family allotted only one room.²

In September, the German authorities issued orders for the Jews to remain within the limits of the ghetto and to wear distinguishing armbands. In addition to organizing a labor office and a post office and distributing meager rations, the Judenrat implemented special German instructions, often involving the confiscation of property.³

The first large-scale killing Aktion against the Jews of Rohatyn was organized by Hans Krüger on March 20, 1942. On this day, members of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen herded the Jewish population to the central market square, then took them by truck to a pit near the railroad station. Some specialist workers, including dentists and pharmacists, were selected out and sent back to the ghetto. The Security Police from Stanisławów shot their victims in groups from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M., when the remainder was released.⁴

According to the estimate of the Jewish Council, 1,820 people were shot on that day.⁵ Around 1,000 Jews survived. Following this Aktion, more Jews from the surrounding villages of the Rohatyn Rayon were resettled into the “open ghetto,” which was also reduced in size, worsening the overcrowding.⁶

By the summer of 1942, the Rohatyn Jews became increasingly aware that their fate was sealed and sought to survive either by hiding on the “Aryan side” outside the ghetto or by constructing hiding places inside the ghetto.⁷

The second Aktion took place on September 21–22, 1942, at the time of Yom Kippur. The Aktion took two days, as so many Jews went into hiding that the Germans could not initially fill the waiting train cars. Some 300 Jews were killed on the spot, and 700 more were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁸ This Aktion was organized by the Security Police detachment from Tarnopol, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian policemen. After the Aktion, at the end of October 1942, more Jews from Bursztyn, Bolszowce, and Bukaczowce were resettled into the Rohatyn ghetto. As a result of this massive influx, the Jewish population of Rohatyn rose to some 4,000 or 5,000 people.

In the summer and fall of 1942, the Jewish Council in Rohatyn repeatedly sent its representatives to visit the office of the Security Police in Tarnopol, hoping to learn about their plans regarding the ghetto and defer its destruction with generous bribes. Nevertheless, the Security Police conducted a third Aktion on December 8, 1942, in which 1,400 Jews were deported from Rohatyn and 500 more were murdered in the

town.⁹ Between 4,300 and 5,000 Jews are estimated to have been killed in the three main Aktions.

On November 10, 1942, SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger ordered that the Jewish residential district in Rohatyn should be completely fenced off from the rest of the town, creating an enclosed ghetto.¹⁰ The 3,000 Jews who still resided in the ghetto were now physically separated from the surrounding population.¹¹

Owing to overcrowding and lack of sanitary facilities, the ghetto was plagued by epidemics of typhus and dysentery. The typhus epidemic reached a climax in the winter of 1942–1943. The Jewish Council opened a hospital for a limited number of patients. Food was scarce, as all contact with the surrounding population was prohibited. Only those Jews who still had some property (clothing was especially in demand among the peasants) could trade it for food; a black market continued to flourish across the border of the ghetto. The ghetto Jews were also taken daily for forced labor outside the ghetto in various German offices and stores, on road construction, and at the railroad.

Despite the hunger, persecution, and death, many Jews maintained their religious observances. Torah scrolls were distributed among private homes, and people congregated during the day to say Kaddish (prayers for the dead) for those who had died.¹²

In the period from February to April 1943, the German Security Police conducted several further Aktions in the ghetto. With the assistance of the Jewish Police, several hundred able-bodied Jews were selected for forced labor at the Borki Wielkie camp, near Tarnopol.¹³ On March 2, 1943, those Jews who had typhus were targeted, and 30 were shot in their own homes. The Security Police also murdered the patients in the Jewish hospital, together with the entire staff. Members of the Jewish Police were ordered to assist in carrying this out. Finally, on April 24, 1943, SS-Oberscharführer Ludwig Wenzel personally shot 40 Jewish children.¹⁴

On June 6, a Gestapo unit arrived in Rohatyn from Lwów. The Security Police detachment from Tarnopol, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian policemen, surrounded the ghetto, rounded up about 2,500 Jews, and shot them at the Jewish cemetery.¹⁵ To capture the remaining Jews in hiding, the Ukrainian police set the ghetto on fire. There was some armed resistance, but this was quickly crushed.¹⁶

It is estimated that in the period from 1941 to 1943 a total of 5,000 Jews were murdered in Rohatyn, and 2,000 more were deported to Bełżec. When the Red Army liberated Rohatyn, only a few survivors remained of a once-flourishing Jewish community of several thousand people.

After the war, Asbach was one of the founders of the Union of Expellees and the Disenfranchised (1950). Until 1957 he was a minister in Schleswig-Holstein. His case was closed due to “lack of evidence” in 1976. Becker was a judge in an administrative court after the war. His case was similarly never brought to court; it was closed in 1975 also due to lack of evi-

dence. He died in 1991. Hans Krüger was sentenced to life in prison on May 6, 1968, by a court in Münster. He was released in 1986 and died two years later. Müller received his life sentence in Stuttgart on July 15, 1966, and died in 1988. Wilhelm Krüger was under investigation for a while, but the case was, like so many others, unable to produce a conviction.

SOURCES Publications on the destruction of the Jewish population of the town include the following: Mordechai Amihai, David Stockfish, and Shmuel Bari, eds., *Kehilat Rohatyn ve-ha-seviva; Rohatyn: A Town That Perished* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Rohatyn in Israel, 1962); Alexander Kimmel, *Child of the Shoah* (Alexander Kimel, 2000); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 506–510.

Documents regarding the fate of the Jewish population of Rohatyn under the German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/2572); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-13); NARA; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-73-13, pp. 34 and reverse.
2. Rosa Halpern (Faust), “A Diary of the Rohatyn Ghetto,” in Amihai, Stockfish, and Bari, *Rohatyn: A Town That Perished*, pp. 27–31; Kimmel, *Child of the Shoah*, chaps. 8 and 9.
3. Halpern, “A Diary of the Rohatyn Ghetto,” pp. 27–31.
4. Schwurgericht beim Landgericht Münster, 5 Ks 4/65, Urteil vom 3. und 6. Mai 1968 in der Strafsache gegen Hans Krüger u.a., in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 28 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 674, pp. 165–173; Dr. Avraham Schtertzer, “How Rohatyn Died,” in Amihai, Stockfish, and Bari, *Rohatyn: A Town That Perished*, p. 51.
5. GARF, 7021-73-13, p. 34. The Rohatyn yizkor book puts the number of casualties at 3,000 adults and 600 children; see Amihai, Stockfish, and Bari, *Rohatyn: A Town That Perished*, p. 51.
6. Kimmel, *Child of the Shoah*, chap. 11.
7. Schtertzer, “How Rohatyn Died,” pp. 51–53.
8. GARF, 7021-73-13, pp. 2 and reverse. According to another source (7021-73-13, p. 34), 800 Jews were deported and 200 more were killed on the spot; Kimmel, *Child of the Shoah*, chap. 13.
9. GARF, 7021-73-13, pp. 2 and reverse.
10. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
11. Amihai, Stockfish, and Bari, *Rohatyn: A Town That Perished*, pp. 47–48.
12. Kimmel, *Child of the Shoah*, chap. 14.
13. Amihai, Stockfish, and Bari, *Rohatyn: A Town That Perished*, pp. 45–50.
14. SWCA, H. Zenner, “Wie ein Jude lebte während der russischen und deutschen Okkupation in Polen 1939–1945,” Online Special Collections, Collection 6: ZENNER Hermann.
15. GARF, 7021-73-13, pp. 20 (both sides), 34.
16. NARA, N-Doc. 018-L, Katzmann report, June 30, 1943.

RUDKI

Pre-1939: Rudki (Yiddish: Ridik), town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Drohobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Rudky, Sambir raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Rudki is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Lwów. According to the Polish census, there were 1,962 Jews residing in Rudki in 1931.

On September 12, 1939, German troops occupied Rudki. Shortly after their arrival, they burned down part of the town, leaving many Jews homeless. They also enforced a curfew and shaved the beard off the rabbi. Rumors were spreading of a pogrom being organized by the Germans and local Ukrainians when the arrival of the Red Army temporarily relieved the pressure on the Jews.¹ Overnight they became Soviet citizens, and a number of Jews were recruited into the Red Army. The new Soviet authorities suppressed Jewish commercial and communal activities. In mid-1941, there were approximately 3,000 Jews in Rudki, including a number of refugees who had arrived from western and central Poland in the fall of 1939.

Following the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, units of the German 17th Army occupied Rudki on June 27. In July, a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. On August 1, 1941, Eastern Galicia was transferred to a German civil administration. Rudki was in Kreis Lemberg-Land, which was governed by Kreishauptmann Otto Bauer until March 1942; then Dr. Werner Becker until early 1943; and finally, Baron Joachim von der Leyen.² Most of the anti-Jewish Aktions in Rudki were carried out by a squad of Security Police and SD from Lwów, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei).

The first Aktion was carried out in Rudki in early July 1941. An Einsatzkommando of the Security Police and SD arrived (probably from Lwów) and arrested 39 Jews from the intelligentsia. The arrestees were taken to a forest 3 kilometers (2 miles) outside the town, where they were murdered. The synagogue was also burned to the ground.³

In July 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in the town by the German military administration, and Jews were forced to wear white armbands bearing blue Stars of David. The German authorities confiscated Jewish property, especially valuable items, and deprived Jews of most rights and liberties. All Jews had to be registered, and they were compelled to engage in hard manual labor.

On November 25, 1942 (in accordance with the November 10 order of Higher SS and Police Leader [HSSPF] SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger), the Kreishauptmann in Lwów issued instructions for the establishment of a Jewish ghetto (*Judenwohnbezirk*) in Rudki, which would also contain several hundred Jews from the surrounding communities of Kupnowice, Dydiatycze, Hoszany, Tuligłowy, and Podwierzyniec.⁴ At the end of November, however, a second

Aktion was carried out in Rudki during which the German forces deported 821 Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp. A similar number of Jews were deported from the nearby towns of Komarno and Szczercz along with the prisoners from Rudki.⁵

The ghetto was established on December 1, 1942, and the remaining Jews in Komarno were also transferred to Rudki. Altogether there were some 2,500 people in the ghetto. Approximately 500 of them died of hunger and typhus in the period up to April 1943. Jews who left the ghetto each day under guard to work were considered fortunate, as they might have the opportunity to obtain some food. Jews tried to keep up their spirits in the ghetto by spreading rumors that perhaps Hitler had died and that there might be a change of regime in Germany.⁶

Security Police and SD personnel from Lwów, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, liquidated the Rudki ghetto on April 9, 1943: about 300 workers were deported to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów; the other 1,700 Jews were escorted out of town to ditches prepared in the forest near Brzezina. Here the victims were made to stand on a wooden plank over the ditch and were shot so that they fell into it. After the liquidation Aktion the Germans declared the town to have been cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).⁷ The German office for setting prices in the office of the Kreishauptmann reported at the end of April that following the complete resettlement of the Jews earlier in the month, prices for agricultural products on the black market had halved in the Rudki subdistrict (Landgemeinde).⁸

A number of Jews managed to escape and hid with local peasants. They lived in constant fear of the Ukrainian policemen, which continued to search for them. The Jews in hiding lived under terrible conditions and listened keenly for any news from the front lines. One survivor recalls that the time in hiding also had a deep psychological impact. The Red Army recaptured the area in July 1944, liberating at least 18 Jews who had hidden successfully.⁹

SOURCES Personal accounts about the Jewish community in Rudki can be found in Josef Chrust, ed., *Rudki, sefer yizkor li-Yebude Rudki veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Hutsa be-hishtatfutam shel yots'e kehilat Rudki, 1977). A brief overview of the history of the community can also be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 503–505.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/527); BA-BL (R 58/214); DALO (e.g., R 24-2-40; R 24-3-156; and R 37-5-30); GARF (7021-58-21); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Chrust, *Rudki, sefer yizkor*, pp. 286–288.
2. Bauer was killed in February 1944; Becker died in 1991; and von der Leyen was killed in the bombing of Dresden in 1945.

3. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 20, July 12, 1941; GARF, 7021-58-21, pp. 199–200; AŽIH, 301/527, testimony of Leib Tell, 1945.

4. DALO, R 24-3-156, Kreishauptmann Lemberg-Land an die Landkommissare, November 25, 1942; see also Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.

5. GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 197; AŽIH, 301/527; Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 234.

6. AŽIH, 301/527.

7. Ibid.; GARF, 7021-58-21, p. 200; Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystryktie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7.

8. DALO, R 24-2-40.

9. AŽIH, 301/527.

SAMBOR

Pre-1939: Sambor, town, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: center, Kreis Sambor, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Sambir, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Sambor is located 68 kilometers (42 miles) west-southwest of Lwów. According to the 1931 census, there were 6,275 Jews in Sambor. Estimates for 1939 put the number of Jews at around 8,000.

With the German invasion in June 1941, groups of Jews tried to flee to the east, but the rapid German advance prevented the escape of all but a few.

German forces occupied the town on June 30, 1941. In July, a German military administration took charge, to be replaced on August 1 by a civil administration. Sambor then became part of Distrikt Galizien in the Generalgouvernement. The town was the administrative center of Kreis Sambor. Kreis Sambor was created from two former Polish powiats, Sambor and Turka, in which, according to the 1931 census, there were 21,885 Jews. The Kreis was governed by a district chief (Kreishauptmann). Dr. Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen held the post of Kreishauptmann from November 1941 until March 1942; Dr. Hans-Walter Zinser, from March until September 1942; and Dr. Karl-Georg Emerich, from October 1942 until April 1943. In the spring of 1943, Kreis Sambor was dissolved and incorporated into Kreis Drohobycz as the Landkommissariat Sambor. Hans Rockendorf was the Landkommissar in Sambor.

There were also a German Gendarmerie post in Sambor, a Criminal Police Commissariat (Kriminalkommissariat), and a detachment of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei). The Criminal Police was commanded initially by SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Ulrich Wüstner (1942–1943) and then by Kriminalobersekretär Johann Iselt (1943–1944). The Criminal Police Commissariat was subordinated to the Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat) in Drohobycz,

which was headed by SS-Sturmabführer Hans Block from June 1942 until August 1944. The anti-Jewish Aktions were generally carried out in the town by a team of Security Police from Drohobycz, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian policemen.

In the summer of 1941, the German military administration established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), chaired by Dr. Schneidscher, and a force of Jewish Police (headed by Herman Stahl) to implement the orders of the Jewish Council. Jews were deprived of all civil rights, and much Jewish property was confiscated (particularly valuables). In October 1941, all Jews in Sambor and the surrounding area were ordered to turn over all agricultural inventory and livestock to the German authorities, much of which was then appropriated by the Stelle zur Stärkung des Volksdeutschtums in Sambor (Office for the Strengthening of the Ethnic Germans in Sambor). All Jews had to be registered, and they were compelled to perform forced labor. Jewish apartments were also seized for the German authorities.

In early March 1942, a “Jewish residential district” (open ghetto) was created on the edge of town in Blich, and all Jews were supposed to move there by March 12.¹ In May, the population numbered 6,466 Jews. At the beginning of the summer of 1942, Jews from the surrounding communities, along with the Jews of Stary Sambor, were forcibly relocated to Sambor. Except for the murder of 32 Jewish prisoners in February 1942, there were no mass shootings of Jews in this period.²

From August to October 1942, four anti-Jewish Aktions were carried out in the town. The first Aktion took place on August 4. SS-Obersturmführer Robert Gschwendtner was in charge of this Aktion, along with the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Distrikt Galizien, SS-Brigadeführer Friedrich Katzmann. A squad of German Gendarmerie, Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and Jewish Police and a team of Security Police from Drohobycz headed by SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Gabriel participated in the Aktion. The German troops and policemen gathered the Jews in a stadium, and Jews from the surrounding area were also brought there (from Stary Sambor, Felsztyn, Strelki, Terszów, and other places). Jewish patients deemed too sick to be moved were murdered in the hospital.³ Subsequently, a selection was conducted in the stadium, supervised by the commander of the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów, SS-Obersturmführer Gustav Willhaus, and his assistant, SS-Untersturmführer Richard Rokita. During the selection, Rokita chose at least 150 and possibly as many as 600 people for the Janowska Street labor camp. Those Jews deemed “incapable of work” were killed on the spot. In the ghetto and at the stadium, at least 150 Jews were murdered. At noon, the greater part of the Jews destined for “transfer” were driven into freight cars and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp, while the selected Jews were locked up in barracks in the Jewish residential district. On August 6, after the chairman of the Jewish Council, Dr. Schneidscher, was able to free several people from the barracks at night, those Jews selected for the Janowska Street labor camp were

taken to Lwów. In their place, a group of Jewish workers was brought in from the Janowska Street labor camp; they prepared the productive machinery located in Sambor for transfer to Lwów under the direction of SS-Untersturmführer Rokita. All told, during the three days of the August Aktion, approximately 4,000 Jews were killed.⁴

On September 25–26, during the distribution of work permits to Jews by the Criminal Police, the second Aktion took place: the Jewish Council had to select about 300 old and sick Jews, who were placed in prison and then shot in a forest near Radlowicze.

On October 17–18 and 22, a team of Security Police from Drohobycz, the German Gendarmerie (commanded by Hauptmann der Gendarmerie Nebel), Schutzpolizei (a section of Company 5 of the 24th Police Battalion), and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police carried out the third and fourth Aktions in Sambor. During these Aktions, Jews were collected in the jail, along with Jews from the surrounding villages. The head of the jail, Friedrich Busse, subjected the Jews in jail to various forms of torture. Robert Quecke once again tried to get his Jewish workers released, but his attempts proved unsuccessful; the supervisor of the Criminal Police in Sambor threatened to shoot him, a fate Quecke managed to avoid only by escaping. During the third Aktion, about 1,000 Jews were transported to Bełżec, and during the fourth Aktion, 460.⁵ During the four Aktions, 5,000 Jews in total were transferred to the Bełżec extermination camp from Sambor (including Jews from the surrounding villages), about 600 Jews were transferred to the Janowska Street labor camp in Lwów, and about 400 Jews were killed in Sambor.

On December 1, 1942, the Jewish residential district in Sambor was isolated from the rest of the town by means of barbed wire and turned into an enclosed ghetto. All the Jews remaining in Kreis Sambor were forced to move to this ghetto, from Turka, Stary Sambor, Felsztyn, and surrounding villages. Altogether, there were more than 3,000 Jews in the ghetto.⁶ The Jews in the ghetto suffered from hunger and disease during the winter of 1942–1943. From time to time, small groups of Jewish youths were removed to the Janowska Street camp near Lwów.

In the period February to June 1943, the Security Police from Drohobycz, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, carried out four Aktions in the ghetto. SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Gabriel was in charge of the Aktions. The first Aktion took place on February 13, 1943, when about 500 Jews were shot in the forest near Radlowicze; they had been arrested by the Jewish Police in November and December 1942 during an Aktion against aged Jews (over 55 years) and had been in prison since then.⁷

On April 14, 1943, a second Aktion was carried out in the ghetto: about 1,200 people were captured and placed in jail after the families of members of the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police (about 300 people) had been selected out, and on April 18, 900 of those held in the jail were shot in the cemetery.⁸ After this Aktion, about 2,000 people remained in the ghetto, most of whom were engaged in construction work.⁹

On May 20–22, a third ghetto Aktion was carried out, during which several hundred Jews “incapable of work” were killed in the forest near Radlowicze, 550 were transferred to the concentration camp of Majdanek, and 70 to 80 people were transferred to the Janowska Street labor camp.¹⁰

On June 5, 1943, the German police began the liquidation of the Sambor ghetto. It was accompanied by the arson and detonation of houses, with the goal of forcing Jews to leave their hiding places. Those Jews captured were put in jail, and on June 10 they were taken in trucks to the forest near Radlowicze and shot there, including the members of the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police and their families. Altogether, more than 1,000 people were killed during the liquidation of the ghetto.¹¹ Some of the last Jews from Sambor tried to escape the ghetto and reach the Hungarian border, but most were killed on the way. Others tried to go into hiding using Aryan papers but without success. Attempts at rescue were limited, with a few exceptions. For example, Ivan and Maria Malenkevich, a Ukrainian couple from a village near Sambor, sheltered the siblings Artur and Irina Sandauer for 14 months in their home, where they built a hiding place in the attic.¹²

After the liquidation of the ghetto, the Germans continued to shoot Jews who were found in their hiding places. Thus, on June 23, 1943, 100 people were shot, on July 6, 40 people, and on July 22, 25 people. Altogether, in 1943, about 3,000 Jews were killed in Sambor, and more than 600 Jews were transferred to Majdanek or to the Janowska Street labor camp.

At the beginning of 1943, there was an attempt to organize a Jewish underground. A group of young Jews, one of whose most active members was Artur Sandauer, acquired firearms and began training in the area of the Jewish cemetery. The group sought assistance from the Jewish Council in securing provisions, but their efforts met with no success. As Irina Sandauer recalled, after the April 1943 Aktion (*aktsiah*), her brother went to extraordinary lengths to secure weapons for his group. To acquire the necessary financial resources to purchase 10 rifles from a Pole, Artur Sandauer turned to the treasurer of the Jewish Council, Batzker. After Batzker refused to hand over money for resistance activities, Sandauer tried to steal the money from the Jewish Council but only managed to make off with three typewriters. The series of Aktions carried out by the Nazis interfered with further preparations for active resistance.

In total, about 160 Jews from Sambor managed to survive, mostly by hiding with Poles and local peasants. For example, in Czukowa near Sambor a peasant hid 18 Jews, who were not betrayed although most of the village knew about them. One of these Jews was, however, murdered by members of the Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army, AK) after the Soviet forces arrived.¹³

Dr. Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen died in 1946 in an internment camp in Dachau. Dr. Hans-Walter Zinser was a federal judge after the war in the federal administrative court in Berlin; he was under investigation for some time, but the case was closed in 1968 owing to insufficient evidence. Dr. Karl-Georg Emmerich was convicted in 1950 by a Soviet mili-

tary tribunal; he died in prison. Gschwendtner was under investigation for some time after the war, but the investigation was abandoned in 1968 owing to his inability to give testimony (he was then 86 years old). Katzmann died in 1957 (he lived in Germany under the name Bruno Albrecht). Gabriel was sentenced in 1947 by a Soviet military tribunal to 25 years imprisonment; in 1955 he returned to Austria, where in 1957 he was once again arrested and in 1959 sentenced to life imprisonment in Vienna; in 1968 he was released from prison. Willhaus died in 1945; Rokita was under investigation for some time after the war and in preliminary confinement, but he did not appear in court owing to his health; he died in 1976 at the age of 82.

SOURCES The following publications were consulted in the preparation of this entry: Alexander Manor, ed., *Sefer Sambor–Sary Sambor; pirkei edut ve-zikaron le-kebilot* (Tel Aviv: Sambor/Sary Sambor Society, 1980); Danuta Dabrowka, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 340–346.

Documents of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), captured German documents, and the testimonies of witnesses and survivors regarding the extermination of Sambor's Jews can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/1474, 1747, 3745, 3763, 3768, 3773, 3898, 4054, 4967, 4975); BA-BL; DALO; GARF (7021-58-22); GStAPK Berlin (P[K] Js 7/68, case against Zinser); RGVA; Sta. Mü I (112 Js 11- 13/68, case against Brumberger); USHMM; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. *Lemberger Zeitung*, March 5, 1942, cited by Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung, in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 194.
2. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 26, testimony of David Freimann.
3. Manor, *Sefer Sambor*, p. 213.
4. Dr. Irina Glanz-Sandauer, “Between Life and Death,” in *ibid.*, p. 214.
5. Meldung 5./Pol.Rgt. 24 an Kommandeur d. Ordnungspolizei, October 25, 1942, RGVA, 1323-2-2926, p. 28.
6. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 16, testimony of David Freimann.
7. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 26, testimony of David Freimann (Freimann claims that the shooting took place on February 15).
8. GARF, 7021-58-22, p. 18; testimony of Samuel Berger, taken June 24, 1948, in the bureau of “Jewish Historical Documentation” in Vienna; Sta. Mü I: Verfahren 112 Js 11- 13/68 (case against Brumberger).
9. Testimony of Samuel Berger.
10. Meldung Kriminalkommissariat Sambor über Munitionsverbrauch bei Judenaktionen, June 21, 1943, DALO, R 36-1-6, p. 102; GARF, 7021-58-22, pp. 18, 26; testimony of Samuel Berger; testimony of David Freimann.
11. GARF, 7021-58-22, pp. 18, 26 (claims 1,500 were killed); testimony of Samuel Berger (claims 800 were killed

during the liquidation of the ghetto); testimony of David Freimann (claims 1,500 to 1,600 were killed).

12. Glanz-Sandauer, “Between Life and Death,” p. 215.

13. AŽIH, 301/4967, testimony of Meyer Lamet, July 15, 1945, in Bucharest.

SKAŁAT

Pre-1939: Skałat, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Skałat, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Tarnopol, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Pidvolochis'k raion, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Skałat lies 32 kilometers (20 miles) southeast of Tarnopol. In 1921 there were 2,919 Jews (49.1 percent) living in Skałat. By 1939, there were 4,800 Jews there, of whom roughly 200 fled with the retreating Red Army after the Germans invaded the USSR on June 22, 1941.

German forces occupied Skałat on July 5, 1941. A German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town until August, when a civil administration took over. Skałat became part of Kreis Tarnopol, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann in Tarnopol was first Gerhard Hager (until April 1942) and then Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the town were organized and carried out by a detachment of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) based in Tarnopol, which was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller from October 1941 until May 1943, then by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger from June 1943 until March 1944. In Skałat itself, there was a Criminal Police (Kripo) post, an Order Police post (Schutzpolizei), and a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police that actively participated in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In mid-July 1941, a temporary Jewish Council of 12 people headed by Nikolaj Bilyk was established on the orders of the Ukrainian town council. Then in early August, the Judenrat was reorganized into a 10-person council headed by Meyer Nirler. On July 19, the Jews were forced to make a contribution of 600,000 rubles within five days. In addition, the Judenrat had to assign 200 to 300 people daily to perform various jobs for the German and Ukrainian administration, as well as supplying German officials with furniture, clothes, and dishes.¹

From August 1941 until August 1942, there were no large-scale Aktions in Skałat; only young and healthy Jews were occasionally selected for work in labor camps. Thus, on October 17, 1941, 200 Jews were sent to work on the railroad in Maksymówka, but at the end of the month the Judenrat was able to obtain their release by paying a large ransom.² On November 24, 1941, 120 women and 120 men were sent to the labor camp at Borki Wielkie (the women were also released two weeks later for a ransom).³ In January 1942, another 130 to 150 people were sent to work in a camp in Nowosiółka; in June 1942, they were transferred to a camp in Kamionki.⁴ Fi-

nally, in July 1942, 30 young Jewish women were sent to a camp in Jagielnica to work on synthetic rubber plantations, but some time later, their parents were able to get them released with a bribe.⁵

On August 31, 1942, the first Aktion took place in the town: the Judenrat, with the assistance of the Jewish Police, collected over 500 elderly Jews on orders of the head of the Security Police post in Tarnopol, Müller. The Jews were taken in trucks to Tarnopol, then deported from there by train to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁶

On October 1, 1942, the German civil administration ordered all the Jews of the Skałat, Grzymałów, and Podwołoczyska subdistricts to move to Skałat by October 15.⁷ After these Jews had arrived in Skałat, the Security Police from Tarnopol under Müller's command organized a second Aktion on October 21–22, 1942. During the Aktion the Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian policemen rounded up about 3,000 Jews with some assistance from the Jewish Police, who helped to reveal some Jewish hiding places (so-called bunkers). Once captured, the Jews were transported by train to Bełżec on the evening of October 22; 153 Jews were murdered in the town. In Lwów, 200 people were selected from the transport for the Janowska Street camp, and the remaining Jews were forced to remove their clothing, to make any escape more difficult.⁸

On November 9, 1942, the Tarnopol Security Police conducted a third Aktion in Skałat. The Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police seized approximately 1,000 Jews in the town and sent them to Tarnopol on trucks borrowed temporarily from the stone quarry in Nowosiółka. From there they were deported by train to Bełżec. About 100 Jews were selected for the labor camp in Hłuboczek.⁹

In April 1942, the Jews were ordered to leave their homes in the town center and to move to the periphery of the town. In mid-October 1942, the Germans created a Jewish residential district (open ghetto) in Skałat, which consisted of mainly dilapidated houses on several small streets in the poorest part of town between the marketplace and the synagogue. On October 25, 1942, soon after the second Aktion, an order came from Tarnopol to reduce the size of this district.¹⁰ Jewish labor gangs from the ghetto were organized to demolish the emptied Jewish houses, and salvaged wood was sold cheaply for heating or building material.¹¹ At the beginning of December 1942, in accordance with the order issued by SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger on November 10, the district officially became a ghetto.¹²

The Security Police from Tarnopol conducted two Aktions in the ghetto. On April 7, 1943, German and Ukrainian police captured and shot approximately 700 Jews in the ghetto. Eighteen Jewish policemen participated in this Aktion; they forced the victims to undress and maintained order at the killing site, beating those who did not move quickly enough. For this, the Germans had promised to spare their lives, but they were also shot into the same ditches at the end of the Aktion. Some members of the Jewish Council and their families met the same fate.¹³

On June 9, 1943, a further Aktion was carried out in the ghetto in which 10 Jewish Police from Tarnopol participated by helping the Germans search for Jews in hiding. During the Aktion, approximately 600 Jews were captured; about 20 of them were transferred to the labor camp in Skałat, and the rest were shot. Shortly afterwards, another 120 Jews were shot; they were discovered in shelters in the former ghetto or were captured by Ukrainian peasants in surrounding villages.¹⁴ A group of Jews from the ghetto tried to find shelter in the labor camp in Skałat, but the Jewish camp administrators refused to help them out of fear. On June 16, 1943, 50 people were handed over to German police and then shot at the cemetery.¹⁵

Following the Aktion on April 7, 1943, a resistance group, led by Mechel Glanz, began to prepare for armed resistance in the ghetto. Glanz had arrived from Kopyczyńce. He was soon joined by other young people, including Lonek Pudles, Sholem Schechter, Meyer Grinfeld, Bucio Elfenbein, Henek Weinberg, and many others. They attended secret meetings to plan for resistance during the expected Aktion. The young men started collecting arms, but the Germans, aware of the existence of the group, brought forward the date of the Aktion, catching the group unprepared. With only a pair of pistols and 12 grenades lacking firing pins, there was no possibility of serious armed resistance. On June 9, 1943, the Germans started the liquidation of the ghetto, which resulted in the complete destruction of the Jewish community of Skałat.¹⁶

During 1941–1943, approximately 2,500 Jews were killed in the town or nearby, and approximately 4,500 more Jews were transported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Thus, approximately 7,000 Jews were murdered in total, including the Jews from Grzymałów and Podwołoczyska. Almost 200 Jews from Skałat and its vicinity survived the German occupation.

Hager died in 1961. Harbou died in 1946 while interned by the Americans at Dachau. Hermann Müller, born on January 30, 1909, was sentenced to life imprisonment by the regional court (Landgericht) in Stuttgart on July 15, 1966. He died in 1988. Wilhelm Krüger, also born in 1909, was held in American captivity after the war, but the investigation against him was closed without an indictment being issued.

SOURCES Publications on the fate of Skałat's Jews during the Holocaust include Abraham Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl* (USA, 1995), which is an expanded edition in English of the original yizkor book, A. Vaysbrod, *Es shtarbt a shtetl: Megiles Skalat; baarbet un redagirt fun Y. Kaplan* (Munich: der Tsentraler historisher komisye baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der amerikaner zone in Daytshland, 1948). The yizkor book *Skalat: kovets zikaron li-kebilab she-barvab ba-Sho'ah / ha-orekh Hayim Bronshtain* [in Hebrew] (Petah Tikvah: Bet ha-sefer al shem Ya'akov Karol ve-Irgun Yehude Skalat be-Yisrael, 1971) was published in Israel. A brief article on the town can be found in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 400–404.

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jewish community in Skalat can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/905); BA-L (ZStL, AR-Z 294/59); BA-MA; BWSL (EL 317 III, Bü 1408); DATO; GARF (7021-75-12); USHMM; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, pp. 10–11.
2. GARF, 7021-75-12, p. 92; Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, p. 11.
3. GARF, 7021-75-12, pp. 92 and verso.
4. Ibid.
5. Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, p. 13.
6. Ibid., pp. 14–18.
7. GARF, 7021-75-12, pp. 92 and verso.
8. Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, pp. 23–27.
9. Ibid., pp. 31–32, 104; GARF, 7021-75-12, pp. 92 and verso.
10. Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, pp. 12, 20, 29.
11. Ibid., p. 32; see especially the diagram of the Skalat ghetto reproduced as an appendix in the same volume.
12. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.
13. Weissbrod, *Death of a Shtetl*, pp. 36–38.
14. Ibid., p. 45.
15. Ibid., pp. 56–57.
16. Ibid., pp. 43–44.

ŚNIATYŃ

Pre-1939: Śniatyń, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sniatin, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Sniatyn, Kreis Kolomea, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Śniatyń is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) southeast of Stanisławów. According to the 1931 census, 3,892 Jews lived in Śniatyń. By June 1941, allowing for an annual increase of 9 or 10 persons per 1,000, there would have been around 4,200 Jews in the town.

Romanian troops had occupied Śniatyń by the start of July 1941. Immediately they began to loot the town, and together with local Ukrainians they murdered more than a dozen Jews. Soon Hungarian forces replaced the Romanians, administering Śniatyń through a military commandant's office. The Hungarians introduced forced labor for the Jews, having them bring in the harvest and repair bridges.¹

At the end of August 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration: Śniatyń was incorporated into Kreis Kolomea, within Distrikt Galizien. Klaus Peter Volkman was appointed as the Kreishauptmann in Kołomyja

from August 1941 until July 1, 1942. SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Gorgon succeeded him until July 26, 1943.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Śniatyń were organized and conducted by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Kołomyja, which was headed by SS-Obersturmführer Peter Leideritz. In Śniatyń itself, a Border Police (Grenzpolizei) outpost was established, which served under the Security Police in Kołomyja. From September 1941 to February 1942, SS-Untersturmführer Paul Elsner headed the Border Police outpost; together with his fellow SS officers, he organized a private “harem” of Jewish women, whom he subsequently murdered. Elsner was caught stealing Jewish valuables, causing him to be court-martialed. From February to May 1942, Kriminalobersekretär Paul Behr commanded the post, and from June 1942, Max Sachs. A German Gendarmerie post and a local Ukrainian police unit were also established in Śniatyń.

The living conditions for the Jewish population deteriorated with the transfer of power into German hands. The German administration established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) under the leadership of a dentist named Cohen and ordered the registration of the Jews. The Germans confiscated large amounts of Jewish property, including most items of value. Jews were forbidden to trade with non-Jews. They were obliged to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. All male Jews aged between 15 and 60 were required to perform forced labor; subsequently, this was extended to female Jews.²

The Germans acted first against prominent Jews, Communists, and Soviet activists. On September 26, 1941, officers of the newly established Border Police post shot about 20 people in the vicinity of Śniatyń. In October and November 1941, the Germans shot around 60 people, and in March 1942 they murdered 70 more.³ According to one account, these selective killings deprived the Jewish community of its trusted leaders; those who subsequently served the Germans did so out of self-interest, hoping to save their own lives.⁴

At the end of March 1942, the German authorities completed the establishment of a so-called open ghetto, or Jewish residential district, in Śniatyń, concentrating the Jews in a special quarter of the town. (According to one source, the Germans started organizing an open ghetto in Śniatyń at the beginning of August 1941, moving the Jews into the area around Steczowska Street and forcing the non-Jews to move out of that area.)⁵ On April 2, 1942, the head of the Border Police, Behr, received an order from SS-Obersturmführer Leideritz to arrest and transport the Jews of Śniatyń via Kołomyja to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁶ The Jews were ordered to assemble at the high school building and have their papers checked. Only some 2,000 Jews complied, while the rest went into hiding. Only a few of those who appeared were released as specialist workers for the Wehrmacht. The majority of the 2,000 Jews were held prisoner for several days and then were subsequently deported to Bełżec by train. A number of Jews were also murdered in and around Śniatyń following searches in the ghetto for those in hiding.

Following the Aktion, groups of Jews were resettled from the surrounding villages into Śniatyń on April 27–28, 1942. At least 216 people were brought into the ghetto: 42 from the village of Podwysoka, 82 from Stecowa, 35 from Budyłów, 17 from Karłów, 23 from Bełtuja, and 17 from Zaprut'e.⁷ As a result of these resettlement efforts, the Jewish population in the Śniatyń ghetto reached 1,582 persons as of June 1942.⁸ Conditions in the ghetto were very overcrowded, with as many as 20 people sharing a room or five families in one house. They were largely without furniture. Hunger ravaged the ghetto: children searched for potato peelings to take home and eat. Hundreds of Jews died of hunger and disease in Śniatyń during the summer.⁹

On September 7, 1942, about 250 Jews were brought into the Śniatyń ghetto from the town of Zabłotów. This signaled the start of the final deportation Aktion and the liquidation of the ghetto. Over the following days, the Jews of Śniatyń were rounded up and held in the building of the high school. Then on September 10, 1942, just before Rosh Hashanah, the Security Police, the German Gendarmerie, and the Ukrainian policemen escorted all the Jews to the railway station and loaded them into 10 cattle cars. Several hundred were murdered in and around the town. The rest (probably about 1,500) were deported via Kołomyja to the extermination camp in Bełżec.¹⁰ A few Jews were excluded from deportation as craftsmen working for the Wehrmacht, but these were murdered a few weeks later. About 15 escapees from the Śniatyń ghetto successfully made their way across the Romanian border and subsequently to Palestine. The border patrols caught many others attempting to cross. In the weeks and months following the Aktion, many Jews were discovered in hiding and shot.

Paul Behr died in 1969 in West Germany while under investigation for war crimes. Max Sachs died in 1944.

SOURCES Published articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of Śniatyń include the following: *L'Extermination des Juifs en Pologne: Depositions de témoins oculaires. Cinquième Serie: Lwów-Śniatyń-Sandomierz* (Geneva, 1945); and "Śniatyn," in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 516–519.

Documents on the destruction of the Jews of Śniatyń can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/5438 and 6098); BA-L (ZStL, 208 AR-Z 277/60); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-17); RGVA (1323-2-292b); USHMM; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/5438, testimony of Norbert Fischer, July 17, 1957.

2. *L'Extermination des Juifs en Pologne*, pp. 21–22. Probably compiled from the statements of several survivors, the chronology in this report is unfortunately somewhat contradictory and unreliable.

3. V. Zamlyn'skyi, *Tavrovani prezyrstvom narodu* (Kiev, 1974), p. 40.

4. *L'Extermination des Juifs en Pologne*, p. 22.

5. AŻIH, 301/5438. Other sources date the establishment of the ghetto in December 1941 or early 1942.

6. BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 277/60, statement of P. Behr, August 13, 1964.

7. GARF, 7021-73-17, pp. 36, 43, 57–59, 62, 78–79.

8. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967) table 6.

9. *L'Extermination des Juifs en Pologne*, p. 22.

10. See the report of the commander of the 7th Company of the 24th Police Battalion, September 14, 1942, in RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 55.

SOKAL

Pre-1939: Sokal, town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sokal', raion center, L'vov oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Sokal, Kreis Kamionka-Strumilowa, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Sokal', raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Sokal is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) north-northeast of Lwów. The Jewish population numbered 4,360 (43 percent) in 1921 and 5,220 in 1931.

After the outbreak of World War II, Jewish refugees from Bełż, Krystynopol, and localities in western Poland arrived in Sokal; as a result, under Soviet rule (1939–1941) the Jewish population increased to more than 6,000. The refugees were lodged in synagogues and private homes, and a special committee was established to aid them. In the summer of 1940, many of the newly arrived refugees were deported to the Soviet interior.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Sokal on June 22, 1941. Initially, the town was run by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), but in August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Sokal became part of Kreis Kamionka-Strumilowa, within Distrikt Galizien. Until the end of November 1942, the Kreishauptmann was Regierungsrat SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rebay von Ehrenwiesen. He was succeeded on January 1, 1943, by Hauptschriftleiter SS-Untersturmführer Joachim Nehring, who in 1941–1942 had been the Kreishauptmann's deputy.

Starting in the fall of 1941, an outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) was stationed in Sokal, which until May 1942 was headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hans Block, and then from May 1942 until October 1943, by SS-Obersturmführer Oswald Heyduk. SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Geisenhof was the deputy head of the post, and SS-Hauptscharführer Hans Hartmann was in charge of "Jewish affairs" there. The Sipo outpost organized and implemented all the anti-Jewish Aktions in the town. Also in Sokal was a German Gendarmerie post and a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), which both took an active part in the anti-Jewish measures.

The first Jews were killed on June 22, 1941. On that day, the German soldiers who occupied the town shot 11 Jews in front of the Polish Cathedral.¹ Further killings in Sokal were organized by Sonderkommando (Sk) 4a, commanded by SS-Standartenführer Paul Blobel. The regional court (Landgericht) in Darmstadt subsequently described the Sk 4a shootings at the end of June 1941:

Immediately upon arriving in Sokal on June 27, 1941, from the officials, translators, and drivers, Blobel formed search detachments that with the help of the Ukrainian militia were to search for “suspicious persons,” including Communist functionaries and Jews. These detachments received the lists and drove off in automobiles to arrest the people. Some of the houses suspected of holding Communist functionaries were pointed out by informers among the local population. Those arrested were delivered to the squad’s base and from there, without interrogation, were taken by truck to the . . . brick factory 2 to 3 kilometers [1.2 to 1.9 miles] east of Sokal. There they were locked in and guarded.

After a brief interrogation, many of the prisoners were shot. In Sokal, members of Sk 4a shot, on June 28, “17 Communist functionaries, agents, and guerillas,” on June 29, “117 active Communists and NKVD agents,” and on June 30, “183 Jewish Communists.”²

In July, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created in the town, headed by the lawyer Grzegorz Januszczyński. It was assisted by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), which acted on the orders of the council. After about one month, the Jews were required to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David. Jews were registered for forced labor, and the Judenrat had to supply hundreds of forced laborers to the German authorities on a daily basis. At the end of July 1941, the German police demanded a large sum of gold from the Judenrat. Jews were also required to hand over furniture and other items to equip the apartments of the newly arrived German officials. Soon, most of the Jews’ property was confiscated, especially any valuables. Six Jewish hostages were shot on August 18, 1941, for disobeying the orders of the German authorities.³

From the fall of 1941 through to the summer of 1942, the Jews were subjected to forced labor, economic restrictions, and physical attacks. A number of Jews were shot by the German police on the streets of the town. At the end of December 1941, the Jews were required to surrender any fur items of clothing for the use of the German army. To enforce this decree, a number of Jews were held hostage. Many Jews suffered from hunger in the winter of 1941–1942, and the Jewish Council organized a soup kitchen to assist the needy.

From November 1941, those Jews without work permits, demonstrating regular employment for the Germans, could be rounded up and sent away to forced labor camps. For example, on March 28, 1942, 150 Jews were sent to a labor camp, and of this group, only 7 people subsequently returned. On

July 10, 1942, 10 people were shot for disobeying the orders of the occupation authorities, and on August 3, 1942, 32 more Jews were shot for violating the regulation that forbade Jews from praying.⁴

On hearing news of the pogroms and mass deportations of Jews from other towns in Distrikt Galizien, many Jews began to prepare bunkers or other hiding places inside the ghetto. On September 17, 1942, the first deportation Aktion took place in Sokal. In its course, some 2,000 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp and about 160 Jews were killed on the spot.⁵ During the Aktion, some Jews were betrayed by other local inhabitants, and a few members of the Jewish Police were used by the Gestapo to track down Jews in hiding.

After this Aktion, on October 15, 1942, a ghetto was established in the town. All the Jews had to move into the designated ghetto area, with the exception of the Jewish doctors, and any non-Jews were moved out. The ghetto was surrounded with barbed wire and was closely guarded by the police. It had only four wells, and its inhabitants suffered from a severe water shortage. There was also terrible overcrowding, with two families having to share a single room.⁶ On October 22–24, Jews from Radziechów, Łopatyn, Witków Nowy, Tartaków, and Mosty Wielkie were brought into the Sokal ghetto.⁷ Earlier, in January and June 1942, Jews from Steniatin had been brought to Sokal.⁸ In total, about 3,500 additional Jews were brought into the town. Following this concentration of Jews in Sokal, the Germans organized a second deportation Aktion, on October 28, in which more than 2,000 Jews were sent to Bełżec, and around 60 Jews were killed on the spot. During this Aktion, the head of the Judenrat, Januszczyński, was also killed.⁹

Of the approximately 4,000 Jews remaining in the ghetto, hundreds died of starvation and disease, especially typhus, in the winter of 1942–1943. The doctors could do little to help the sick, as the Landrat in Sokal, Löscher, forbade them from bringing any medicine into the ghetto.¹⁰

On May 27, the Germans liquidated the ghetto,¹¹ shooting about 3,000 Jews.¹² On June 7, 1943, Kreishauptmann Nehring announced on placards that his Kreis had been “cleansed of Jews.”¹³

After the Germans had been driven from the town by the Red Army on July 19, 1944, several dozen Jews who had been hiding in the surrounding woods and villages returned to Sokal. Many more had managed to escape from the ghetto, but most were captured and killed by German patrols or Ukrainian nationalist partisans.

On July 13, 1949, Oswald Heyduk was sentenced to life in prison by Landgericht München I. On August 24, 1981, Joachim Nehring was acquitted by Landgericht Stade.

SOURCES Information about the destruction of the Jewish population of Sokal can be found in Avraham Chomet, ed., *Sefer Sokal* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Sokal vеха-sevivah, 1968); *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 15 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), pp. 82–83; and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of*

Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 352–355.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews in Sokal during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/805, 1167, 2012, and 4971); BA-L; DALO; GARF (7021-67-82); USHMM (RG-22.008 [TsGAMORF], 236-2675-134, folder 7); VHF (# 3434, 24942, 24947, and 26101); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/940).

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 2.
2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941. See also LG-Darm, verdict in the case against Kuno Callsen and others, November 29, 1968, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 31 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 694a; and YVA, M-1/E/940, testimony of Paulina Schochet (née Langer) (born in 1927).
3. YVA, M-1/E/940; GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 2.
4. GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 3.
5. Ibid., however, gives the figure of 2,300. YVA, M-1/E/940, gives 1,500.
6. YVA, M-1/E/940. VHF, # 3434, testimony of Ida Kuchberg; this witness, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto somewhat earlier. See also BA-L, ZStL, 208 AR 1415/66, interrogations of J. Nehring March 24, 1965, and W. Rebay von Ehrenwiesen, May 21, 1965.
7. AŻIH, 301/4971, testimony of Mozes Brüh. In mid-1942, there were 450 Jews in Lopatin, 920 in Tartaków, and 1,125 in Witków Nowy; see Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 5.
8. AŻIH, 301/2012, testimony of Henoch Burg.
9. GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 4.
10. YVA, M-1/E/940. The father of this witness was a Jewish doctor.
11. AŻIH, 301/2012, 301/4971.
12. According to a ChGK file dated October 7, 1944, in the Sokal’ raion, 1,500 Jews died in the ghetto and 6,000 more Jews were shot on May 27, 1943 (GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 5). In our opinion, in view of the number of Jews then in the ghetto, this number is considerably too high.
13. BWSL, Bestand EL 317 III, LG-Stutt Ks 5/65.

STANISŁAWÓW

Pre-1939: Stanisławów, city, powiat and województwo center, Poland; 1939–1941: Stanislav, raion and oblast’ center, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Stanislau, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Ivano-Frankivs’k, oblast’ center, Ukraine

Stanisławów is located 113 kilometers (70 miles) south-southeast of Lwów. On the outbreak of World War II, about 25,000 Jews were living there, comprising about one third of the population.

On July 2, 1941, Hungarian troops occupied Stanisławów, and by the end of July the Germans had taken control of the



A crowd of people observes a mass exhumation in the Jewish cemetery of Stanisławów, 1945.

USHMM WS #80762, COURTESY OF JACEK NOWAKOWSKI

city. At that time, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger arrived to become head of the newly established Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office) in Stanisławów. He brought with him Heinrich Schott as his Judenreferent—the Jewish Affairs Officer. The Kreishauptmann in Stanisławów from September 1941 was Heinz Albrecht. It is significant that all the key figures in the German administration in Stanisławów were radical antisemites. On July 26, 1941, on the orders of the Gestapo, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established to organize Jewish life and, above all, to implement German orders. The chairman was Israel Seibald, who had been active in the Jewish community before the war. His deputy was the lawyer Michael Lamm.¹ The Jewish Council was ordered to establish the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst).

Parts of the Ukrainian and Polish population conducted attacks against Jews at the beginning of the occupation.

On August 1, 1941, Distrikt Galizien became the fifth Distrikt of the Generalgouvernement. One day later, Krüger ordered Seibald to draw up a list of Jews who belonged to independent professions, and these men were ordered to come to the Gestapo headquarters on Biliński Street, where they were tortured, and most of them were killed.² Anti-Jewish decrees soon followed; Jews had to wear armbands and perform forced labor. Soon the Jewish Council instructed the lawyer Dr. Tenenbaum to set up a labor office, where registered Jews had to assemble to be assigned to various jobs for the Germans. Later, in the ghetto, it was this office that organized the Jewish work details that went outside the ghetto. The Germans also plundered the Jewish population. In addition, the German civil administration, under Kreishauptmann Heinz Albrecht and Stadtkommissar Emil Beau, drew up plans to establish a ghetto.

Before the Jews were enclosed in a ghetto, the Germans wanted first to “decimate” them. On October 12, 1941, they demonstrated how they meant to “solve” the “Jewish question” in the area. This day was later called *Blutsonntag* (“Bloody Sunday”). Unlike the other districts of the Generalgouvernement,

in the region of Stanisławów the local German administration did not wait until the extermination camps had been established. Thousands of Jews were gathered on the market square; then the German forces escorted them to the Jewish cemetery, where mass graves had been prepared. On the way, the German and Ukrainian escorts beat and tortured the Jews. At the cemetery, the Jews were compelled to surrender their valuables and show their papers. Some of them were then released, but the majority had to remain. The men of the Security Police (Sipo) then started the mass shootings, assisted by members of the German Order Police (Ordnungspolizei) and also the Railroad Police. Krüger personally took part in the shootings. The Germans ordered the Jews to undress in groups and then proceed to the graves, where they were shot. They fell into the grave or were ordered to jump in before being shot.

Some survivors have described the massacre in detail, revealing the incredible brutality employed by the German forces. Many survivors remember how bravely Dr. Tenenbaum of the Jewish Council went to his death. Krüger, the head of the Gestapo, offered to set him free, but Tenenbaum said that he rejected this offer from a murderer and that he wanted to die with his brethren.³ In the evening, those Jews still alive were allowed to leave the cemetery. The German forces shot between 8,000 and 12,000 Jews on that day.⁴ Seibald, the chairman of the Jewish Council, survived the massacre but lived in hiding afterwards. Most probably he was also killed later on. On the day after the bloodbath, Lamm was called to the Gestapo headquarters, where they informed him that he would be the new chairman of the Jewish Council.⁵

After the mass murder, the civil administration began preparations for the move of the remaining Jews into the designated ghetto area. The Jewish Council succeeded in negotiating with the Germans regarding the inclusion of certain specific streets, but by the end of October, the final borders had been determined. As was the case almost everywhere in occupied Eastern Europe, in Stanisławów the Germans selected the oldest and most neglected part of the city to house the ghetto. The exact number of Jews in the ghetto is not known, but at least 20,000 Jews were compelled to live in this tiny, densely overcrowded area. Those who lived outside the ghetto were required to move inside between December 1 and 15, 1941. Many Jews did not manage to find housing, and the Jewish Council had to put them up in every available space, including storehouses and synagogues. During the month of November, the "Aryan" population living in this part of the city had to move out. The ghetto was officially closed on December 20, 1941, with a wooden fence separating it from the rest of the city. In the houses directly on the ghetto's perimeter, the windows had to be blocked with wooden bars. There were three gates, each guarded by German Schutzpolizei and the Ukrainian militia on the outside and by the Jewish Police on the inside. The commandant of the Jewish Police was Zahler, a former sergeant in the Polish army. About 100 Jews served in the ghetto police.

Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto only to perform forced labor. There were several workshops, where Jews

worked for the Germans. The Jewish labor office organized these workshops under its new chairman, Horowitz, who succeeded Dr. Tenenbaum. The labor office issued identity cards to the workers. Many Jews worked outside the ghetto for various German institutions, at factories in the city, and also on farms. Salomon Günsberg recalls: "The Jewish population carried out work under the most difficult circumstances, virtually without any tools and they were beaten during the work."⁶

The living conditions in the ghetto were catastrophic. The sanitary conditions were dreadful; hunger and various diseases became the permanent companions of the Jewish population. The official rations were far too small; more and more people died of hunger. The hospital was overcrowded. During the first winter in the ghetto, many people died of hunger and the cold. Only those with some money left were able to buy extra food on the black market, which had to be smuggled into the ghetto, but only a few people could afford the exorbitant prices demanded. It was possible to sell things legally to the non-Jewish population in a shop established and run by Eckhaus, a member of the Jewish Council. The Jewish Council, with Lamm as its head and Mordechai Goldstein as his deputy, tried to organize life and social welfare under these difficult conditions. Many different departments were established in the Jewish Council, most of which were directed by Jewish Council members. One of the most important departments was the supply division, which organized food supplies for the population. The Beschaffungsamt (department of food procurement) had to "calm down" members of the Gestapo and Schupo with bribes of money and other valuables. There was also a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) set up in Stanisławów, which received some money every month from the headquarters of the JSS in Kraków. But all these efforts to support the numerous poor inmates of the ghetto remained inadequate. Living conditions in the overcrowded ghetto deteriorated.⁷

By the end of March 1942, Krüger told Lamm that only 8,000 Jews could remain in the ghetto and the rest, old and sick people or beggars, would be taken to a labor camp. He ordered Lamm to hand over these Jews. When Lamm refused to comply, German police and Ukrainian policemen surrounded the ghetto during the night of March 31, 1942. In a brutal raid, they expelled many Jews from their houses and drove them to Belwederska Street. Houses were set on fire to force hidden Jews to come out. They had to march to the train station, where freight cars were already waiting, and the people were deported to the extermination camp in Bełżec. After these first deportations, the ghetto was reduced in size, and the German authorities instructed the labor office to prepare new lists of those Jews who were able to work and those who were not. The Jews were divided into three categories: A, young and healthy Jews working in important factories or institutions; B, Jews able to work but without employment at the moment; and C, weak, old, or sick Jews. After this registration, thousands of Jews belonging to category C were murdered, probably shot. Life became more and more unsafe: only Jews

deemed fit to work were allowed to live in Stanisławów. The German police frequently searched the ghetto for Jews of category B, who had not yet found a place to work.⁸

The civil authorities also began concentrating the Jews from smaller communities such as Kałusz, Nadwórna, or Tłumacz, in Stanisławów. Most of them were then murdered in successive Aktions. These killings were carried out in the Rudolfsmühle (Rudolf's Mill), a three-story building that housed a grain mill. Here the Germans concentrated old and sick people, along with Jews from Ruthenia. Jews with invalid work permits or those caught smuggling were also taken here. Living conditions were even worse than in the ghetto. Ukrainian policemen guarded the building on the outside, and the guards inside were Jewish policemen. Krüger had ordered all the sick Jews in the mill building to be killed. Owing to conditions in the building and the already poor health of the prisoners, most of them soon fell ill. The mill, directly under the control of Judenreferent Schott, was a place of terror and mass murder. Schott personally took part in many of the shootings. Schupo Leutnant Ludwig Grimm often joined him in carrying out the shootings. After the first deportations to Bełżec, Jews were regularly taken to the mill and shot there. Up to July 1942, most killings were carried out at the mill, and from August onwards, in the courtyard of the Sipo headquarters. At this time the head of the Jewish Council was Goldstein, the former deputy head. It is not known exactly when Lamm was murdered and Goldstein succeeded him, but he was probably shot in a nearby forest together with other members of the Jewish Council in June or July 1942. On August 22, 1942, the Germans also killed Goldstein. He was hanged publicly as the first symbolic victim during a "reprisal Aktion." The alleged reason for this reprisal was the murder of a Ukrainian, which the Germans blamed on a Jew. Schupo commander Walter Streege led this Aktion. More than 1,000 Jews were shot. The German policemen raped some Jewish girls and women before taking them to the courtyard of the Sipo headquarters. Streege also ordered the hanging of about 20 members of the Jewish Police. The Germans left the dead bodies hanging there for two days as a means of deterrence and to terrorize the Jews.⁹

The next head of the Jewish Council in Stanisławów was Schönfeld. According to the accounts of survivors, he apparently proved to be unscrupulous and a loyal servant of the Germans. He organized a new Jewish Police for this purpose, of which he also became the head.¹⁰

About 11,000 Jews were still living in Stanisławów when the next Aktion took place. On Rosh Hashanah, which fell on September 12 in 1942, about 3,000 or 4,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec. On October 15, 1942, the Jewish population in Stanisławów was largely annihilated. Only a few Jews who continued to work for various German offices remained alive.

By January 1943, there were no more deportations to the extermination camp in Bełżec, but the police continued to carry out shootings of Jews. On February 22 or 23, 1943, Brandt, who had succeeded Krüger in August 1942, ordered the police forces to surround the ghetto, thus initiating the

final liquidation. People were brutally taken from their houses and driven to the Jewish cemetery, where the German police shot them. Among the victims was the head of the Judenrat. Many Jews had prepared hiding places, but owing to lack of water and food, most of them soon emerged and were captured. Four days after the beginning of the Aktion, the Germans put up posters announcing that Stanisławów was "free of Jews" (*judenfrei*). According to Jewish testimonies, about 500 Jews still remained in the city for various work tasks, but these people were also gradually shot in turn. On June 25, 1943, most of the last Jews still living "legally" in Stanisławów were shot. Only a few professionals such as engineers and technicians were still kept in the central prison.¹¹

When the Soviet army reached Stanisławów on July 27, 1944, there were about 100 Jews in the city who had survived in hiding. In total, about 1,500 Jews from Stanisławów survived the war.¹²

A formal indictment against Hans Krüger was issued in October 1965, after six years of investigations by the Dortmund State Prosecutor's Office. On May 6, 1968, the Münster State Court sentenced him to life imprisonment. He was released in 1986.¹³ In Vienna and Salzburg, there were other trial proceedings against members of the Schupo and the Gestapo in Stanisławów in 1966.

SOURCES The testimonies of Julian Feuerman and Joachim Nachbar have been published: Julian Feuerman, "Pamiętnik ze Stanisławowa (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 59 (1966): 63–91; Joachim Nachbar, *Endure, Defy and Remember. Memoir of a Holocaust Survivor* (Southfield, MI: J. Nachbar, 1977, repub. 2003). There are many testimonies quoted in these publications: Elisabeth Freundlich, *Die Ermordung einer Stadt namens Stanislau* (Vienna, 1986); and Towiah Friedman, ed., *Schupo und Gestapo Kriegsverbrecher von Stanislau vor dem Wiener Volksgericht: Dokumentensammlung* (Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1957).

Two excellent German studies of the annihilation of the Jews in Distrikt Galizien contain much information concerning the events in Stanisławów: Dieter Pohl, *Von der "Judenpolitik" zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993); and Thomas Sandkühler, *"Endlösung" in Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996). Pohl has also published an article focused on Stanisławów: "Hans Krüger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanisławów Region (Galicia)," *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1997): 239–264. In Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 2, Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 359–367, there is an entry for Stanisławów.

Documentation, including survivor testimonies, can be found in the following archives: AAN; AŻIH (e.g., 301/91, 889, 1093, 1161, 1734, 2169, 2171, 3238, 3258, 3913, 4680, 4966; and 302/135, 136, 175); DAI-FO; GARF; IPN; USHMM; VHF; and YVA. The documents from the trial in Münster against Hans Krüger and others can be found in BA-L (ZStL); IfZ; and ZSSta-D.

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VOLUME II: PART A

Vienna. Hauptmann was later replaced by Oberleutnant Karl Klarmann in October 1942. A 70-man unit of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), led by a man named Nykolyn, backed the Germans up. The Security Police office in Stryj was subordinate to the Drohobycz Border Police Office (Grenzpolizeikommissariat, or GPK), led by SS-Sturmbannführer Franz Wenzel, who was replaced in May 1942 by Hans Block.³

On September 22–23, 1941, during Yom Kippur, the Security Police and Ukrainian policemen shot 830 Jews in the Holobutów Forest on the edge of the city. On October 2, Kreishauptmann von Dewitz ordered the establishment of a Jewish residential district (open ghetto), initially encompassing 16 streets in Stryj's old Jewish quarter. The resettlement of the Jews into the Jewish district progressed slowly. In January 1942, more than 2,000 Jews were still living outside the designated area, and it was not until July 1942 that the last non-Jews were required to leave. At this time, Jewish medical personnel, members of the Judenrat, and a few craftsmen were still permitted to reside outside the district, although they could not leave the city. About 4 people shared each room inside the district.⁴

Jews were also required to register for work and were employed, for example, in road construction, at a glass factory, and for the Heeresbarackenwerk—a German firm that built barracks for the Wehrmacht. Conditions at the latter firm were good, and people prized the positions there. Others, mainly women and small children inside the ghetto, worked making and repairing clothing.⁵

During the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews had to surrender all their winter clothing to the German army. Due to the lack of fuel, food, and adequate clothing, many died. A typhus outbreak also ravaged the ghetto, and the Jewish hospital quickly became overcrowded and unsanitary. At this time, a number of Jews were sent to perform forced labor in impoverished villages in the Carpathian Mountains. Only a few of them returned a few weeks later, bloated from starvation.⁶ According to a report by the mayor of Stryj, the Jewish population declined from around 11,000 to only 9,700 during the winter months.⁷

In the spring of 1942, the Security Police, assisted by the Schupo and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, conducted an Aktion in which they shot several hundred Jewish men, women, and children. By this time many Jews had prepared bunkers and other hiding places, but the perpetrators shot many people who tried to escape or hide.⁸ In June 1942, there were 9,744 Jews in Stryj, of whom 3,930 were working. In July, reportedly 22 percent of the Jews were dependent on welfare support, which a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS), headed by Heinrich Kronstein, was distributing.⁹

In the fall of 1942, the GPK in Drohobycz organized four deportation Aktions to the Bełżec extermination camp. The first Aktion took place on September 3 when units of Hauptmann Kröpelin's 5th Company of the 124th Police Battalion, assisted by the Security Police, the Jewish Police, and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, deported 3,000 Jews and shot an

additional 400 people on the spot. In September and October 1942, hundreds of Jews from the surrounding area were brought into Stryj, as the Kreishauptmann ordered that the villages be cleared of all but the most essential Jewish workers (e.g., doctors) by the end of October. The local authorities were to ensure that no Jews remained in hiding.¹⁰ On October 17–18, a second deportation Aktion occurred: 1,487 Jews were detained overnight in the synagogue and then transported to Bełżec the following morning. A third Aktion took place on October 21–24; this time 800 Jews were deported. The fourth Aktion was on November 15–16, during which 1,200 Jews were sent to Bełżec.¹¹

These deportations were badly organized and did not proceed on the basis of prepared lists. Rather, the German and Ukrainian police appeared to be simply meeting a quota, seizing Jews off the streets and dragging inhabitants from their homes to the synagogue regardless of age or employment. In the chaos, some Jews managed to hide. A few, like the teenager Friedrich Edelstein, managed to bribe Ukrainian guards to board up the windows of their train only loosely. Under the cover of nightfall, they removed the boards, jumped from the train, and made their way back to the ghetto. By the end of 1942, Stryj's Jews had no doubts about the fate that awaited them.¹²

After these Aktions, around 5,000 Jews remained in Stryj, including a number of nonworking Jews who were brought in from Bolechów by early December. Large posters announced that on December 1, 1942, an enclosed ghetto was officially declared in Stryj. The ghetto was on Berek Joselewicz, Kugnierska, Krawiecka, and Lwów Streets, occupying a smaller area than the previous residential district. The roads leading out of the ghetto were fenced off, and the exits were guarded. Some of those who were employed and had special armbands bearing the letter "W" were now relocated to camps established near their respective work sites, while their families remained in the ghetto. Inside the ghetto hunger reigned, and many, like the teenager Rena Goldstein, formed small knitting groups or other associations in an attempt to hold the community together.¹³

Conditions in the enclosed ghetto were markedly worse. Electricity and gas were cut off, and only two water pumps were available, so Jews had to stand in line for water. People stored water in the bunkers in preparation for the next Aktion. The dead were taken to the cemetery on a cart pulled by a wizened old mare. Some youths wanted to obtain arms to fight the Germans and were critical of the Judenrat for its quiescent attitude to the incessant German demands.¹⁴

On February 28, 1943, 1,000 people were executed by the Security Police, assisted by the Ukrainian police, in the Holobutów Forest. Raids were conducted also in the various work camps in an attempt to find unregistered workers who had sneaked into the camps, trying to find food and safety. On capture, these Jews were taken to the prison located at the city square to await execution. On at least one occasion, Jews attempted to resist these roundups; one young man attempted to stab a Security Police official, and the other prisoners used

the ensuing chaos to try to escape. Other searches were conducted in the ghetto where the Security Police used them as a means to uncover valuables hidden by the inmates.¹⁵

On May 23, 1943, 1,000 ghetto inmates were deported first to the Janowska Street labor camp outside of Lwów, then to the Majdanek concentration camp. Then on June 5–7, the remaining 3,000 ghetto inmates were shot in the Holobutów Forest by the Security Police and Ukrainian policemen, who—according to eyewitnesses—exhibited signs of heavy alcohol consumption. After the ghetto liquidation, Kreishauptmann von Dewitz reported that the mass graves had been improperly covered, posing a health danger for the general population.¹⁶

In the months after the liquidation of the ghetto, the police conducted a series of searches to uncover Jews who remained in hiding. In September, 150 Jews who had been collected were executed together. Among the last to be killed were the Jewish doctors, who had continued to live together in a separate house. The labor camps in the surrounding area were also liquidated on June 22, July 13–14, and August 25–26. The majority of the inmates were executed, although 70 were deported to Drohobycz.¹⁷

Stryj was liberated by the Red Army on August 8, 1944, and several dozen Jews emerged from hiding. Some had escaped into the woods, while others had been hidden by Poles and Ukrainians. A number of survivors returned to the city, but they soon moved on.

In 1947 several members of the Security Police unit based in Stryj were arrested in Vienna and extradited to the Soviet Union, where they were tried for their crimes. They received sentences of varying durations, the last of them returning to Austria in 1955. On March 16, 1954, a Hamburg court sentenced Karl Klarmann to four years and six months in prison for his role in crimes committed in Stryj. On March 18, 1959, in Vienna, Josef Gabriel, a former member of the Drohobycz GPK, was sentenced to life in prison for his participation in atrocities committed in Eastern Galicia.

SOURCES The following publications contain information regarding the fate of Stryj's Jewish community during the Holocaust: N. Kudish, Sh. Rozenberg, and A. Rotfeld, eds., *Sefer Stry* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Stri be-Yisrael, 1962)—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; “Stryj,” in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 383–393; Tuvia Friedman, ed., *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher von Stryj* (Haifa: T. Friedman, 1996); Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Bertold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996); and Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/437, 1293, 1361, 1676, 2570, 2574, 2770, and 3033); BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (e.g., B 162/4932); DALO (e.g., R 1952-1-62, 63, 65, and 172); GARF (7021-58-21);

RGVA (1323-2-2926); USHMM (e.g., RG-31.003M [DALO]); VHF (e.g., # 1873, 6347, 20674, 29179, 46571); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov, Michael McConnell, and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Kudish, Rozenberg, and Rotfeld, *Sefer Stry*, pp. 19–35.
2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 20, July 12, 1941; AŻIH, 301/1293, testimony of Speranza Marguiles; 301/2574, testimony of Dr. Izaak Ajzenszer; VHF, # 46571, testimony of Rena Goldstein.
3. Friedman, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher*, p. 11, statement of Johann Kranzler, and p. 19, statement of Johann Pflamitzer.
4. DALO, R 1952-1-62, includes extensive correspondence on the establishment of the Jewish district, including a detailed street map.
5. GARF, 7021-58-21, pp. 59, 75; VHF, # 29179, testimony of Rosa Braseliten; # 20674, testimony of Fredrich Edelstein; # 6347, testimony of Samuel Drix.
6. VHF, # 1873, testimony of Thomas Blatt; Friedman, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher*, p. 18, statement of Johann Pflamitzer.
7. DALO, R 1952-1-62, Stadtverwaltung in Stryj an die Kreishauptmannschaft, February 25, 1942.
8. Kudish, Rozenberg, and Rotfeld, *Sefer Stryj*, pp. 41–50; Friedman, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher*, p. 7, statement of Alexander Garber.
9. DALO, R 1952-1-63 and R 1952-1-65.
10. Ibid., 1952-1-62, pp. 92, 98.
11. Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 10; AŻIH, 301/2770, testimony of Freda Schwechter; 301/1293; 301/2574; RGVA, 1323-2-2926, pp. 28, 33, reports of the 5th Company, 124th Police Regiment, November 19 and 25, 1942.
12. VHF, # 20674, # 46571, and # 29179.
13. Y. Eshel and M.H. Eshel, *Sefer ha-Zikkaron li-Kedoshei Bolehov* (Haifa: Association of Former Residents of Bolechow in Israel, 1957), p. 325; VHF, # 20674 and # 46571; Friedman, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher*, p. 22, statement of Max Preuer; Kudish, Rozenberg, and Rotfeld, *Sefer Stryj*, pp. 41–50.
14. Kudish, Rozenberg, and Rotfeld, *Sefer Stryj*, pp. 41–50.
15. Friedman, *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher*, p. 8, statement of Alexander Garber; VHF, # 20674.
16. DALO, R 1952-1-172, p. 89, Monatsbericht der Kreishauptmann Stryj für Mai/Juni 1943, as cited by Sandkühler, “Endlösung,” p. 378.
17. BA-L, B 162/4932, p. 23, statement of Semen Fendyk; Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” pp. 31–32.

TARNOPOL

Pre-1939: Tarnopol, city, powiat and województwo center, Poland; 1939–1941: Ternopol', raion and oblast' center, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Tarnopol, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Ternopil', oblast' center, Ukraine

Tarnopol is located about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east-southeast of Lwów. According to the 1931 census, 13,999 Jews were living in the city, and by June 1941, the Jewish population had grown to around 18,600.¹



Group portrait of members of the Jewish forced labor detail in the Tarnopol ghetto, ca. May 1943. Each forced laborer wears a "W," meaning "Wehrmacht," workers for the German army.

USHMM WS #33530, COURTESY OF GFH

Units of the German 9th Panzer Division and the SS-Division Wiking captured Tarnopol on July 2, 1941. Initially, the city was run by a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur); then, in August, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Tarnopol became the center of Kreis Tarnopol, within Distrikt Galizien. The position of Kreishauptmann in Tarnopol was occupied first by Gerhard Hager (until April 1942) and then by Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen. Subordinated to the Kreishauptmann was a German Stadtkommissar or mayor (Saltner), who in turn supervised the Ukrainian city administration.

The anti-Jewish Aktionen in the city were organized and conducted by the Security Police (Sipo) and the SD. From mid-July 1941, an operational squad of the SD (SD-Einsatztrupp), subordinated to the Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. (for special purposes), was present in the city; the squad was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne. In the middle of September 1941, the squad consisted of 39 people, assisted by 60 members of the Ukrainian militia, 8 interpreters, and 20 more locals who served as drivers, auto mechanics, and clerks.²

In September 1941, the SD-Einsatztrupp was converted into an outpost of the Security Police and SD (Sipo/SD-Aussendienststelle) that between October 1941 and May 1943 was headed by SS-Sturmabführer Hermann Müller and, after June 1943, by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger. The Tarnopol outpost reported to the head of the Security Police and SD in Lwów. Tarnopol also had a squad of Schupo (German Order Police), which in turn supervised a detachment of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei).

On July 4, 1941, Sonderkommando (Sk) 4b, commanded by SS-Sturmabführer Günther Herrmann, arrived in the city from Lwów. In accordance with the order, issued by the head of the Security Police and the SD (Reinhard Heydrich) on June 29, 1941, Sk 4b organized a pogrom. The pretext used was the discovery in the jail of the bodies of Ukrainian na-

tionalists and German soldiers killed by the Soviet People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD). Both local Ukrainian antisemites and German soldiers (including members of the SS-Division Wiking) participated in the pogrom.³ They broke into Jewish homes, dragged out any men they found, and shot them in the courtyards outside. Jews were also kidnapped off the streets, gathered at several collection points, including the synagogue, and then shot. Those Jews who were forced to wash and bury the corpses from the jail in mass graves were murdered upon completion of their work. The violence began to escalate out of control, so the Germans brought the killing to a halt. Several thousand people were murdered in the course of the pogrom that lasted one week.⁴ Sk 4b also reported shooting 127 people itself, mostly members of the Jewish intelligentsia.⁵

In the days following the pogrom, the Jews searched through the mass graves for their lost family and friends. In July 1941, Jewish property was confiscated, Jews were excluded from all business activity, their rations were reduced, kidnappings began for forced labor, and their freedom of movement was severely restricted. By early August of 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat), consisting of 12 to 18 people, had been established in the city. The Jewish Council was headed in turn by the attorney Gustav Fischer (until the beginning of 1942), Yakov Lipper (until September 10, 1942), Karol Porhyrles (until November 1942), and Pinhas Gruenfeld. As an executive body reporting to the Jewish Council, the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) was created (consisting of 60 people). It was led by a man named Furstenberg from Warsaw. The Gestapo assigned the following tasks to the Jewish Council: to conduct the registration of the Jews, in seven days to collect a "contribution" of more than 1 million rubles, to mobilize all the Jews between 14 and 50 years of age for labor, and to ensure that all Jews wore an armband with the Star of David and marked their apartments with a similar sign.⁶

On September 5, 1941, the German authorities announced that a ghetto was being created in Tarnopol and that all Jews would have to move there by September 25. Some 7,000 additional Jews were forced to move into the poorest part of the city, where some 5,000 Jews already lived. The area consisted of only about 5 percent of the city and had very few wells.⁷ On December 1, 1941, the territory of the ghetto was surrounded by a tall fence and barbed wire. One could enter and exit the ghetto only through two gates that were guarded by German and Ukrainian police externally and the Jewish Police internally. Cramped space (there were several families living in each room), unsanitary conditions, cold, hunger, and shortages of clothing soon led to a typhus epidemic in the ghetto. Despite the enclosure of the ghetto, Jews were still able to barter items for food with the non-Jewish population, as every day hundreds of Jews passed through the gates to their places of work.

At the end of December 1941, the Jews were ordered to surrender all their fur items; to ensure that the Jews obeyed this order the Gestapo took 12 Jews hostage. After the Jewish Council collected and handed over the furs, the Gestapo

conducted a search and discovered fur items in the homes of the Schwartz family; for that, all 5 family members were shot.

In the ghetto the Jewish Council operated a hospital and a clinic, but these facilities were inadequate to meet the population's needs, and medicine was in short supply. A soup kitchen also provided food for the needy, but living conditions in the orphanage and the old-age home were appalling. The rooms were unheated, and some people slept on the floor. There were almost no medical supplies or medicine, and insufficient food led to starvation. In the winter of 1941–1942, the burial society had to bury many people in mass graves.

At the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, on the orders of the Gestapo, the Jewish Council, with the aid of the Jewish Police, conducted several roundups in the ghetto in which they seized several hundred young healthy Jews and sent them to the labor camps in Borki Wielkie, Kamionki, Hłuboczek Wielki, and Zagrobela. The Jewish Council was also required to provide these laborers with tools, food, and clothing; to pay the wages of the German staff and Ukrainian guards of the camps; and in the event of a laborer's death, to send a replacement worker.

The Security Police conducted the first Aktion in the ghetto on March 23, 1942. On the orders of the Gestapo, the Jewish Police collected 630 people (the elderly, the sick, and the handicapped), including 150 children. These people were then shot, together with the children from the Jewish orphanage, by the Gestapo and Ukrainian police in the Janowska Forest outside the city. Supposedly, the Gestapo originally demanded 1,000 people, but after receiving a bribe, it agreed to a smaller number.⁸

After this Aktion, according to the data of the city administration, 11,350 Jews remained in the ghetto as of April 20, 1942.⁹ This number diminished in May 1942, when several hundred women were sent to work on the kok-saghyz (synthetic rubber) plantations in Jagielnica near Czortków.

During July and August 1942, the Jews from nearby villages, including Balkowce, Smykowce, and Gaje Wielkie, were brought into the Tarnopol ghetto. On August 31, 1942, at 4:30 A.M., the ghetto was surrounded by German and Ukrainian police, and the residents were ordered to gather at the public square.¹⁰ A deportation Aktion was then conducted by the German and Ukrainian policemen, assisted by the Jewish Police, during which 2,600 to 2,800 Jews were rounded up. Only some of the Jews with work cards were exempted from the transport. Other railroad cars with Jews from Mikulińce, Zbaraż, and Strusów were added to the train leaving Tarnopol for the Bełżec extermination camp.¹¹

After this Aktion, the Gestapo demanded from the Jewish Council 2 grams (0.7 ounce) of gold from each Jew, promising to stop the Aktions. The Judenrat handed over more than 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of gold, but the Aktions continued. In early September, the area of the ghetto was reduced, and Jews had to move into the smaller section within a few hours. Now the ghetto residents struggled to obtain work cards, improve or create hiding places, and buy forged documents or poison.

Only a few people with sufficient money or connections were able to find a safe hiding place outside the ghetto.

On September 30, 1942, the second deportation Aktion took place. In the course of the Aktion, 750 Jews were rounded up and sent to the Bełżec extermination camp.¹² After this Aktion the ghetto was reduced in size. During further deportation Aktions in October and in early November, approximately 2,500 people were captured and deported.¹³ In October 1942, more Jews arrived in the Tarnopol ghetto from other towns, including Kozłów and Mikulińce, as it was one of the few places where Jews could still reside. During the November deportation Aktion, about 1,000 Jews were rounded up for deportation and forced for two days to remain at a mill that served as a collection point. During these two days the Jewish Council and Jewish Police replaced their own relatives or people who paid them with other less fortunate members of the community.¹⁴ In total, during the four Aktions in the second half of 1942, more than 6,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec.

In November 1942, a Jewish labor camp (*Julag*), a branch of the Janowska Street camp in Lwów commanded by SS-Untersturmführer Richard Rokita, was established in Tarnopol. Jewish craftsmen, as well as all able-bodied Jews, were placed in this camp. As of January 13, 1943, 5,246 Jews officially remained in the city, in the ghetto and in the labor camp combined, although others remained illegally.¹⁵ Starting in April 1943, the Security Police, with the aid of the German Schutzpolizei, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, and the Jewish Police, regularly conducted Aktions in the ghetto, which resulted in the extermination of the Jews unfit to work and the transfer to labor camps of the able-bodied. On April 7, 1943, one of the ghetto inmates wrote: "Our end is coming constantly closer. We sense it and know it. . . . From January until April 1943, it was quiet. . . . In April everything started again. A small number of people from the ghetto were dragged away somewhere and murdered. 20 people. On Monday again 50 people, and so forth."¹⁶

On April 9, about 1,500 Jews were shot, leaving some 700 Jews in the ghetto. The ghetto was finally liquidated on June 18–20, 1943. On June 23, 1943, the city was officially declared to be "cleansed of Jews" (*judenrein*).¹⁷

Altogether, about 3,000 Jews from the ghetto were shot in the period from March to June of 1943.

In mid-July 1943, there were about 2,000 Jews remaining in the labor camp. On July 23, German police surrounded the Julag, and most of the camp inmates (about 1,500 people) were shot near the village of Petryków by the Gestapo and the Ukrainian police. With them were also shot the members of the Jewish Police from the former ghetto. About 100 people were sent to the Janowska Street camp in Lwów. Several hundred Jews avoided execution by hiding. To capture them the Gestapo promised that all those who voluntarily came out of hiding would be sent to the camp in Lwów. Some of those in hiding tried to defend themselves with grenades and guns; however, it was to no avail, as almost all were murdered or committed suicide. On July 31, 1943, several hundred Jews who emerged from hiding were sent to the station, where they

were held for one day in railroad carriages before being killed in the evening.¹⁸

Between 1941 and 1944, more than 10,000 Jews were killed in Tarnopol, about 6,000 Jews were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp, over 1,000 were sent to various labor camps, and several hundred died of disease and hunger in the ghetto.

Several people of Polish nationality in Tarnopol actively assisted Jews. Especially distinguished were Dr. Kolczycki, a physician with the railway administration, who helped Jews during Aktions; a Polish woman, Karola Pietroszyńska, who hid two Jews on her farm for nine months; and the Polish shoemaker Franciszek Stech and his wife, who employed a number of Jews, giving some fictitious jobs, so that they were registered with the German labor office. During the Aktions, they sheltered these Jews in their home.

Only about 750 Jews from Tarnopol and the surrounding area are known to have survived the Holocaust. Most of these survivors subsequently migrated to Poland.

On July 15, 1966, Hermann Müller was sentenced to life in prison by a German court in Stuttgart.

SOURCES Much of the information for this entry is derived from Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 234–253—an English translation by Shlomo Sneh and Francine Shapiro is available on jewishgen.org. Other relevant publications on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Tarnopol include the following: P. Korngrün, ed., *Tarnopol* (Jerusalem: Hevrat entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1955); Żaneta Margules, “Moje przeżycia w Tarnopolu podczas wojny,” *BŻIH*, no. 36 (1960): 62–94; and Pesah Hertsog, *Be-tsel banesher ha-shabor: Ayarati Tarnopol mitbozeset be-damah* (Tel Aviv: Yaron Golan, 1996). Correspondence written in the Tarnopol ghetto in April 1943 has been published in Walter Zwi Bacharach, ed., *Dies sind meine letzten Worte . . . Briefe aus der Schoah* (Göttingen: Wallenstein, 2006), pp. 112–120.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/367, 2049, 3176, 4837, and 4845); BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (e.g., ZStL, 208 AR-Z 294/59); DATO; GARF (7021-75-105); RGVA (1323-1-59); TsDAVO; USHMM (e.g., RG-02.140); VHF (e.g., # 2874, 11785, 41613); and YVA.

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 11; GARF, 7021-75-105, p. 187.

2. RGVA, 1323-1-59, p. 258, report of the Tarnopol squad (Mittsner) to the head of the Security Police and SD in Warsaw (department 1), September 21, 1941.

3. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR (EM) no. 14 (July 6, 1941), no. 19 (July 11, 1941), no. 24 (July 16, 1941), and no. 28 (July 20, 1941).

4. GARF, 7021-75-105, pp. 136, 181, 187, and verso, gives the figure of 4,600 victims. Bacharach, *Dies sind meine letzten*

Worte, p. 113, letter from Tarnopol, April 1943, gives almost 5,000. German sources put the number somewhat lower.

5. BA-BL, R 58/214, EM nos. 14, 19, and 28 (July 1941).

6. GARF, 7021-75-105, pp. 4–5.

7. Ibid., p. 5. For a list of the streets inside the ghetto, see Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 2, pp. 234–251.

8. GARF, 7021-75-105, p. 136; AŻIH, 301/3176, testimony of Róża Spiess, dates the Aktion on March 24.

9. TsDAVO, 4620-3-308, p. 106.

10. USHMM, RG-02.140, Herbert R. Ert, “The Diary of a Survivor.”

11. GARF, 7021-75-105, pp. 136, 174, 187, 270.

12. Ibid., pp. 84, 134, 136.

13. Ibid., p. 85.

14. Margules, “Moje przeżycia,” pp. 79–80.

15. TsDAVO, 4620-3-308, p. 106.

16. Bacharach, *Dies sind meine letzten Worte*, pp. 112–117.

17. Ibid., pp. 118–119; Verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 7/64, July 15, 1966, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 634.

18. GARF, 7021-75-105, pp. 134, 202.

TŁUMACZ

Pre-1939: Tłumacz, town, powiat center, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Tłumach, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Tłumacz, Kreis Stanislaw, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Tłumach, raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Tłumacz is located about 24 kilometers (15 miles) east-southeast of Stanisławów. There were 2,012 Jews living in Tłumacz in 1921 (35 percent of the total).

Hungarian forces occupied the town on July 7, 1941. Then in September 1941, a German civil administration took over. Tłumacz became part of the Kreis Stanislaw, within Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann in Stanisławów from 1941 to 1944 was Regierungsrat Dr. Heinz Albrecht.



Jews board a deportation train in the Tłumacz ghetto, ca. 1942.
USHMM WS #07516, COURTESY OF YIVO

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the town were organized and carried out by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów, which from the end of 1941 to early November 1942 was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger; and from November 1942, by his former deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Oskar Brandt.

In Tłumacz itself, there were outposts of the German Criminal Police (Kripo) and the German Gendarmerie, as well as a detachment of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), which took an active part in the Aktions.

During the period of administration by the Hungarian army (July–August 1941), generally it treated the Jews properly, sometimes hindering antisemitic Aktions organized by Ukrainian nationalists. Hungarian anti-Jewish measures were limited to organizing a Jewish Council and marking the Jews. In August 1941, about 1,200 to 1,500 Jewish refugees arrived in Tłumacz, having been deported from Hungary. The Ukrainians ordered them to be expelled to a camp near Horodenka, along with some local Jews who were helping them. The Ukrainians then tied them up with barbed wire and threw them into the Dniester River to drown. They also drove out the Jews from Tłumacz to Hocimierz and denounced them to the Germans as “Bolsheviks.” The German officers, however, rejected the allegations. They disarmed the Ukrainians, beat them, and sent the Jews back to Tłumacz. On their return, the Jews found that their homes had been looted.¹

With the transfer of authority to the Germans, conditions for the Jewish population rapidly deteriorated. The Germans soon confiscated a large portion of Jewish property, especially any valuables. They were registered and made to perform hard labor, during which they were beaten.

At the end of August 1941, after the shooting of several leading Jews on the authority of the Gestapo chief, Krüger, in Stanisławów, two SS men came to Tłumacz demanding that several prominent Jews also be turned in. The newly appointed heads of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), Eliyahu Redner and his deputy, Moshe Mendel Bildner, warned the men to hide. The Germans then shot Redner and Bildner for their disobedience. The Germans also threatened to shoot another 300 Jews, so the 3 in hiding gave themselves up and were killed.

After this incident, the Judenrat was reconstituted, with Dr. Steinberg as chairman on the advice of Haim Ritzer, who had been appointed chief of the Jewish Police by the Germans. Steinberg’s deputy was Herzl Spirer, and Steinberg’s brother also served on the Judenrat.

In October 1941, when the Jews of Tłumacz were ordered to turn in all their gold, silver, cash and foreign currency, furs, and soap to the Gestapo, the Judenrat was made responsible for its collection. These items were required to furnish 32 rooms for German administrators who had arrived in the town. On October 12, 1941, news arrived from Stanisławów that more than 10,000 Jews had been murdered there on the previous day by the Gestapo and the Ukrainian

policemen, which spread alarm among the Jews of the region. During the winter of 1941–1942, many Jews from Tłumacz were seized and sent to work in various labor camps in the area.²

In the spring of 1942, about 1,500 Jews from the surrounding villages, including the village of Hołosków, were brought into Tłumacz, raising the town’s population to about 3,500 Jews.³ At the beginning of April 1942, the German SS officers Doppler, Schäfer, and Metz arrived from Horodenka and began to organize a series of anti-Jewish Aktions. On one occasion, more than 1,000 Jews were assembled on the pretext of registration. They were told to bring up to 27 kilograms (60 pounds) of luggage in order to allay fears about their fate. During this Aktion, the Jewish Police used force to bring people to the assembly point at the Polish school. Then the German authorities sent them to Stanisławów, where they were subsequently murdered.⁴

In another Aktion organized by the Security Police, probably on May 18, 1942, German security forces murdered some 160 Jews in Tłumacz and sent several hundred others to labor camps, including the Janowska Street camp in Lwów, where most died shortly afterwards. Two weeks later the Germans deported 78 more Jews.⁵

A ghetto was established in the town with the active participation of the Jewish Council, probably at the end of March or the beginning of April 1942. It was then enclosed a few weeks later, just after the deportation Aktion on May 18. However, the ghetto was not closely guarded, and it remained possible to escape. Nevertheless, food was very scarce, and the Jews had to barter their last possessions for flour. Owing to the unsanitary and overcrowded conditions, about 280 people died in the ghetto of disease and hunger. After the ghetto was sealed, the Judenrat organized the distribution of the limited amounts of bread, flour, potatoes, and thin milk still supplied to the ghetto. The size of the ghetto was reduced with successive deportations; by the end, it consisted only of a couple of housing blocks.⁶

Although the Judenrat exercised nominal authority inside the ghetto, real power lay in the hands of the Kripo, which took its orders from SS-Obersturmführer Schäfer of the Gestapo. Schäfer placed three Poles in charge of the ghetto, the former schoolteachers Banderowsky, Sitnik, and Zborowsky, all serving in the Kripo under the German Schubert. During the summer, these men were primarily responsible for the murder of several hundred Jews. For example, they ordered the Judenrat to set up a Jewish hospital staffed by Jews. However, shortly after its establishment, they murdered the patients and staff with their own hands. Sometimes these three Poles roamed through the ghetto, shooting and killing at random. On another occasion, several Jews were shot while working to remove gravestones from the Jewish cemetery. Jews who escaped from the ghetto and hid in the forests were mostly caught by Ukrainian policemen and handed over to the Gestapo.

The clearance of the ghetto started in mid-August 1942, once the Ukrainian militia had herded the remaining Jews from

the surrounding countryside into the ghetto on completion of the harvest. Seeing that many people sent for forced labor did not return, some Jews prepared bunkers within the ghetto, and the numbers reporting for work declined to only a few hundred. To entice more Jews out, the authorities provided increased rations and even permitted Jews to leave the ghetto for two hours a day. This did tempt some Jews to come out of hiding. However, a few days later the Gestapo and Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto. On September 8, the last large group was deported. On this occasion the Gestapo, SS men, and local policemen drove the Jews to the square, where members of the Judenrat, including its last head, Dr. Steinberg, were added to the waiting group. The Jews were then taken to the railway station and were either murdered in Stanisławów shortly afterwards or deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. As many as 2,000 Jews may have been included in these last deportations in August and September 1942.⁷ The Germans kept back some 80 craftsmen to help sort out property from the ghetto, but these people were murdered only a few days later. In its situation report for December 1942, the Gendarmerie platoon in Stanisławów reported that the ghetto in Tłumacz had been liquidated.⁸

Some Jews managed to survive the liquidation by escaping from the ghetto after emerging from their bunkers or by jumping from the trains. However, most of the local population was unwilling to help them, as the Germans threatened with death anyone caught assisting Jews. Nevertheless, those who had long-standing contacts with local peasants, who were prepared to risk hiding them, had a better chance of surviving. Only about 30 surviving Jews returned to Tłumacz in the first days after its liberation by the Red Army in 1944, and 2 of these were murdered by Ukrainian nationalist partisans shortly afterwards. Most survivors soon left the town, immigrating to Israel or other countries in the West.

In 1945–1946 Heinz Albrecht was held captive, but in 1949 he again served in the local administration as an Oberregierungsrat (senior government official) in Hildesheim. Hans Krüger was tried before the State Court in Münster in 1968 and sentenced to life imprisonment. He died in 1988. Brandt died in 1948 in jail in Breslau.

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of the town can be found in Shlomo Blond et al., eds., *Tłumacz-Tłomitsb: Sefer Edut Ve-Zikaron (Memorial Book of Tłumacz)* (Tel Aviv: Tłumacz Society, 1976); in Shlomo Blond, *The Righteous Gentiles* (Israel: Shlomo Blond, 1983); and also in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 264–265.

Documents and testimonies describing the fate of the Jews of Tłumacz are located in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1425, 3126, and 4977); DAI-FO (R 36-1-15); GARF (7021-73-19); USHMM (RG-02.088); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov, Samuel Fishman, and Martin Dean
trans. Michael Rosenbush

NOTES

1. Blond et al., *Tłumacz-Tłomitsb*, pp. cxxii–cxxiii.
2. Ibid., p. cxxiii.
3. GARF, 7021-73-19, p. 5; AŻIH, 301/4977 (Jehuda Feuer) and AŻIH, 301/1425 (Eugenia Seinfeld).
4. GARF, 7021-73-19, p. 18; AŻIH, 301/4977.
5. GARF, 7021-73-19, p. 27.
6. Ibid., pp. 19 and verso; Blond et al., *Tłumacz-Tłomitsb*, pp. cxxiii–cxxiv, cxli; USHMM, RG-02.088, “An Angel at My Doorstep,” by Fran Finkelstein.
7. Blond et al., *Tłumacz-Tłomitsb*.
8. DAI-FO, R 36-1-15, pp. 1–2, situation report of Gend.-Zug Stanisław for December 1942.

TŁUSTE

Pre-1939: Tłuste, town, Zaleszczyki powiat, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Tolstoye, raion center, Ternopol’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Tłuste, Kreis Czortkow, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Tovste, Zalizhchyky raion, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Tłuste is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Tarnopol. On the eve of World War II, about 2,000 Jews lived in Tłuste out of a total population of some 3,000.¹ Under Soviet occupation from September 1939 until July 1941, some Jews were among those deported to Siberia by the Soviet authorities, which also established collective farms in the region.

On July 7, 1941, a local Ukrainian administration was organized in Tłuste as soon as the Soviets fled the town before the advancing German army. At this time, a train containing ammunition exploded and burned down the railroad station. That night local Ukrainian antisemites organized a pogrom against the Jews in the nearby village of Ułaszkwice (Jewish population 138 in 1921), murdering most of them. Further pogroms followed in other villages, causing many Jews to flee to Tłuste. A pogrom was also feared in Tłuste, but it was prevented with the aid of two local priests and other prominent Ukrainians in the town.² The arrival of a Hungarian garrison on July 10, 1941, helped to stabilize the situation. The Hungarian commandant organized a Jewish Council (Judenrat) based in the building of a bank and conducted a registration of the Jews, obliging them to wear distinguishing armbands. After a few weeks, some Jews deported from Hungary as non-citizens arrived in Tłuste and were made to perform forced labor. When the number of Jewish refugees in Tłuste became too great, some of these people were sent to Kamenets-Podolskii. Other refugees in Tłuste attempted to cross the border back into Hungary, but they risked being killed by German and Ukrainian patrols.³

In the meantime, in August 1941, authority had been transferred to a German civil administration. Tłuste became part of Kreis Czortkow, within Distrikt Galizien. At first, the Kreishauptmann was the former deputy Gestapo chief in Stettin, SS-Sturmabführer Dr. Gerhard Littschwager, and from



The deportation of the Jewish population of Tłuste.
USHMM WS #44360

April 1942, former Stadthauptmann (city mayor) in Lwów, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Hans Kujath.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in the town were organized by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) based in Czortków. The heads of this office successively were SS-Obersturmführer Karl Hildemann (from October 1941 to October 1942), SS-Untersturmführer Hans Velde (from October 1942 to February 1943), and SS-Sturmscharführer Heinrich Peckmann (from February to September 1943). In Tłuste there was a post of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, both of which took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions. A man named Schab was particularly notorious among the Ukrainian policemen.⁴

With the transfer of power to the Germans, the situation of the Jews deteriorated severely. They were required to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David and forbidden to leave the limits of the town, appear on its main street, and leave their homes after dark. In the fall of 1941, Jews were prohibited from shopping in the market except for a brief two-hour period, and the Ukrainian police sometimes still beat them even then. All men aged between 14 and 60 had to perform forced labor on a regular basis, which was organized by

the Jewish Council, headed by Dr. Aberman. The Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) assisted in collecting “contributions” in money and goods demanded by the German authorities.

On November 15, 1941 (according to some sources, in January 1942), 150 Jews from Tłuste were sent to work at the labor camp at Kamionki, and in March 1942, 120 more Jews were dispatched to the Borki Wielkie forced labor camp (both camps were not far from Tarnopol).⁵ From February 1942, several hundred Jewish women were sent to work on the plantations for kok-saghyz—a plant similar to tobacco, used for the production of synthetic rubber, which under war conditions was considered a strategic resource. In charge of the plantation works was the Rubber Administration Office of the Generalgouvernement with its main office in Jagielnica headed by Kriegsverwaltungsrat Dr. Hanf. One of the branch offices was in Tłuste, which was responsible for rubber production on seven nearby estates. The Jews (mainly women) who worked on the plantations were not only from Tłuste but also from numerous other towns and villages of the region, including Czortków and Tarnopol. Initially the workers received some food and a daily wage of 2 zloty. Other Jews worked (some illegally) as craftsmen for the local population. Jewish survivor Adela Sommer, who made knit wear for local Ukrainians while in Tłuste, recalls: “One young man remarked he hoped that she wouldn’t be killed until the gloves she was knitting for him were completed.”⁶

In 1942, the German authorities conducted two deportation Aktions in Tłuste, sending Jews to the Bełżec extermination camp. The first Aktion took place on August 25 when 300 people were captured and deported to Bełżec in the same train with Jews from Czortków and Jagielnica.⁷ After that Aktion, on September 20, all the Jews in Zaleszczyki, about 2,700 people, were moved to Tłuste.⁸ The second Aktion took place on October 5, 1942, when 1,000 people were deported to Bełżec and about 120 people were murdered in the town.⁹

On December 1, 1942, on the order of the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, a ghetto was formed in the town. The ghetto was an open one, meaning that unlike most other ghettos in Distrikt Galizien at this time, it was not isolated from the outside world.¹⁰ Officially, 1,500 people lived in the ghetto,¹¹ but in reality, there were about 5,000 Jews living there. The ghetto existed for half a year.

In the winter of 1942–1943, a typhus epidemic broke out in the ghetto after the arrival of Jews from many places brought unbearable congestion. The death rate reached 6 to 8 people per day.¹² Sensing that the liquidation of the ghetto was only a matter of time, Jews prepared bunkers inside the ghetto or made plans to flee to the forest or hide with local peasants. On February 12, 1943, four drunken Gestapo men went on a rampage in the ghetto and shot 40 Jews in Tłuste.

On May 27, 1943, a squad of the Security Police from Czortków, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, liquidated the ghetto, shooting 3,000 Jews

at the Jewish cemetery.¹³ Since some of the Jews managed to escape the killing by hiding, on June 6 another Aktion was conducted in Tłuste, during which an additional 1,000 people were arrested and shot in the cemetery.¹⁴ Over the following days, in the course of searches for Jews in hiding, the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen captured and shot several hundred more people.

After the liquidation of the ghetto, the forced labor camp for Jews (*Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden*, ZALfJ) in Tłuste for workers on the kok-saghyz plantations remained in existence. In July 1943, there were 20 laborers there, and at the beginning of 1944, due to the influx of Jewish refugees from other estates, 450 workers. The Red Army entered Tłuste on March 23, 1944, but the battle for the town continued into April. At this time 65 or more of the surviving Jews perished when the Germans bombed the town.¹⁵

After the war, Gerhard Littschwager was under investigation by the State Prosecutor's Office in Darmstadt for some time; the investigation was closed in 1972. Hans Kujath also was under investigation for some time; the case was closed due to his death in 1963. Karl Hildemann died in 1945 in American captivity. Hans Velde died in 1943 from typhus. Heinrich Peckmann was acquitted by the State Court in Saarbrücken on August 25, 1962.

SOURCES Publications on the persecution and destruction of the Jewish population of Tłuste include Gavriel Lindenberg, ed., *Sefer Tlustab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Telustah veva-sevivah be-Yirsrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1965); Baruch Milch, *Can Heaven Be Void?* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2003); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), p. 526; and Joseph J. Preil, ed., *Holocaust Testimonies: European Survivors and American Liberators in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), pp. 193–197. An essay titled “History of Tłuste/Tovste—My Story” was published by Douglas Hykle in 2006 (www.tovste.info/MyStory.php).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1310, 2860, 3281, 3298, 3337, 3360, 3491, 3882, 3886; and 302/98, 128); DATO; GARF (7021-75-107); USHMM (RG-50.002*0026); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Testimony of Julius Sommer in Preil, *Holocaust Testimonies*, p. 195.
2. AŻIH, 301/3337, 3281, 3491; 302/128 (in Yiddish) and 98; USHMM, RG-50.002*0026, oral history interview with Adela Sommer, 1983.
3. AŻIH, 301/3281.
4. Ibid., 301/3882, 3886.
5. GARF, 7021-75-107, pp. 82–83, 180.
6. USHMM, RG-50.002*0026.
7. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 180. Among those deported were also 70 Jewish women who worked on the kok-saghyz plantations.

8. Ibid., p. 141.

9. Ibid., p. 175. Milch, *Can Heaven Be Void?*, pp. 102–103, gives the figure of 200 killed on the spot.

10. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967): 18–19.

11. Ibid., p. 27.

12. Milch, *Can Heaven Be Void?*, p. 105. AŻIH, 301/3281, gives an average of 15 deaths per day.

13. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 181; USHMM, RG-50.002*0026; Lindenberg, *Sefer Tlustab*, p. 299.

14. GARF, 7021-75-107, p. 181; Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” p. 27, table 3.

15. USHMM, RG-50.002*0026; AŻIH, 301/3281.

TREMBOWLA

Pre-1939: Trembowla, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Terebovlia, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Trembowla, Kreis Tarnopol, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Terebovlia, raion center, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Trembowla is located 29 kilometers (18 miles) south of Tarnopol. By June of 1941, there were probably around 1,700 Jews in the town in a total population of about 10,000 (about 3,000 Poles and 5,000 Ukrainians).¹

Units of the German army occupied Trembowla on July 3, 1941. Initially, a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. At the beginning of August 1941, power was transferred into the hands of a Nazi civil administration. Trembowla was incorporated into Kreis Tarnopol. Gerhard Hager was appointed the Kreishauptmann. He was succeeded after April 1942 by Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen. The anti-Jewish Aktions in Trembowla were organized and carried out by the regional office of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnopol. The office was headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne (July–October 1941), SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller (October 1941–May 1943), and then SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger (June 1943–March 1944).

In Trembowla, a German Gendarmerie post (consisting of about 30 German Gendarmes), a local office of the Criminal Police (Kripo), subordinate to the Security Police in Tarnopol, and a local Ukrainian police unit were established. These units took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions within the town. The local Ukrainian mayor during the German occupation, Wolodymyr Wawrzyszyn, was also an ardent antisemite.

Soviet officials abandoned the town starting on June 29, 1941, but only about 100 to 150 Jews were able to evacuate with them. On July 5, 1941, 3 Jews were murdered in Trembowla.² At this time a provisional Ukrainian administration was organized, and Ukrainians began to persecute the Jews, seizing them for cleaning tasks and plundering Jewish houses. On July 10, 1941, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) arrested 40 more Jews, supposedly

for forced labor. Instead they were taken to a military barracks, where the Ukrainians tortured and then shot them. One man was able to save himself by bribing the guards with his gold watch.³

In the summer of 1941, the German authorities required Jews to wear a Star of David in plain view and to hand over all money and valuables. Successive German officials also demanded or took large amounts of furniture from the Jews. The Jews were prohibited from leaving the area of the town without permission on pain of death.⁴ The Ukrainian police was given a free hand to rob and search Jewish homes.

After several weeks, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 12 to 15 members was established, which the German occupying forces used to pass on their orders and restrictions to the Jewish population. The first head was Dr. Serat, who was then succeeded by a merchant named Goldstein. Once the civil administration was established, the labor office (Arbeitsamt) registered all Jews aged between 14 and 60, and these Jews had to perform forced labor. In October 1941, the Judenrat organized the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), headed by Grynfeld, who told his men that if they served the Germans loyally, they would be saved. In the winter of 1941–1942, the Judenrat established a soup kitchen for needy Jews, which also received some financial support from the offices of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) organization in Kraków and Lwów.⁵

On November 22, 1941, the Arbeitsamt sent 27 young Jews to the Borki Wielkie forced labor camp, near Tarnopol, where they worked repairing the railroad. Others were sent to similar camps, such as those in Kamionki and Stupki. As many Jews were shot or died of starvation in these camps, the Arbeitsamt subsequently demanded replacements. The Judenrat also raised a contribution from the Jews with the aim of bribing the German authorities to allow food to be sent to the camps. As people tried to avoid forced labor, both Ukrainian and Jewish policemen seized them off the streets, beating those who resisted.⁶

At the end of September 1942, the boundaries of the Trembowla ghetto were established. Then in October 1942, the Germans began to clear the smaller towns and villages of the region of their remaining Jewish population, and many Jews were resettled to Trembowla, including some from the neighboring towns of Strusów, Mikulińce, Janów, and Budzanów. The final date set for resettlement into the ghetto was November 3, 1942.⁷

Following the concentration of the Jewish population, the German security forces carried out a deportation Aktion in the town on November 5, 1942, during which they also killed 109 Jews on the spot. The occupiers deported 1,091 Jews (mostly those recently arrived in the town) to the extermination camp in Bełżec.⁸ German Security Police from Tarnopol carried out the Aktion with the assistance of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen.

On November 10, 1942, an order issued by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger, included Trembowla as one of

the towns where the continued existence of a ghetto after December 1 was officially recognized.⁹ Living inside the ghetto after the November Aktion were some 2,500 Jews. The ghetto consisted only of two small streets and was desperately overcrowded. According to available witness testimony, however, it appears that it was not fenced off from the rest of the town, as Jews going to work still moved freely outside the ghetto wearing their armbands. In the winter of 1942–1943, there was starvation in the ghetto, and hundreds died from typhus due to the unsanitary conditions. An isolation area was set up within the ghetto hospital to deal with those infected, but the disease still continued to spread.¹⁰

On April 7, 1943, a Security Police unit from Tarnopol, the German Gendarmerie, and the Ukrainian policemen carried out a cleansing Aktion. The Jews were driven out onto the marketplace, and the Ukrainian police searched for those in hiding. After removing their outer clothing and surrendering any valuables, 1,100 Jews were escorted to a ditch near the village of Plebanowka and shot. Following this Aktion, the ghetto was further reduced in size. Then, at the beginning of June 1943, the ghetto in Trembowla was liquidated. All those Jews remaining were shot near Plebanowka. On June 3, 1943, 843 Jews were killed. On June 4, the Germans declared the town to be *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews); but the hunt for hidden Jews continued, including outside the ghetto, as some Jews had hidden on the Aryan side; and another 350 Jews were killed on June 5, 1943. The Germans spared only two engineers, two doctors, and three schnapps brewers as needed specialists at this time. They murdered these Jews later, apart from two who escaped.¹¹

Trembowla was taken by the Red Army on March 23, 1944. Only between 50 and 100 Jews from Trembowla managed to survive the German occupation. Among the survivors was Sofia Kalski, who was assisted by Anna and Voitek Gutonski in Humniska after escaping from the Trembowla ghetto and hid in a hole for eight months until the Red Army arrived. Other survivors of the ghetto include Myra Genn (born 1938) and her mother Sabina, who managed to evade several round-ups by hiding under the floor of their building, before fleeing to hide on the property of a former customer, Wincent Rajski.¹² Sofia Kalski, Myra Genn, and Myra's mother all migrated to the United States after the war.

Wawrzyszyn was tried before the regional court (Landgericht) in Munich in 1948 but was acquitted on all counts.¹³

SOURCES Several articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of Trembowla can be found in the yizkor book: *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Trembovlah Strusov ve-Yanov veba-sevivah* (Bene Berak: Be-hotsa'at Irgun yots'e Trembovlah veba-sevivah, 1981). Additional information can be found in the article by Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); and in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 272–274.

Documents and eyewitness testimonies describing the fate of the Jews of Trembowla can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1421, 1422, 1423, 2149, 2150, 3697, 3983, and 4973); BA-L; DATO; GARF (7021-75-13); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2149, testimony of Dr. German Kollin, September 9, 1946.
2. GARF, 7021-75-13, p. 42; AŻIH, 301/2150, testimony of Wolf Aszkenaze, September 1946.
3. AŻIH, 301/4973, testimony of Chaskiel Sommerstein, July 10, 1945. GARF, 7021-75-13, pp. 45, 48 (and verso), dates the incident on July 11, stating 38 victims. Also see AŻIH, 301/2150; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 3 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1969-), Lfd. Nr. 99, pp. 432-434; *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Trembovlab*, p. 212.
4. AŻIH, 301/4973; *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Trembovlab*, pp. 218, 252.
5. AŻIH, 301/1422, testimony of Fini Dresdner, March 21, 1946; 301/2149 and 2150.
6. GARF, 7021-75-13, pp. 48 and verso; AŻIH, 301/2150 and 4973; *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Trembovlab*, pp. 218-220.
7. *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Trembovlab*, pp. 230, 254.
8. GARF, 7021-75-13, p. 49; AŻIH, 301/1423, testimony of Klara Szajowicz from Mikulińce, February 26, 1946.
9. Order of HSSPF Krüger on October 10, 1942, published in Tatiana Berenstein, ed., *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), pp. 344-346.
10. AŻIH, 301/1422, 2149, and 4973.
11. GARF, 7021-75-13, pp. 2, 6, 42 (and reverse), 49; *JuNS-V*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd. Nr. 634, p. 41; AŻIH, 301/2149 and 4973.
12. Myra Genn has given a video testimony; see VHF, # 44456, taped on August 19, 1998.
13. *JuNS-V*, vol. 3, Lfd. Nr. 99.

TYŚMIENICA

Pre-1939: Tyśmienica, town, Tłumacz powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Tismenitsa, raion center, Stanislav oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941-1944: Tyśmienica, Kreis Stanislau, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Tyśmienitsa, raion center, Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast', Ukraine

Tyśmienica is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) east of Stanisławów. According to the 1931 census, there were 1,850 Jews living in Tyśmienica.¹ By mid-1941, there were probably more than 2,000 Jews in the town.

Hungarian armed forces occupied the town on July 3, 1941. A few weeks later, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Tyśmienica became part of Kreis Stanislau, within Distrikt Galizien. Regierungsrat Dr. Heinz

Albrecht was the Kreishauptmann in Stanisławów from 1941 to 1944.

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Tyśmienica were organized and carried out by the local Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Stanisławów. It was headed by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger from July 1941 to November 1942. In Tyśmienica itself, a German Gendarmerie post was set up, and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) was recruited from among the local residents.

During their brief control of the town, the Hungarian armed forces generally treated the Jews reasonably. The Hungarian forces ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council and also required the Jews to wear armbands and perform forced labor. By August 1941, a number of Jews expelled from Hungary had arrived in Tyśmienica, where they received aid from the local Jews. Soon afterwards, however, the German authorities ordered these refugees to move to Stanisławów, where most of them presumably were massacred on October 12, 1941.²

Following the transfer to a German civil administration in August, the situation of the Jews deteriorated. The Germans confiscated a large amount of Jewish property, especially any items of value. Jews over the age of eight had to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. The Judenrat, headed by Yakov Zigler, had to organize contingents of forced laborers, which were escorted to their workplaces by the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), headed by Eliahu Buchhalter. Soon, the head of the Gestapo in Stanisławów, Hans Krüger, made regular visits to Tyśmienica, which usually resulted in Jews being killed or taken away to Stanisławów with the assistance of Ukrainian policemen, never to be heard from again.³

A few days before Passover, in the spring of 1942, a ghetto area was demarcated for the Jews of Tyśmienica. It covered an area of about 300 by 350 meters (328 by 383 yards) and started at the Polish monastery but did not include any part of the market square. All the Jews living outside the demarcated area were forced to move inside it. Jews were escorted out of the ghetto every day to perform forced labor, and this gave them the opportunity to obtain some food and smuggle it into the ghetto for their starving families.⁴

After the creation of the ghetto, a number of Jewish families who owned farms around Tyśmienica were permitted to continue living outside. At night Jews from the ghetto would sneak out and visit these farms to obtain food. In addition, there were certain craftsmen who received permits to leave the ghetto to conduct their trades. These people had the possibility to smuggle in food, but they were only permitted to leave the ghetto when accompanied by the Jewish Police, and Ukrainian policemen also searched them on returning to the ghetto.

Living conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded and unsanitary. Widespread hunger led to cases of stomach typhus and dysentery, while the cramped conditions caused lice-borne spotted typhus to flourish. The Jewish Council tried to do

what it could for the ghetto population; however, it only had the resources to supply skimmed milk to a few children. Food rations were limited to the small amounts the Germans permitted into the ghetto. The Judenrat ordered the creation of an epidemic hospital in which one doctor provided medical care for the sick. However, the treatment met with little success, and there were deaths from starvation and disease almost every day.⁵

According to the account in the yizkor book, the Germans liquidated the Tyśmienica ghetto in August 1942. The precise details of the liquidation Aktion remain unclear. It appears that the bulk of the Jews were transferred to the Stanisławów ghetto, where they were either killed in the city or were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp. Some of the younger able-bodied Jews either were transferred or made their own way to the Tłumacz ghetto, where around 80 Jews remained after that ghetto's liquidation, which had been completed by September 8, 1942.⁶

In Tyśmienica, initially around 30 craftsmen were kept alive to clear out the ghetto. They were accommodated together in one house. It appears that these Jews were also transferred subsequently to Stanisławów. One of them, Hirsh-Leib Fliker, a furrier, subsequently managed to escape from his German escort on a trip to purchase raw pelts in the villages in March 1943.⁷

According to the records of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), around 1,500 Jews passed through the camp or ghetto in Tyśmienica, and a total of 63 people were killed or died from hunger and disease. The remaining Jews were taken to Stanisławów.⁸ Local inhabitants also witnessed the murder of groups of Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Tyśmienica, where they were forced to undress before being shot.⁹

SOURCES Information on the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Tyśmienica can be found in the following publications: Shlomo Blond, ed., *Tismenits; a matseyve oyf di kburves fun a farnikhteter yidishe kebile* (Tel Aviv: Hamenora, 1974); Shlomo Blond, *The Righteous Gentiles* (Israel: Shlomo Blond, 1983); and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 854.

Relevant documentation is located in these archives: AŻIH (302/136); DAI-FO; GARF (7021-73-9); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 9.

2. Blond, *Tismenits*, p. 120; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), pp. 144–147.

3. Blond, *Tismenits*, p. 121.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 121–122.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 123; Blond, *The Righteous Gentiles*, p. 46.

7. Blond, *Tismenits*, pp. 124–125; Blond, *The Righteous Gentiles*, pp. 48–49.

8. GARF, 7021-73-9, pp. 77, 80.

9. Blond, *Tismenits*, pp. 125–126.

ZBARAŻ

Pre-1939: Zbaraż, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zbarazh, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Zbaraz, Kreis Tarnopol, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Zbarazh, raion center, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Zbaraż is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Tarnopol. The 1931 census recorded 3,000 Jewish residents. During World War II, the Jewish population reached 5,000 with the arrival of refugees from western Poland.

The town was occupied by German troops on July 4, 1941. Until August 1941, Zbaraż was controlled by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), but authority was then transferred to a German civil administration. Zbaraż became part of Kreis Tarnopol, in Distrikt Galizien. Until April 1942, the Kreishauptmann in Tarnopol was first Gerhard Hager, then Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen.

Anti-Jewish Aktions in Zbaraż were organized and conducted by the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnopol, which between late July and October 1941 was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne; from October 1941 to May 1943, by SS-Sturmbannführer Herman Müller; and from June 1943 to March 1944, by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger. Zbaraż itself had posts of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, which both took an active part in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In the days preceding July 4, 1941, Ukrainian nationalist antisemites and German soldiers engaged in anti-Jewish violence in the town in which around 20 Jews were murdered and two synagogues burned down. Soviet reports indicate that dozens of Soviet prisoners of war also were killed.¹ In mid-July, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). For "health reasons" the head of the local community council declined to serve, and a man named Feder was appointed as its head.² That same month, Jews were required to wear armbands bearing the Star of David for identification purposes and to turn in all gold and valuable items. Jews were forbidden to leave the town limits and were subjected to systematic robbery and beatings by the Ukrainian police.

On September 6, 1941, an SD-Einsatztrupp from Tarnopol under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Schöne arrived in Zbaraż from Tarnopol and ordered all men capable of work to assemble with shovels. The German Security Police selected more than 70 members of the intelligentsia and then shot them in the Lubianka Forest. Among the victims was the head of the Judenrat, Feder.³

Shortly afterwards the Germans appointed Pinchas Gruenfeld, a refugee from western Poland, as chairman of the

Judenrat. According to Jewish survivor Jakob Littner, Gruenfeld carried out German orders without regard for the interests of the local community. The Judenrat also organized the Jewish Police, which collected contributions from the Jewish community using force where necessary. Jewish men were put to forced labor on railroad construction for no pay. Others were sent to forced labor camps, but the winter of 1941–1942 passed without further major incidents.

In the second half of 1942, in four deportation Aktionen, Jews were sent from Zbaraż to the Bełżec extermination camp. In late August 1942, Jewish fugitives started to arrive in Zbaraż from Łanowce and Wiśniowiec in neighboring Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien, where the ghettos had already been liquidated. Then on August 31, the first Aktion took place in Zbaraż. The Jewish Council was forced to select 500 old and sick Jews, who were taken to Tarnopol and, from there, together with other Jews, were transported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁴ On September 30, the second Aktion took place, with 260 more Jews selected for deportation and taken to Bełżec via Tarnopol.⁵ On October 21–22, as part of the third Aktion, 960 Jews were deported to Bełżec, a smaller group was sent to the Janowska Street camp in Lwów, and around 130 were killed on the spot.⁶

Following the third Aktion, on October 25, 1942, a Jewish ghetto was established in Zbaraż for around 2,000 Jews near the old horse-trading market. Local Jews, together with others brought in from nearby Podwołoczyska were jammed into a few decrepit shacks located near the bathhouse and the synagogue. Overcrowding was severe, with about 20 people sharing each room.⁷ It was an “open ghetto,” but the perimeter was guarded internally by Jewish and externally by German and Ukrainian police. Jews only left the ghetto under guard to go to their places of work. The restricted movement made it difficult to find food. Around this time, anticipating further Aktionen, Jews began to prepare hiding places in the ghetto and in the nearby forest. The destruction of the Jewish community continued on November 8–9, when another 1,000 people were deported to Bełżec. In total, around 3,000 Jews fell victim to the four Aktionen.

On November 10, 1942, the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) of the Generalgouvernement, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, proclaimed that Zbaraż was one of the towns in which a Jewish residential district would be permitted. Remaining Jews in all other locations were forced to move to these ghettos.⁸ In Podwołoczyska there was a labor camp, where some Jews from Zbaraż worked.

The winter of 1942–1943 was very hard on the remnants of the community, as hunger and illness took their toll.⁹ Jews continued periodically to be deported to various forced labor camps in the area, including those in Kamionki and Hłuboczek. Some Jews were able to avoid these transports by bribing the Judenrat.

On April 7, 1943, a Security Police detachment from Tarnopol, together with the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, conducted another Aktion in the ghetto. In its course, more than 1,000 Jews, including members of the Jewish Police, were shot in ditches near the fuel storage tank at the Zbaraż

railroad station.¹⁰ On June 9, 1943, the ghetto was finally liquidated: on that day a Security Police detachment from Tarnopol, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, captured and shot several hundred Jews.¹¹

Some Jews escaped from the ghetto to the nearby woods, but they remained vulnerable to local informants and faced constant food shortages. The German Gendarmes and Ukrainian policemen regularly combed the woods in search of the remaining Jews; those captured were shot on the spot. On June 19, 1943, 150 Jews were captured and killed in the forest 7 kilometers (4.5 miles) outside the town.¹² Only around 60 Zbaraż Jews survived the German occupation; among them were Jakob Littner and his companion and future wife, Janina Korngold.

Of the German officials who served in the region, Harbou died in 1946 in the detention camp in Dachau; Herman Müller was sentenced to life in prison on July 15, 1966, in Stuttgart; and Wilhelm Krüger was under investigation for some time after the war, but the case against him was closed eventually, owing to insufficient evidence.

SOURCES Information about the destruction of the Jewish population of Zbaraż can be found in the following publications: Jakob Littner, *Aufzeichnungen aus einem Erdloch* (Munich, 1948); Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 189–202; Moshe Sommerstein, ed., *Sefer Zbaraz* (Tel Aviv: Organization of Former Zbaraz Residents, 1983); Wolfgang Koeppen, *Jakob Littners Aufzeichnungen aus einem Erdloch* (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1992); Kurt Nathan Gräbler, ed., *Journey through the Night: Jakob Littner's Holocaust Memoir* (New York: Continuum, 2000); and Roland Ulrich and Reinhard Zachau, eds., *Jakob Littner: Mein Weg durch die Nacht: Mit Anmerkungen zu Wolfgang Koeppens Textadaptation* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002).

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Zbaraż can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/350, 1725, 2177, 2571, 3554, 3772, 4853; 211/541); BA-L (ZStL, Verfahren 208 AR-Z 294/59 case against Raebel et al.); BWSL (EL 317 III, Bü 1408); DATO; GARF (7021-75-4); and YVA.

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2571, testimony of Dr. Marek Szmajuk; 301/3554, testimony of Icchok Lilien; GARF, 7021-75-4, p. 9.
2. Gräbler, *Journey through the Night*, p. 31.
3. AŻIH, 301/2571; GARF, 7021-75-4, pp. 1, 70. According to the report of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) in Zbaraż to the JSS in Kraków, June 13, 1942, 72 people were shot (AŻIH, JSS, 211/541).
4. Littner, *Aufzeichnungen*, p. 65; Urteil Schwurgericht Stuttgart, Ks 7/64, gegen Paul Raebel u.a., July 15, 1966 (see *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 [Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998], Lfd. Nr. 634).
5. GARF, 7021-75-4, pp. 3 and verso, 39; Urteil Schwurgericht Stuttgart, Ks 7/64, gegen Paul Raebel u.a., July 15, 1966 (*JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634).

6. GARF, 7021-75-4, p. 39; Littner, *Aufzeichnungen*, pp. 86–87; Urteil Schwurgericht Stuttgart, Ks 7/64, gegen Paul Raebel u.a., July 15, 1966 (*JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634).

7. Gräbler, *Journey through the Night*, p. 54; AŽIH, 301/2571; 301/3554.

8. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.

9. Sommerstein, *Sefer Zbaraz*, p. 40.

10. GARF, 7021-75-4, pp. 3 and verso, 40, 47, 49; Littner, *Aufzeichnungen*, pp. 92–96; Urteil Schwurgericht Stuttgart, Ks 7/64, gegen Paul Raebel u.a., July 15, 1966 (*JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634).

11. GARF, 7021-75-4, pp. 4, 22, 41; Urteil Schwurgericht Stuttgart, Ks 7/64, gegen Paul Raebel u.a., July 15, 1966 (*JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634). Estimates of the number of victims range from 300 to 600.

12. GARF, 7021-75-4, pp. 60 and verso.

ZBORÓW

Pre-1939: Zborów, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zborov, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Zborow, Kreis Tarnopol, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Zboriv, raion center, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Zborów is located 34 kilometers (21 miles) west-northwest of Tarnopol. In 1921, there were 1,086 Jews living in the town (29.1 percent), and in 1931, 1,900 Jews.

Zborów was occupied by German troops on July 3, 1941. Until August, the town was run by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), but then authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Zborów was incorporated into Kreis Tarnopol, within Distrikt Galizien. The position of Kreishauptmann in Tarnopol was held in turn by Gerhard Hager (until April 1942), then Mogens von Harbou und von der Hellen.

The Tarnopol outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Ausendienststelle) organized and conducted the anti-Jewish Aktionen in the town. SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne headed the unit from the end of July until October 1941; SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller succeeded him from October 1941 until May 1943; and from June 1943 on, SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Krüger was in charge. There was a German Gendarmerie post, a Criminal Police (Kripo) outpost (reporting to the Tarnopol branch of the Security Police), and a squad of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, all based in Zborów that participated in the anti-Jewish Aktionen.

At the start of the occupation, SS forces killed 600 Jews in Zborów, according to a German Einsatzgruppen report, “in retaliation for Soviet atrocities.”¹ Maria Cukier testified that the victims were killed in two separate locations, in a ditch just outside the town and in the courtyard of the former Soviet People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) building.²

In the summer of 1941, the occupation authorities ordered Jews to wear armbands bearing the Star of David and to turn in all their gold and valuables. Jews were assigned to perform forced labor, which included working as servants for the Germans. Jews were forbidden to leave the town and were subjected to systematic assault and robbery by the Ukrainian policemen. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in the town, and through it all the orders and instructions of the German authorities were delivered to the Jewish population.

On October 16, 1941, a further anti-Jewish Aktion was carried out in Zborów. At that time an SD squad from Tarnopol, which SS-Hauptsturmführer Edmund Schöne commanded, shot around 600 Jews (including women and children) about 2 or 3 kilometers (about 1.5 miles) outside the town; the victims were selected and gathered in the market square on German instructions by the Jewish Council.³

Some information about living conditions in Zborów is available from letters sent to a relative who was a prisoner in Germany. By April 1942, the Jews were forced to sell their last possessions to buy something to eat, and a soup kitchen had been opened for the needy. As news arrived of killings and deportations in other towns, the Jews did not expect to survive the end of the year.⁴

The next Aktion was conducted in the late summer of 1942, on August 29. On that day, 220 Jews were rounded up, mostly children and the elderly, and, together with Jews from other localities in Kreis Tarnopol, they were deported to the Bełżec extermination camp.⁵ After this Aktion, Jews from the villages of Jezierna (Ozeriany), Zalozce, and Pomorzany were moved into the town.⁶

In accordance with the order of SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) in the Generalgouvernement, a ghetto was established in Zborów on November 20, 1942.⁷ About 3,000 Jews were enclosed within the ghetto, including the remaining Jews from nearby villages. The ghetto was located on two streets near the river and was surrounded with barbed wire. Dozia Blustein has described living conditions there. Her family shared a three-room apartment with four other families. Each day hunger became more acute and sanitary conditions worsened, leading to an outbreak of typhus. People were dying daily by the dozen. Some local non-Jews used to smuggle food into the ghetto, among them Kola Leskiv, who also hid Dozia and her mother in his house in Jezierna after they escaped from the Zborów ghetto.⁸ There was a hospital in the ghetto, but it soon became overcrowded due to the rapid spread of typhus. People were lying next to each other on the floor with only straw for a bed. The only Jewish doctor came by once a day, but there was little that could be done for the hundreds of patients. According to one estimate, around half of those infected died of typhus.⁹

The Jews in the ghetto performed a variety of forced labor tasks. These included road construction, factory work, and sewing for the Germans. One group of Jewish girls was assigned to perform laundry work and gardening at the Gestapo

headquarters. Some Jews, especially able-bodied men, were transferred to the forced labor camp in Zborów in early 1943. Their families remained in the ghetto.¹⁰

In the spring of 1943, an underground organization led by Levy Remer was active in the Zborów ghetto. The organization collected weapons and constructed bunkers in preparation for the ghetto's impending liquidation. On April 9, 1943, the first Aktion took place against the ghetto. On that day, a squad of Security Police from Tarnopol, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen, shot about 2,300 Jews. On June 5, 1943, the ghetto was liquidated. When the Germans and Ukrainians came to clear the ghetto, they encountered armed resistance, so they set fire to some of the buildings to flush out the Jews in hiding.¹¹

In the spring of 1942, a Jewish forced labor camp was established in the town, which formed part of the series of camps along the Transit Highway 4 (Durchgangsstrasse, or DG IV) from Lwów to Podwołoczyska. Able-bodied Jews from Zborów and the vicinity were placed in the camp. The inmates were used to build and repair roads. In November 1942, branches of this camp were created in the villages of Zalozce and Olejów.¹² In October 1942, there were 420 inmates in the camp.¹³ SS-Schütze Erich Klaus was the first commandant of the camp. From August until November 1942, the camp was under the command of SS man Hans Sobotta. The camp was liquidated on July 23, 1943, when all the inmates were shot, about 500 people in all.¹⁴

In Jezierna, 14 kilometers (9 miles) to the east of Zborów, another Jewish labor camp was organized. Its inmates, as well as the prisoners in the Zborów camp, were used for road construction and repair. In July 1942, in the village of Zagrobela, not far from Tarnopol, a branch of this camp was established. At first SS-Unterscharführer Erich Minkus (who died in 1945) was the commandant of the Jezierna camp, and from April 1942 on, SS-Scharführer Richard Dyga (who died in 1961 while under investigation). The branch of the camp in Zagrobela was headed by Thomas Hasenberg (who was convicted in Stuttgart in 1966). The camp was liquidated on July 23, 1943, by shooting all the inmates (260 people).¹⁵

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Zborów can be found in the following publications: A. Zilberman, ed., *Yizkor Bukh Zborov* (Israel: Landsmanshaft Zborov un Umgebung in Israel, 1975); "Zborov," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 16 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972); "Zborov," in Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 202–205; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Gbetos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 971–972.

Documentation regarding the fate of Zborów's Jews during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AZIH (301/1643, 2520, 3777); BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (208 AR-Z 249/59, case against Raebel et al.); BWSL (EL 317 III, Bü 1408); DATO; GARF (7021-75-5); USHMM; and YVA.

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 19, July 11, 1941. According to Soviet Extraordinary State Commission materials, on the very first day of the occupation 830 Jews were killed in Zborów (GARF, 7021-75-5, p. 4).

2. AZIH, 301/2520, testimony of Maria Cukier.

3. Verdict of LG-Stutt, Ks 7/64, July 15, 1966, in the case against Paul Raebel et al. (*Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 [Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998], Lfd. Nr. 634).

4. Zilberman, *Yizkor Bukh Zborov*, pp. 84–85.

5. GARF, 7021-75-5, pp. 3 and verso. According to other data, *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634, the Aktion took place in the fall of 1942, and at least 600 people were deported to Bełżec.

6. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 11. There were 1,106 Jews in Jezierna in June 1942, but some of them were deported to Bełżec at the end of August 1942; in 1931, 704 Jews lived in Zalozce; in 1942, there were 1,450 Jews in Pomorzany, but some of them were deported to Bełżec.

7. Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942; Zilberman, *Yizkor Bukh Zborov*, p. 175.

8. Testimony of Dozia Blustein, in J. Sigelman, ed., *Memorial Book of Jezierna* (Israel, 1971), pp. 352–349 (English section); see also Iakiv Suslenskyi, *They Were True Heroes: Citizens of Ukraine, Righteous among the Nations* (Kiev: Society "Ukraine," 1995), pp. 117–118.

9. Zilberman, *Yizkor Bukh Zborov*, pp. 89, 180.

10. Testimony of Dozia Blustein, pp. 352–349 (English section).

11. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, p. 205. Zilberman, *Yizkor Bukh Zborov*, p. 94, estimates 1,500 victims of the April Aktion.

12. Tatiana Berenstein, "Praca przymusowa ludności żydowskiej w tzw. dystrykcie Galicja," *BŻIH*, no. 69 (1969): 33, 45.

13. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 11.

14. GARF, 7021-75-5, p. 12.

15. *JuNS-V*, vol. 24, Lfd. Nr. 634.

ZŁOCZÓW

Pre-1939: Złoczów, town, powiat center, Tarnopol województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zolochiv, raion center, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Zloczow, Kreis center, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Zolochiv, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Złoczów is located 64 kilometers (40 miles) east of Lwów. On the eve of World War II, there were around 7,800 Jews living in Złoczów.¹

German forces occupied Złoczów on July 2, 1941. At first, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. A German civilian administration took over control in August 1941. Złoczów became the ad-



Soviet troops exhume a mass grave in Złoczów, 1944. Złoczów was the site of Aktions against Jews from July 3 to 7, 1941, and from April 3 to 4, 1943.

USHMM WS #86588, COURTESY OF HERMAN LEWINTER

ministrative center of Kreis Zloczow, within Distrikt Galizien. Until January 1943, the Kreishauptmann was Regierungsassessor Hans Mann. He was then replaced by Dr. Otto Wendt. Until the fall of 1942, the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Tarnopol organized and carried out the anti-Jewish Aktions in Złoczów. Subsequently, that function shifted to the office of the Sipo and SD in Lwów (KdS Lemberg) and the post of the Criminal Police (Kripo) based in Złoczów, headed by a Criminal Police official from Vienna, Otto Sigmund.

According to a German Einsatzgruppen report, in Złoczów “before the Russians fled . . . they arrested and killed in all about 700 Ukrainians. In retribution, the [Ukrainian] militia arrested several hundred Jews and shot them, on instructions from the Wehrmacht. The number of Jews killed was between 300 and 500.”² A mobile group of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), led by I. Klymiv (codename “Legenda”), initiated the pogrom. On July 3, members of this group rounded up and confined hundreds of Jews in a fortress. There they made the Jews dig up the victims of the Soviet People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) with their bare hands. Then they killed the Jews on the spot, and the slaughter spread into the town itself. The killing went on for four days. According to the testimony of Jewish witnesses, thousands of Jews were killed; but the actual toll of the mass slaughter was more likely around 1,400. (According to the testimony of witnesses from the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission [ChGK], about 3,500 Jews were killed; that figure included 300 women.)³ Several days later, on July 10, a detachment of Security Police (part of Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. [for special purposes]) shot another 300 Jews selected from among the town’s professionals.

On orders from the German administration, the Jews remaining in Złoczów formed a 12-man Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Dr. Sigmunt Majblum. Subsequently, the Jewish

Police, led by D. Landsberg, was established as the enforcement arm of the Judenrat.⁴ Jews were made to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David. The Germans confiscated most of the Jews’ belongings, especially any valuable items, and they introduced a series of restrictive measures against the Jews. Jews were required to register and to perform various kinds of hard labor for little or no pay, and they were not permitted to leave the limits of the town. The Germans also imposed a large financial contribution on the Jews, which was paid by the Judenrat.

In the fall of 1941, the Germans confiscated all Jewish-owned apartments and evicted those Jews living on the town’s main streets. A curfew was also enforced from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M., and Jews were not permitted to shop after 10:00 A.M. In November 1941 and at the beginning of 1942, the German authorities sent several hundred Jews to the labor camp in Lackie Wielkie, leaving 5,833 Jews in the town. Soon typhus broke out in the camp, and it quickly spread to the Jews in Złoczów.⁵

As many Jews had no source of income, from early in the occupation, people had to barter their remaining possessions for food at exorbitant prices. In the spring of 1942, the Judenrat organized a soup kitchen to help the poor. There was also a small hospital, staffed with Jewish doctors. In July 1942, another group of young men was rounded up, and they were sent to the labor camps in Sasów, Lackie Wielkie, Płuhów, and Kozaki.

Some sources indicate that a form of open ghetto was set up in Złoczów, at some time in 1942, perhaps in the spring, before the establishment of the enclosed ghetto in December. The Jews were concentrated in one part of town but could still move about within the town limits.⁶

In 1942, the principal means of killing the Jews of Złoczów was to send them on a train to the Bełżec extermination camp. In mid-August 1942, the Judenrat was requested to prepare a list of 2,500 Jews unfit for work. In the course of the first mass deportation Aktion, on August 28 and 29, 1942, the Germans sent some 2,000 Jews to Bełżec.⁷ The Sipo-Aussendienststelle in Tarnopol, headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Hermann Müller, carried out that Aktion with the assistance of German and Ukrainian policemen and the Jewish Police.⁸ After that, 4,172 Jews remained in Złoczów.⁹ The second Aktion took place on November 2, 1942, during which some 2,500 more Jews were deported to Bełżec. A detachment of the Security Police from Lwów, under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Karl Wöbke, together with members of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, carried out the Aktion. First the combined police forces combed the Jewish residential area, which at the time was not enclosed by a fence, and assembled those Jews they could catch at the so-called Green Ring. From there the Jews were escorted in groups to the railway station. Many Jews were shot on the spot during the roundup.¹⁰

On December 1, 1942, the Germans established an enclosed ghetto in Złoczów in which they confined the Jews still in the town, as well as Jews brought in from the surrounding villages

(e.g., Gołogory, Sasów, and Biały Kamień). For example, Herman Zeigler recalled that announcements were posted on the walls in Sasów ordering the Jews to move to the Złoczów ghetto within one week. The Jewish workers in the Sasów labor camp were excluded, but all their family members were transferred.¹¹ All told, there were about 4,000 Jews in the Złoczów ghetto at this time. According to one Soviet source, the ghetto was located on Mickiewicz and Targowa Streets. It was fenced using barbed wire, as well as the existing house walls. There was only one gate, guarded by the Ukrainian police. The severe overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in the ghetto soon led to an epidemic of typhus.¹²

Subsequently the typhus epidemic served as the grounds for liquidating the ghetto. Some sources indicate that Judenrat head Majblum refused to sign a document declaring that the ghetto was being eliminated because of typhus, and he was killed. Deputy Kreishauptmann Gerhard von Jordan apparently played a sinister role in the ghetto's destruction. He claims to have ordered the liquidation in a document he signed using the fictitious identity "Politruk-SS." A German Security Police detachment, accompanied also by Jewish Police from Lwów, and assisted by the local Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, promptly liquidated the ghetto in an Aktion that was carried out primarily on April 3 and 4, 1943. In total, some 3,500 Jews were shot near the village of Jelechowice.¹³

Many Jews had prepared bunkers and hiding places inside the ghetto. The shootings continued for several weeks afterwards, as Ukrainian policemen and German Gendarmerie continued to search for those in hiding.¹⁴

A labor camp remained in the town after the liquidation of the ghetto. The occupiers had set up the camp towards the end of 1942 under the command of SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Grzimek. The prisoners in this camp were employed in a workshop and on the construction of a railway line. The Germans liquidated the camp in July 1943.¹⁵

Thanks to the help and backing of Josef Meyer, the Kreislandwirt in Złoczów, a group of Jews managed to survive. Until November 1942, Meyer did not believe that the German occupiers were exterminating Jews in gas chambers. When he finally grasped this reality, he did his utmost to help them. He made reasonable arrangements for the work to which they were assigned; he saw to their food supplies; and he gave them the chance to hide during the roundups. In Israel after the war, Meyer was awarded the title Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

Two secret groups were established in the Jewish labor camp. P. Nachumovits led one group; H. Safran, the other. The group headed by Nachumovits—about 30 strong—managed to escape into the woods, where they tried to prepare a bunker. However, peasants in a neighboring village turned them in to the Germans, who killed most of the group. The members of Safran's group were also betrayed to the Germans, who arrested and shot them. At the time of the shooting, Safran jumped one of the Germans and grabbed his pistol but was killed from behind by a member of the Ukrainian police.

After the war, Otto Wendt was a Staatssekretär in Lower Saxony, Germany. For a while, he was under investigation; it was discontinued in 1969. Otto Sigmund was extradited to the Soviet Union in 1949, where he was tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison. He died in a Soviet jail. Hermann Müller was sentenced to life in prison for his part in the killings in Złoczów as well as other crimes.

SOURCES Relevant information may be found in these publications: Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 217–223; Thomas Sandkühler, "Endlösung" in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), pp. 256–258; Israel Gutman et al., eds., *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust: Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden* (Munich: Piper, 1995), pp. 1336–1337; Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967); *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 16 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972); and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 986–988.

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Złoczów can be found in the following archives: AAN (119/1, Personal File 5, pp. 56–63); AŻIH (e.g., 211/544; 301/87, 2850, 3285, 3752, 3776, 3777, 4015, 4670, 4834, 4991, 5879); BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (e.g., B 162/19262); DALO; GARF (7021-67-80); TsGAMORF (236-2675-134); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.084); VHF (e.g., # 8443, 21772); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 12. See also TsGAMORF, 236-2675-134, which gives the figure of 8,000 inhabitants.
2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941.
3. GARF, 7021-67-80, pp. 4–7.
4. AŻIH, 301/3550, testimony of Anna Ulreich; 301/87, testimony of Mendel Ruder.
5. Ibid., 301/3550; Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 12.
6. AŻIH, 301/3550; VHF, # 21772, testimony of Fani Fulero (née Fanka Batisz).
7. GARF, 7021-67-80, pp. 14, 15; Sandkühler, "Endlösung," pp. 256–257.
8. See Urteil LG-Stutt, Ks 7/64, July 15, 1966, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 24 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), Lfd Nr. 634.
9. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja," table 12.
10. See Urteil LG-Stutt, Ks 5/65, April 29, 1968, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 27 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), Lfd. Nr. 671, pp. 704–707. For this and other crimes, Karl Wöbke was sentenced to nine years in prison.
11. AŻIH, 301/3776, testimony of Herman Zeigler; 301/3777, testimony of Chaim Wander; GARF, 7021-67-80, p. 6; Polizeiverordnung des HSSPF Krüger über die Errichtung jüdischer Wohnbezirke, November 10, 1942, in *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements*, November 11, 1942.

12. TsGAMORE, 236-2675-134; VHF, # 21772.
13. Gutman et al., *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, p. 1337; Sandkühler, "Endlösung," pp. 257-258.
14. VHF, # 21772; BA-L, B 162/19262, p. 25; AAN, 119/1, Personal File 5, Feld-Urteil gegen Gend.-Meister Walter Schlamilch, p. 58; GARF, 7021-67-80, p. 75 (forensic medical document). According to the ChGK concluding report for the Zolochov raion, more than 5,000 people were shot (p. 78). Likely, this figure is too high.
15. Tatiana Berenstein, "Praca przymusowa ludności Żydowskiej w tzw. dystrykcie Galicja," *BŻIH*, no. 69 (1969): 32, 36.

ŻÓŁKIEW

Pre-1939: Żółkiew, town, powiat center, Lwów województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Zholkva, raion center, L'viv oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941-1944: Zolkiew, Kreis Lemberg-Land, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Zhovkva (aka Nesterov), L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Żółkiew is located just over 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) north-northwest of Lwów. In 1921, the Jewish population was 3,718 (out of a total of 7,867). In 1931, there were about 4,400 Jews residing in Żółkiew.¹ By June 1941, due to an influx of Jewish refugees mainly from western Poland, the Jewish population had increased to about 5,000 people.²

Units of the German 17th Army occupied Żółkiew on June 29, 1941, and the town was initially placed under a local military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur). A few days after taking the town, German soldiers burned down the synagogue, and a pogrom erupted in which several Jews were killed. The Jews established an informal Jewish committee in early July to ameliorate the brutal roundups of Jews for forced labor. Subsequently, the Ortskommandantur converted the committee into a Jewish Council (Judenrat) chaired by Dr. Febus Rubinfeld, which had to ensure the fulfillment of German demands.³ The German authorities imposed a curfew and a daily labor quota on the community. Jews working on labor details suffered from constant abuse and harassment.

In August 1941, Żółkiew became part of Kreis Lemberg-Land, in Distrikt Galizien. The Kreishauptmann was Otto Bauer from September 1941 until March 1942; Werner Becker then served until January 1943. Baron Joachim von der Leyen replaced him in turn. The town of Żółkiew was governed by Landkommissar Rockendorf, who soon demanded a contribution from the Jews of 250,000 rubles, 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of gold, and 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of silver. At this time the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) also beat and arrested 12 prominent Jews, including the head of the Judenrat, and the community was informed that these Jews would be shot if the ransom were not paid. After considerable effort, assisted by some non-Jews, the community paid the ransom. In late December 1941, the Jews were required to surrender all their fur clothing (about 5,000 items) on pain of death.⁴

Daily labor details continued, and labor tasks for Jews included loading railroad cars at the station and repaving the town's streets with tombstones from the Jewish cemetery. The Germans also ordered the establishment of the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst); 18 men served under Phillip Czaczkes. The Jewish Police had to ensure that the labor quotas were met. The Jewish Council attempted to improve conditions for the Jews by paying bribes to key Germans and Ukrainian policemen.⁵ The many remaining smaller Jewish-owned properties that had not been confiscated by the Soviets were now confiscated by the Germans, who also charged the former owners rent.⁶

In March 1942, a group of SS men arrived from the forced labor camp in Lackie Wielkie and rounded up about 60 male Jews for work there. When one of these men escaped back to Żółkiew a few days later, he was recaptured and hanged in Lackie Wielkie. Others died there of exhaustion, hunger, and beatings, despite the efforts of the Jewish Council to send them food packets.⁷

German Security and Order Police units conducted the first Aktion on March 15, 1942, in which they deported 700 Jews, designated as incapable of work, to the Bełżec extermination camp; it was probably the first deportation to this destination. The Jews were informed that they would be sent to drain the swamps near Pińsk. However, when after many days Mina Astmann and Mala Thalenfeld returned to Żółkiew, they revealed that the Jews had been forced to undress before being murdered. The two women had only managed to escape because German security measures in Bełżec were not yet perfected at this time. Many Jews disbelieved the women initially, but other reports confirmed that trains delivered Jews to a camp near Bełżec and returned carrying only their property. A cloud of smoke hung over the camp from which terrible screams were sometimes heard. Over the summer, deportation trains from other towns also passed through Żółkiew.⁸

The German Security Police, assisted by men of the Order Police and Ukrainian police, conducted a second Aktion on November 22-23, 1942, during which about 2,400 people were sent to Bełżec. Knowing what to expect, many Jews managed to break holes in the moving railcars with tools and escape, while others went into hiding in town, some with local non-Jews. During and just after the Aktion, it is estimated that about 800 Jews (including some who had jumped from the trains) were shot and buried in and around Żółkiew, mainly at the Jewish cemetery. Local ethnic Germans were especially active in rooting out those in hiding.⁹

At the beginning of December 1942, the Germans established an enclosed ghetto in Żółkiew, surrounded with barbed wire. The remaining Jews in the town, plus arrivals from other nearby towns and villages (including about 1,000 from Kulików and some from Mosty Wielkie), were forced to relocate to the Żółkiew ghetto, which encompassed six blocks of the town. The population of the ghetto is estimated to have been around 4,000 people. Any Jews caught outside the ghetto were to be shot.¹⁰

Overcrowding was intense, and in January and February 1943, between 10 and 20 Jews died daily as an epidemic of typhus swept through the ghetto. The final liquidation took place in two further Aktions on March 15 and March 25, 1943. During these Aktions about 800 ghetto inmates (618 individuals on March 15 and then another 170 on March 25) were sent to the Janowska Street camp in Lwów or its subcamps (e.g., Gródek Jagielloński).¹¹ Altogether, some 1,500 Jews who remained in the ghetto were shot in the Borek Forest.¹² The members of the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police were also killed. The Aktion was carried out by members of the German Security Police based in Lwów, assisted by the local German Gendarmerie (commanded by Käthe) and Ukrainian policemen.

On April 6, the German police entered the ghetto area, offering food and security to the Jews still hiding there if they were to surrender. Some of the victims accepted this offer and left their hiding places; they were shot immediately. Only a few that were captured were sent to the Janowska Street camp. About 70 Jewish skilled workers (so-called specialists) remained in Żółkiew. They were shot on July 10, 1943; only 52 Jews are known to have escaped the roundups and survived.¹³

Soviet forces recaptured Żółkiew on July 23, 1944. Over the following months a few Jews returned to the town, but they soon moved on, and the Jewish community was not reconstituted.

SOURCES Published sources on the Żółkiew ghetto include Gerszon Taffet, *Zagłada żydów żółkiewskich* (Łódź, 1946)—other versions of this can be found in AŻIH (302/141) and BA-L (B 162/2100—a translation into German); and Danuta Dabrowska, Abraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 206–216.

Documents regarding the fate of the Żółkiew Jews during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: DALO (e.g., R 98-1-4); GARF (7021-67-79 and 82); USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 15838); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Dabrowska, Wein, and Weiss, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 2, *Eastern Galicia*, pp. 206–216; and VHF, # 15838, interview with Ben Bergstein, 1996.

2. Tatiana Berenstein, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943),” *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 7.

3. BA-L, B 162/2100, pp. 79–119 (German translation of Taffet, *Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich*), here p. 83 (of the German file).

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 86–93; Berenstein, “Eksterminacja,” table 7.

6. DALO, R 98-1-4, p. 16. By July 1942, 40 nationalized (Sovietized) and 481 nonnationalized Jewish properties had been confiscated in Żółkiew by the German Housing Office (Wohnungsamt).

7. BA-L, B 162/2100, pp. 90–92.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–100.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 100–103.

10. GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 55, gives the figure of 5,000 ghetto inmates, which is probably too high; 7021-67-82, p. 38; VHF, # 15838; and Taffet, *Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich*, pp. 22–43.

11. Taffet, *Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich*, pp. 54, 57.

12. GARF, 7021-67-79, p. 55.

13. Taffet, *Zagłada żydów żółkiewskich*, p. 60; Joseph J. Preil, ed., *Holocaust Testimonies: European Survivors and American Liberators in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), p. 172.

ŻURAWNO

Pre-1939: Żurawno, town, Żydaczów powiat, Stanisławów województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zhuravno, raion center, Drogobych oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Żurawno, Kreis Stryj, Distrikt Galizien, Generalgouvernement; post-1991: Zhuravno, Zhidachiv raion, L'viv oblast', Ukraine

Żurawno is located 48 kilometers (30 miles) northwest of Stanisławów. In 1939, there were about 1,300 Jews in the town.¹

German armed forces occupied Żurawno on July 3, 1941. At first, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) ran the town's affairs. Then a German civil administration took over in August 1941. Żurawno was incorporated into Kreis Stryj, within Distrikt Galizien. Regierungsrat Dr. Wiktor von Dewitz was the Kreishauptmann from 1941 to 1944. In Żurawno, there was a German Gendarmerie post, which served under the command of the Gendarmerie in Stryj, and a local Ukrainian police force, which participated actively in the anti-Jewish Aktions.

In the summer of 1941, the German occupying authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and the Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) to carry out the registration and marking of all the Jews in Żurawno. At the end of July, the Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David. Then, by the end of August, the Jews were forced to pay a “contribution” of 100,000 złoty. Other restrictions included the closing of Jewish schools and a ban on Jews buying food in the marketplace or leaving the limits of the town.

The Jewish Council also established a labor office, which assigned Jews to various forced labor tasks. In the summer of 1941, a number of Jews were engaged in regulating the flow of local rivers that were prone to flooding. In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews of Żurawno had to surrender any furs or other warm clothing for the benefit of the German army. The Jews suffered from terrible hunger and cold; there were a number of deaths from starvation.²

By the summer of 1942, a soup kitchen had been established in Żurawno to provide hot meals to Jewish workers. Plans also were made for a branch of the Jewish Social Self-Help (JSS) to be opened in the town.³ On June 10, 1942, there were 1,151 Jews registered in Żurawno, of whom 403 were

forced to perform various labor tasks.⁴ These included work on road construction, at a quarry, and in an alabaster factory. In mid-June 1942, on instructions from the Judenrat, the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police rounded up 50 Jews for transfer to the Chodorów labor office, which was viewed as a great hardship in view of the food shortages before the harvest. Another 15 Jews were arrested and held by the Jewish Police. According to survivor Henryk Schächter, these Jews were threatened with deportation to extort money from them to be used by the Judenrat.⁵ The Judenrat may have had an urgent need of funds to bribe the Germans or pay the next contribution, but Schächter's testimony is highly critical of the unscrupulous tactics employed by the Judenrat.

At the beginning of September 1942, a mass deportation Aktion was carried out in the town in the course of which around 500 Jews from Żurawno were sent to the extermination camp in Bełżec. Jews from Stryj, Chodorów, and other nearby towns were deported at the same time.⁶ Two weeks after this first wave of deportations in early September 1942, the Kreishauptmann issued instructions for the remaining Jews of the Kreis to be concentrated in Stryj, Bolechów, Chodorów, Skole, or Żurawno. Then, on September 29, 1942, most of the remaining Jews of Żurawno were forcibly resettled into the ghetto in Stryj. Further deportation Aktions were carried out in Stryj during October and November 1942 in which most of the Jews sent there from Żurawno were deported to Bełżec.

Information on the existence of a small remnant labor ghetto in Żurawno is sparse. On October 7, 1942, the Kreishauptmann ordered the concentration of all remaining Jews of the Kreis in the Stryj ghetto by the end of the month: it was not to be permitted that any individual Jews should hide or be hidden in the countryside. Exceptions, however, were granted for Jewish doctors and pharmacists, waste collectors working for the Kremin Company, and Jews working for the local council. However, these specialist Jews who were to remain in some locations after the end of October were "under all circumstances to be housed in barracks."⁷

According to survivor Zwi Liberman, at the end of September 1942, all the Jews who remained after the deportations were forced to go into a small, but open, ghetto in Żurawno.

Liberman was forced to abandon his house as it was outside the ghetto. Jews could only bring in with them what they could carry. Conditions in the ghetto were very crowded, with around 18 to 20 people living in one room.⁸

As a result of the successive German orders, around 160 Jews remained in a small remnant labor ghetto in Żurawno after the end of October 1942, including a group of waste collectors. These Jewish workers were subsequently liquidated in two Aktions on February 4 and June 5, 1943.⁹

SOURCES Documentation regarding the annihilation of the Żurawno Jews can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1036, 2809); DALO (e.g., R 1951-1-65; R 1952-1-62); GARF (7021-58-22); USHMM (RG-31.003M [DALO]); VHF (# 30316); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja, 1941–1943," *BŻIH*, no. 61 (1967), table 10.
2. VHF, # 30316, testimony of Zwi Liberman.
3. DALO, R 1951-1-65, p. 13, Tätigkeitsbericht JSS Kreis Stryj, July 1942.
4. Thomas Sandkühler, "Endlösung" in *Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), p. 329.
5. AŻIH, 301/2809, testimony of Henryk Schächter.
6. Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 387.
7. DALO, R 1952-1-62, p. 92, Runderlass Kreishauptmann Stryj an alle Vögte, October 7, 1942, as cited by Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 243; and Sandkühler, "Endlösung," p. 352.
8. VHF, # 30316.
9. Ibid.—Zwi Liberman states that 152 Jews were killed in February 1943; AŻIH, 301/1036, testimony of Dawid Liberman. See also Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung*, pp. 250, 260; and Sandkühler, "Endlösung," p. 370.

SECTION IV

BIAŁYSTOK REGION (DISTRIKT BIALYSTOK)

On July 17, 1941, less than a month after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler ordered the establishment of a civil administration for the occupied western regions of the Soviet Union. He named Erich Koch, the Oberpräsident and Gauleiter of East Prussia (Ostpreussen), as head of the civil administration (Chef der Zivilverwaltung) for Distrikt Białystok, as well as the Reichskommissar of Ukraine. Distrikt Białystok consisted of territories mostly from eastern Poland's pre-World War II Białystok województwo (without the Suwałki region). Its borderlands also included small parts of the Warsaw, Poleskie, and Nowogródek województwa. In the period from late 1939 until June 1941, the area of Distrikt Białystok had been under Soviet rule, comprising more or less the entire Belostok oblast' and small parts of the Brest oblast' and the Baranovichy oblast', within the Belorussian SSR.

The official transfer from a military to a civilian administration occurred on August 15, 1941. How-

ever, the Distrikt's northeastern borderlands, near Lithuania, were incorporated only on October 1, 1941. One reason for establishing Distrikt Białystok was to create a direct territorial link between Koch's home base within the Reich as Gauleiter of East Prussia and his new fiefdom in the east, Reichskommissariat Ukraine. As it was intended that the Distrikt would be later incorporated directly within Gau Ostpreussen, the administration and many of the laws were based on the model of East Prussia. However, it remained throughout the German occupation somewhat of an anomaly: a separate Distrikt in the heart of Hitler's expanded empire, neither fully incorporated into the Reich nor subordinated to either the Generalgouvernement or the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (RMO) but sandwiched between these three separate entities, serving both as a buffer zone and a link.



BIAŁYSTOK REGION



"The Jews in a transport," by Józef Charyton, Kamieniec Lit.[ewski], 1942.
USHMM WS #27701, COURTESY OF ŻIH

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Szymon Datner calculated the September 1, 1939, population of the Białystok Region at 1.5 million, including 240,000 Jews, and noted the arrival of another 100,000 Jewish refugees after the region came, from September 17, under Soviet occupation. About a third of the refugees subsequently were deported to the Soviet interior. Sara Bender placed the population on August 1, 1941, the day the Distrikt officially was established, at 1.13 million, including 150,000 Jews.

On July 17, 1941, Adolf Hitler named Erich Koch, the Oberpräsident and Gauleiter of East Prussia, the Chef der Zivilverwaltung for Distrikt Białystok. The transfer to civilian administration occurred only on August 15. Even then, the Distrikt's northeastern borderlands, near Lithuania, were incorporated only on October 1. They included Grodno and the northern parts of the pre-war Grodno powiat (county).



Pre-war portrait of Erich Koch, appointed Chef der Zivilverwaltung for Distrikt Białystok in 1941.

USHMM WS #45260, COURTESY OF GEOFFREY GILES

Before then, a military administration had governed the Distrikt. Under its tenure, the 3 largest ghettos were established in Białystok, Grodno, and Łomża and about half of the 61 provincial ghettos. The physical devastation and violence in the first two months of the war, a by-product of larger German military and strategic priorities, helped determine an irregular regional pattern of ghettoization: remnant ghettos predominated in the western borderlands near East Prussia; more traditional ghettos emerged in the north, near Grodno and Sokółka, and south, near Bielsk Podlaski; and open ghettos predominated in more devastated areas, including in the east near Wołkowysk and in the center, around Białystok.

The German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, devastated some Jewish communities immediately. Hundreds perished as early morning artillery shelling set Sopoćkinie ablaze. The material devastation was greatest in the Białystok pocket, where five days of aerial bombardment leveled Wołkowysk, Wołpa, and Zelwa.

Upon occupying a locality, local German military commandant's offices (Ortskommandanturen) ordered Jews to surrender radios and bicycles and mandated forced labor. Within about two weeks, the regional military command, in Łomża, had issued to all Jews in its territories the so-called rules of conduct, including requirements to wear either yellow stars on their clothing or white armbands with yellow stars. A subsequent order, likely on July 20, 1941, required Jewish communal leaders to submit population censuses and commanded all Jews to return home, warning they were forbidden, on penalty of death, from leaving their places of census registration. The same order mandated the establishment of Jewish Councils (Judenräte).¹

During the first two months of the war, Einsatzgruppen, supported by the SS, Order Police, and Wehrmacht units, conducted small killing Aktions of suspected Communists and intellectuals in almost every Jewish community. The violence initially was most massive and rapidly accelerated in and around Białystok. On June 27, 1941, the day after the Germans had occupied Białystok, Police Battalion 309 murdered 2,000 to 3,000 Jews, including some 800 people burned alive in the Great Synagogue. A July 8 visit by Heinrich Himmler brought orders to execute 2,000 Jewish men. Police Battalions 316 and 322 killed 4,000 instead. On June 26–28, a small German unit (or perhaps units) set fire to Dąbrowa Białostocka, Zabłudów, Jasionówka, and Trzcianne, likely because their inhabitants almost all were Jewish. During the Jasionówka fire, on June 27, local Poles helped the Germans murder 70 to 150 Jews; a day later in Trzcianne, another group of locals abetted the murder of some 800 Jews.

In the west, violence accelerated after orders from Reinhard Heydrich, on June 29, 1941, for the Security Police to mobilize the local population and, on July 4, for Einsatzgruppen to clear Jews from the borderlands near East Prussia. A July 4 visit by Hermann Göring to Łomża intensified violence there, as a small Einsatzkommando from Zichenau murdered almost 2,000 Jews from July 4 to July 19. On July 5, Göring and Koch visited Kolno, as local Poles murdered 30 Jews.² The visit likely sealed the fate of the 2,350 to 3,000 Kolno Jews, executed in several stages beginning on July 15 with able-bodied men; from July 18, their parents and wives; and from late July, children, single men and women, and the elderly.³ In the meantime, in Radziłów, on July 7, and in Jedwabne, on July 10, the local population burned 1,100 to 2,400 Jews alive in two barns. By early September, parts of the local population, including the auxiliary police (Hilfspolizei), had engaged in anti-Jewish violence in at least 60 other localities, mostly assisting small Einsatzgruppen and police units to plunder, beat, murder, and ghettoize Jews.

Amid the war devastation and violence, the Wehrmacht issued the first orders for ghettoization. Local military commanders responded to fire devastation upon occupying Sopoćkinie and Michałowo, on June 22 and 27, 1941, by ordering the Jews into ghettos, in Sopoćkinie to secure a captive labor force, and in Michałowo, to enable the local population to appropriate the Jews' surviving houses. A remnant ghetto also was established in Jedwabne, on July 20, for survivors of earlier violence. On August 1, the military administration ordered the Jews confined to a closed ghetto in Białystok. Days later, the Łomża ghetto was established. Six of nine provincial ghettos in the Grodno region were created under the military administration. The Jews in Grodno proper were moved into its two ghettos on October 1, the day the region was incorporated into the Distrikt.

With the transfer to civil administration, on August 15, 1941, Koch delegated a plenipotentiary, Waldemar Magunia, to represent him in the Distrikt. In February 1942, Fritz (Friedrich) Brix succeeded Magunia. They supervised seven Kreiskommissare appointed to head the Kreise of Białystok,



Jews move their belongings into the Grodno ghetto, ca. 1941–1942. USHMM WS #50349, COURTESY OF IPN

Bielsk (Podlaski), Grajewo, Grodno (from 1942, Garten), Lomscha, Sokolka, and Wolkowysk. The Białowieża Forest, officially a part of Kreis Bielsk, was treated as an extraterritorial unit within the Distrikt, administered directly by the Reichsforstamt (Reich Forestry Office).

In Kreis Grajewo, located on the East Prussian border, large-scale killing Aktions accompanied the establishment of its four closed ghettos, all created in the first weeks of August, likely by the same Einsatzkommando from the Tilsit State Police. In Augustów and Szczuczyn, all Jewish men were imprisoned as closed ghettos were constructed, in the latter case by the local Polish population, for the Jewish community's women and children. A small number of craftsmen and medical professionals were released to the newly constructed ghetto. About 2,400 to 3,200 others were shot. Events likely followed a similar course in Grajewo. However, the sparse documentation makes it difficult to corroborate a Jewish eyewitness's suggestion that as many as 7,900 Jews perished before the ghetto was established.

In Kreis Lomscha, large-scale killing Aktions coincided with ghettoization in half of the eight ghettos established from July to September 1941. In Stawiski, in July, and in Czyżewo, in August, a total of 3,500 to 3,850 Jews were executed, and only 110 and 60, respectively, mostly male craftsmen were retained in remnant ghettos. In Zambrów, local auxiliaries helped the SS, on August 19, to choose 700 to 900 mostly able-bodied men, about a third of the Jewish community, for execution, likely the day before the ghetto was established. A remnant ghetto also was planned for Wysokie Mazowieckie, but the SS failed to arrive from Łomża as scheduled. The Jews, ordered to a ghetto in late August, lived in relative peace until November 1942. In Łomża, mass killing Aktions in August and September 1941 rid the ghetto of 700 to 2,000 "nonuseful" workers, including yeshiva students, the elderly, and those unemployed. A similar execution in Zambrów, in September, targeted 300 elderly and pregnant Jews.

Because of the mass killing Aktions, the ghettos in Kreis Lomscha and Kreis Grajewo remained small. The Jewish communities south of Śniadowo (Kreis Lomscha), including in Lubotyń, Prosiénica, and Szumowo Nowe, were wiped out in the first weeks of August. As a result, the Śniadowo ghetto, established in early August 1941, was made up almost exclusively of Jews native to the town. Likely, because a warehouse was established in one of Śniadowo's two railway stations to store items plundered on the Eastern Front, the Jewish community was spared from execution to sort, repair, and repack the goods for shipment to the Reich.

Because of the violence, Kreis Lomscha and Kreis Grajewo stood apart from the other Kreise for the relatively large number of Jews, mostly survivors of violence, living illegally inside and outside of its ghettos. These individuals placed enormous pressures on the ghettos in Zambrów, Czyżewo, and Łomża. In the spring of 1942, local authorities permitted fugitives in Stawiski (and other Jews in small remnant ghettos) to work for Poles as agricultural laborers, on contracts arranged by the local Arbeitsamt, and to remain behind in

Jedwabne (Kreis Lomscha) and Radziłów (Kreis Grajewo), when the ghettos were dissolved in November 1941 and June 1942, respectively. The Jedwabne Jews were expelled to the Łomża ghetto. However, the Grajewo Kreiskommissar, in the spring of 1942, ordered Jews in his Kreis, including almost all the Radziłów survivors, sent for labor in Milewo, on his estate at Milbo. About a third of the Jews in the Augustów ghetto also were deported to Milbo at about the same time, as were most Jews from tiny survivor communities. Because it was more of a labor camp than a ghetto, Milewo is not covered in this volume.

In other Kreise, the transfer to civilian administration resulted in the concentration of Jews into just a few ghettos, including in the Białowieża Forest, in Kreis Bielsk. The initial violence that accompanied the expulsion of Jews from the forest's interior in the first two weeks of August 1941 gave way by the end of the month to a less murderous expulsion drive, likely ordered by the Reichsforstamt to clear the Jewish and non-Jewish population from a wide territorial belt along the forest's periphery. A small number of Jews were retained for remnant ghettos in Narewka and Kamieniec Litewski; the rest were expelled to Prużana along with Jews from 18 other communities. The expulsions continued after the establishment of the Prużana ghetto on September 25, 1941. With the expulsion of 4,000 to 5,000 Białystok ghetto inmates there in October, the Prużana ghetto population swelled to over 10,000, making it (because of the mass killings in Łomża) the third most populous ghetto in the Distrikt, behind only the Białystok and Grodno ghettos.

The Prużana ghetto also looked different from most other ghettos in the Distrikt, because its fence was constructed of metal and brick. More typically, local German authorities, even in Białystok, ordered the Jews in closed ghettos to provide wooden construction materials for the fences and to build them. In the case of Prużana, the authorities provided the metal fencing and barbed wire, charging the Jewish Council a 750,000 rubles "fee."⁴

In Kreis Sokolka, arson in late August 1941 drove the Jews from Sidra and Kuźnica Białostocka, but when they and the Dąbrowa Białostocka Jews returned to their burned-out homes, German authorities began establishing remnant ghettos for craftsmen and road construction laborers in fire-devastated towns, including Kuźnica in October and Dąbrowa in February 1942. Almost all the rest of the Jews from the northern and western part of the Kreis, including from Sidra, Dąbrowa, and a part of the Janów Sokółski community, were consolidated in the Suchowola ghetto, established in early August 1941. Following the last expulsion in February, the ghetto population had expanded from 2,000 to around 6,000. Because of the pressures overcrowding placed on its limited resources, the Suchowola Amtskommissar consented to establish a new ghetto in March 1942. Similar consolidations occurred in the east of the Kreis, to the Krynki ghetto, established in December 1941, but began only in the early spring of 1942. In the meantime, the ghetto established in October, in Sokółka, the Kreis center, remained a small,

walled-off fortress for the native population and a small number of voluntary refugees.

In Kreis Bielsk, the establishment of the 12 ghettos outside the Białowieża Forest proceeded in stages with little violence. In August 1941, the local civil administration first ordered Jews to live apart from Christians. In large communities, including Ciechanowiec and Bielsk Podlaski, closed ghettos were established by the fall of 1941; in others, including Wysokie Litewskie, Siemiatycze, and Brańsk, open ghettos were created instead. In the spring of 1942, the newly appointed Kreiskommissar, Landrat Tubenthal, ordered all Jews in the Kreis to closed ghettos. The orders established ghettos in Orla and Boćki in March, and in Drohiczyn, Grodzisk, and Kleszczele, and also likely in Wysokie Litewskie, in May. However, the Jewish Council in Siemiatycze prolonged negotiations over the closed ghetto's future location and size and bribed local officials to postpone its establishment until August 1942.

The establishment of the provincial ghettos in Kreis Grodno likely followed a similar pattern as in Kreis Bielsk. All the provincial ghettos initially were open ghettos, including the ghettos in Ostryna and Marcinkańce, established in October and November 1941. The Ostryna ghetto was closed in April 1942, as were almost all the others, though the timing of the closure orders in Łunna, Jeziory, and Skidel is not known precisely.

Likely, because of the material devastation from war operations in Kreis Wolkowysk, almost all of the nine ghettos established in the summer of 1941 remained open. The ghettos had some of the worst material conditions in the Distrikt. In Zelwa, the Jews lived in the basements of war-devastated houses; in Wołpa, in pits dug into the ground. In Wołkowysk, 15 families crowded together in the few Jewish-owned structures still standing. Only two of the eight provincial ghettos, in Porozów and Piaski, were closed, with the first closed on September 23, 1942, and the second on September 26.⁵

Of the 10 provincial ghettos established in Kreis Białystok, likely only the ghettos in Michałowo and Gródek Białostocki were closed. The local Amtskommissar, Paul Melzer, disbanded the Michałowo ghetto upon arriving in nearby Gródek in August 1941. Several testimonies note Melzer established a closed ghetto in Gródek, perhaps in the fall of 1941. However, Szymon Datner recalls that the postwar Polish investigative team, of which he was a part, encountered difficulties charging Melzer with war crimes related to ghettoization, because documentation in the Underground Archives of the Białystok Ghetto upheld Melzer's claim that he had released Jews from ghettos rather than imprison them.⁶ The Knyszyn Amtskommissar ordered the ghetto there fenced in the fall of 1941, but local Polish health professionals intervened to suspend the closure order. It is the only known example of the local population seeking to mitigate the course of ghettoization in Distrikt Białystok.

Local authorities also did not expel Jewish returnees from fire-devastated localities, as in Kreis Sokolka. Rather, they established open ghettos, including in Trzcianne, in the fall

of 1941, and Zabłudów, in January 1942. However, the ghetto populations were small from the outset, because only a limited number of Jews chose to live in the fire-devastated ruins of their former communities.

The varying patterns of ghettoization reflected the physical conditions in the region and larger German military and strategic priorities, but the wide range of ghettos across the Distrikt also highlights the flexible and partially decentralized nature of Nazi ghettoization policies. Given the near uniformity of certain ghettos in some Kreise and the uneven patterns across the Distrikt, it appears Kreiskommissare, as in Bielsk, decided whether ghettos would remain open or be closed and when and where ghetto consolidations would occur.

The decentralization helps to explain the vast disparities in provisioning across the ghettos, including why Jews in the Rajgród and Bielsk Podlaski ghettos received no rations and starved, whereas local peasants were permitted in Grajewo and Zambrów to enter the ghetto to barter food for material possessions. The relatively large number of examples of calves being smuggled into ghettos and the many references across the entries to ritual slaughterers (*shochetim*) executed for being found outside of ghettos suggest that kosher slaughter continued, inside and outside of ghettos, and that Jews, even in provincial ghettos, had access, albeit illegally and at great risk, to food sources beyond the limited rations.

Even the most uniform ghettoization policy instituted in the Kreis, the simultaneous liquidation of the provincial ghettos, on November 2, 1942, and the establishment of five regional transit camps in which to concentrate the Jews before sending them to the extermination camps was unique to the Distrikt. Local officials also appear to have decided the level of support they needed during the liquidation Aktion. In Drohiczyń (Kreis Bielsk), SS Ukrainian auxiliaries supported local Gendarmes and auxiliaries. In Marcinkańce (Kreis Grodno), for a ghetto of likely about the same population, the local Gendarmerie commander employed a small force of about 16 German police and civilians. Local auxiliaries were not called in for support until after the Jews had fled from the deportation. The Białystok Jews also were excluded from the liquidation Aktions because Brix and Froese, the Distrikt military inspector for the ordinance industry, successfully appealed to Berlin to maintain the Białystok ghetto intact to exploit its Jewish labor to expand munitions production.

Such arguments were no longer tenable by mid-July 1943, when losses on the Eastern Front and growing Soviet partisan activity prompted the German decision to transfer Białystok's industries to Lublin and in August to liquidate the ghetto, the last in the Distrikt. On August 15–16, with all hope for survival lost, the underground launched an uprising but was soon overwhelmed. More than 100 Jews managed to escape from the ghetto and join the partisans.

SOURCES Secondary works offering at least some regional coverage of the history of the Jews in the ghettos of Distrikt Białystok include Sara Bender, *Mul Mavet Orev: Yehude Białystok be-Milhemet ha-'Olam ha-Sbniya 1939–1945* (Tel Aviv:

'Am 'Oved, 1997), now in an English translation, by Yaffa Murciano, as *The Jews of Białystok during World War II and the Holocaust* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008); Szymon Datner, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim," *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 3–50 plus unnumbered tables; Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Belorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); Tikva Fatal-Knaani, *Zo lo otah Grodnob, Kiblat Grodnob u-sevivatab bamilbamah uva-sho'ah 1939–1943* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001); Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999); Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KSZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*; Ewa Rogalewska, *Getto białostockie. Doświadczenie Zagłady—świadełwa literatury i życia* (Białystok: IPN-KSZpNP, 2008); Waldemar Monkiewicz and Józef Kowalczyk, *Zagłada ludności Żydowskiej w Białymstoku* (Białystok, 1983); Mariusz Nowik, *Zagłada Żydów na ziemi łomżyńskiej* (Warsaw: Bellona, 2006); Andrzej Żbikowski, *U genezy Jedwabnego: Zrytzi na kresach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej, wrzesień 1939–lipiec 1941* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2006), with chap. 5, the most pertinent chapter, in an English translation as "Pogroms in Northeastern Poland—Spontaneous Reactions and German Instigations," pp. 315–354, in Elazar Barkan et al., eds., *Shared History, Divided Memory: Jews and Others in Soviet-Occupied Poland, 1939–1941* (Leipzig: Simon-Dubnow-Institut für Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur, 2007).

Published collections of testimonies, memoirs with regional coverage or containing important information about German decision making about the region, and other primary source material include the following: R.A. Chernoglazova, ed., *Tragediia evreev Belorussii (1941–1944): Sbornik materialov i dokumentov* (Minsk: Izdatel' E.S. Gal'perin, 1997); Hajkah (Chaika) Grosman, *Anshe ha-Maheret* (Tel Aviv: Moreshet and Sifriyat Po'alim, 1965), available in an English translation by Shmuel Beer, as *The Underground Army: Fighters of the Białystok Ghetto* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987); Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992); Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KSZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*; Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000); Mordecai Tenenbaum, *Dapim min ha-Delekah* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem and Bet Lohame ha-Gita'ot, 1984); and for its documentation on the deportations from Distrikt Białystok to the Auschwitz death camp, Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: Wykazy imienne. Polish Jews in KL Auschwitz: Name Lists* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004).

Publications used to identify smaller ghettos in Distrikt Białystok included Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000); Emanuel Ioffe, *Belorusskie evrei: Tragediia i geroizm, 1941–1945* (Minsk: Arti-Feks, 2003); U.P. Verkhas' and U.F. Shumila, eds., *Pamiats'. Historyka-dakumental'naia khronika Hrodzenskaha raiona* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Entsyklapedyia, 1993); Henadz' Pashkou, ed., *Pamiats'. Historyka-dakumental'naia khronika Shchubynskaha raiona* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Entsyklapedyia, 2001); Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979); Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish*

Communities: Poland, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989); Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005); *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945. Województwo łomżyńskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHwP and OKBZH-Bi, 1985); *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich. Województwo ostrołęckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHwP and IPN, 1985); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Bialystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006); and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; APB; APŁmż; AUKGBRBBO; AUKGBRB-GrO; AŻIH; BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; BLH; CDJC; FVA; GABO; GAGO; GARF; IPN; IPN-Bi; NARA; NARB;

RGASPI; RGVA; USHMM; VHAP; VHF; YIVO; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/899, anonymous testimony, Rutki[-Kossaki] refugee, pp. 1–5.
2. BA-MA, RH 26-211/84, p. 1.
3. Dinah Koncepolsky-Chludniewitz, “The End of the Kolno Community,” in A. Rembah and Binyamin Halevi, eds., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Kolnah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Kolnah ye-Sifriyat-po’alim, 1971), pp. 45–50; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 1, 2/177-78, pp. 1–2; IPN-Bi, S-1/71, pp. 1–289. See also IPN, SOŁ 130.
4. AŻIH, 301/1380, testimony of Olga Goldfajn, pp. 2–3.
5. *Informacja Bieżąca*, no. 44 (69), December 2, 1942, p. 3, in USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring II/338/b [CD: # 8, 434. Ring II/338/2], p. 86.
6. Datner, “Eksterminacja,” p. 68.

AUGUSTÓW

Pre-1939: Augustów, town, Augustów powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Avgustov, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1945: Augustowo, Kreis Grajewo, Distrikt Białystok; post-1999: Augustów, Augustów powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Augustów lies 95.5 kilometers (59.3 miles), north-northwest of Białystok and 42.5 kilometers (26.4 miles) northeast of Grajewo.

Because of its location near the Polish–East Prussian border, the Germans bombed the Augustów train station on September 1, 1939, but occupied the town for just two hours before ceding it to Soviet occupation. In September 1940, 2,906 Jews lived in the Avgustov raion.

On June 22, 1941, the first day of the German invasion of the USSR, the Germans reoccupied Augustów. They established a Polish administration and recruited an auxiliary police force. A Jewish survivor remembers the force as composed of local Poles, who subsequently all qualified and registered under Nazi racial laws as ethnic Germans.¹ Little is known about the collaborators' activities in the summer of 1941, a period in which one third to one half of the Jewish community perished.

On June 24, 1941, a Waffen-SS commander arrested 70 workers and guests of an Augustów retreat center and executed about 30 of the captives—15 Jews and 15 Russians.² Operational units organized by Regierungsrat Hans-Joachim Böhme, commander of the Tilsit State Police, were responsible for the subsequent June and July murders of Augustów Jews. On June 27, an Einsatzkommando, led by SS-Captain Wolfgang Ilges, from Tilsit, ordered the arrest, for communism, of 100 more Augustów residents, mostly Jews.³ Several days later, the men arrested a furrier and several other Jews, probably for defying orders to return home. Whether the prisoners were executed immediately or were held and murdered on July 3, together with 175 more victims, remains unclear. What is known is that on July 3 an operational unit led

either by Ilges or by Waldemar Macholl, the Grenzkommis-sar of the Sudauen (Polish: Suwałki) border police, and soldiers from the intelligence branch of the 87th Infantry Regiment murdered 300 to 316 people, including 10 women, in two mass shooting Aktions in the Augustów Forest.⁴ Almost all of the victims were Jews.

The largest mass shooting of Augustów Jews occurred at the same time the ghetto was established. On August 15, 1941, a German unit, also likely from the Tilsit State Police, ordered Jewish men from 13 to 60 years old to register for work at a central point in Augustów. Held captive in the synagogue, the 800 to 1,650 men who obeyed the order were executed in small groups of 200 to 300 people in the Szczecbrze section of the Augustów Forest, near Klonownica village.⁵

Likely, on the day of the roundup the Jewish women in Augustów were confined to a ghetto. Located on a 12-hectare (29.7-acre) area between the Augustów and Bystry Canals, the ghetto occupied a former settlement of one-room houses built for the workers of the local sawmill. It contained several streets of company-owned houses, all referred to as Barracks' Street. In the period of the ghetto, the streets were numbered from 1 to 13. They were surrounded by a wire fence, topped in some places by barbed wire. The only gate was on the road leading to Lipsk nad Biebrzą. The road is now called Bohaterów Westerplatte (Street of the Westerplatte Heroes).⁶

A detailed list in the postwar Polish court documentation of the skilled trades practiced by men in the Augustów ghetto suggests that craftsmen may have been released to the ghetto, as had happened several weeks prior in Szczuczyn (Białostocki), also in Kreis Grajewo. However, Jewish survivor Nusia Janowski maintains the Germans intended the ghetto population to be wholly female.⁷ Charles Levine, another survivor, notes that no men were held back from execution. The only men in the ghetto were those who had not registered for labor or had broken the windows of the synagogue and fled.⁸

In August 1941, the Germans consolidated in the ghetto about 100 Jews from other parts of the former Avgustov raion as well as a handful of Jews still resident in Kreis Sudauen. The expellees included the Sztabin community, a part of the Lipsk nad Biebrzą community, and a smaller number of Jews from Raczek (Augustów powiat) and Dowspuda. (In October 1939, the Germans had driven almost all of the Jews from the last two communities across the border near Augustów. Some had been deported from Augustów to the Soviet interior in May 1940; the others were ordered to move to Słonim.) The executions and consolidations make it difficult to ascertain the Augustów ghetto population. Most survivors claim 2,000 Jews resided there.

Toyer, the head of the SS in Augustów, and his assistant, an ethnic German named Klonovsky, were ultimately responsible for the ghetto. It was monitored on a day-to-day basis by the German Gendarmerie and guarded by Polish auxiliaries.⁹ Living conditions were poor. About 24 people resided in a single house. Overcrowding gave way to ailments, such as purpura, associated with typhus, and other fever epidemics. A hospital and cemetery were established in the ghetto.¹⁰



Jews are gathered at an assembly point during a deportation Aktion in the Augustów ghetto, November 1942.

USHMM WS #74337, COURTESY OF ŻIH

The male craftsmen worked as tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, watchmakers, and painters. Some men and many more women were conscripted for labor at the lumber mill, renamed in this period for Hermann Göring. Skilled mechanics and locksmiths worked for the Wehrmacht. Unskilled workers were sent to a labor camp established in Augustów for road repair or were conscripted for agricultural labor or timber harvesting. August Bogener, from January to March 1942 an auxiliary policeman and supervisor of Jewish forced labor crews, routinely beat prisoners with a rubber truncheon, kicked them, and stripped them of food they were attempting to smuggle into the ghetto.

In June 1942, the Germans reduced the size of the Augustów ghetto population by deporting a large number of young women inmates to Grajewo. The women were sent for agricultural labor at Milewo, the estate of the Grajewo Kreis-kommissar, located in Milewo (Szczuczyn gmina and powiat). Approximately 500 to 1,000 Jews at Milewo came from Augustów, Sztabin, and Lipsk.

The Augustów ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. A handful of Christian converts were permitted to remain with their families in Augustów. The Gendarmes locked the sick and elderly, those they deemed unable to travel, either into the ghetto hospital or a regular house and set it ablaze.¹¹ The remaining Jews were expelled to a transit camp located north of Grajewo, in Bogusze village, near the train station in Prostken, East Prussia. About 5,000 to 9,000 Jews from other nearby localities, including from Milewo, were expelled to the transit camp that same day. On December 15–16, the Germans sent 3,000 to 5,000 inmates from Bogusze to the Treblinka extermination camp. On January 3, 1943, the remaining 2,000 Jews at Bogusze were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp. On January 7, at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Germans selected 296 men and 215 women from the transport for labor. The remaining 1,489 people were gassed on arrival.



A pile of tombstones removed from the Jewish cemetery during the destruction of the Augustów ghetto, November 1942. The tombstone on top was erected in memory of Abraham bar Mayrim Moloveichik and includes a Hebrew acrostic using the letters of his first name.

USHMM WS #33431, COURTESY OF GFH

In August 1943, the converts excluded from the Bogusze deportation were executed.¹² In April 1944, Macholl, then head of Department IVA-3 of the Białystok Gestapo, organized a Sonderkommando 1005 unit, personally selecting its 43 laborers from a group of Jewish male craftsmen and other survivors at the city prison. The unit began its work on May 15, 1944, in the Augustów Forest. Closely supervised by Obersturmführer Dick, the Jewish prisoners spent almost three weeks exhuming and burning the corpses there, including 3,000 to 5,000 Jewish, Belorussian, and Polish civilians and former Soviet officials buried in seven mass graves at Szczębrze.¹³

In addition to the handful of survivors from Auschwitz, three Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland are counted as survivors. Assisted by Paweł Kunda, a local physician, they lived outside the ghetto on false identity papers and remained in Augustów after the liquidation of the ghetto.¹⁴

In West Germany, Böhme received a 15-year prison term for ordering the executions of several thousand Jews (and Communists), including in Augustów. In 1957, Ilges received a 4-year sentence for murdering 100 Augustów Jews. In Poland, Bogener was sentenced to life in prison in 1947 for using compulsion to exploit Jews for forced labor. In 1954, the sentence was commuted to a 12-year term.¹⁵ Macholl was convicted in March 1945 of numerous crimes, including ordering the murders in June and July 1941 of 316 Augustów Forest victims, ordering the Sonderkommando 1005 unit to destroy evidence of Nazi crimes in Augustów, and ordering the execution of at least 31 Jews from the unit. He was sentenced to death and executed.¹⁶

SOURCES Some archival documentation appears in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 260–262 (AŻIH, 301/1846, Polish trans.), a testimony by Menachem Finkelsztein, which provides the most detailed description of labor at Milewo. The yizkor book edited by Ya'akov Aleksandrone, *Sefer yizkor li-kehillat Ogustov veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Ogustov veba-sevivah be-Yisrael, [1966]), pp. 373–489, also includes accounts of the destruction of the Augustów Jewish community.

Secondary works covering the Jewish community of Augustów under German occupation during World War II include the brief account by Sara Bender, “‘Akcja Reinhardt’ w okręgu białostockim,” in Dariusz Libionka, ed., *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie* (Warsaw: IPN, 2004), pp. 209–210; Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), p. 126 (Augustów), p. 421 (Raczki); and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 36–38 (Augustów), p. 124 (Lipsk), and p. 212 (Sztabin). For the deportations to Augustów of the Lipsk and Sztabin communities and the handful of Jews from Raczki and Dowspoda, still invaluable is Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): tab. 4.

Historians divide over whether Macholl or Ilges was responsible for the July 1941 killings. Here compare Datner, “Niemiecki okupacyjny aparat bezpieczeństwa w Okręgu Białostockim (1941–1941) w świetle materiałów niemieckich (opracowania Waldemara Macholla),” *Biuletyn GKBZHW* 15 (1965): 25, 47, a point reiterated in *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945. Województwo suwalskie* (Warsaw: GKBZHW-IPN, 1986), p. 15; with Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 539; and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia*, p. 264. The fact that the July victims were almost all Jews is discussed in Józef Kowalczyk, “Zbrodnie Wehrmachtu w rejonie białostockim w latach 1939–1945,” *Biuletyn GKBZHW* 31 (1982): 94.

Published verdicts from the West German trials, cited below, are available in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 14 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 444, pp. 105–134 (LG-Köl, 24 Ks 1/57); vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 146–149 (LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57; and BGH, 1 StR 648/59); and vol. 16, Lfd. Nr. 485, pp. 155–164 (LG-Biel, 5 Ks 2/59). The Sonderkommando 1005 unit assigned to the Augustów Forest is discussed in Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Sonderaktion 1005 na Białostocczyźnie,” *Białostocczyzna*, no. 16 (1989): 27–29.

Documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Augustów during World War II can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 301 [21, 547, 1846, 2264]); FVA (e.g., HVT [1458, 663]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOB 279-280, SOE 102, SWB 44); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/1961, 7/1133, and 443/71 [Lipsk nad Biebrzą]); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 14, 46/1], RG-50.002*0037, RG-50.549.02*0009); VHF (e.g., # 5388, 6010, 21177, 23224, 26675, 27439, 44356, 49356); and YVA (e.g., M-1Q/481, M-11/275, M-11B [37, 97, 206], M-49/E [21, 1265, 1267], O-3/2773, O-33/290, TR-10 [BA-L] 843).

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13. AŻIH, 301/21, testimony of Szymon Amiel, pp. 1–2 (typescript); and 301/547, testimony of Gerszon Mojżesz Hejss, pp. 1–3.

14. VHF, # 26675.

15. IPN, SOE 102. See also IPN-Bi, 7/1133.

16. IPN, SOB 279–280.

BIAŁYSTOK

Pre-1939: Białystok, city and capital, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Belostok, oblast' center, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Białystok, Kreis center and capital, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Białystok, capital, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Białystok lies 190 kilometers (118 miles) northeast of Warsaw. Its 1936 population of 99,722 included 44,482 Jews. The Jews had transformed Białystok into a leading manufacturing center, with the second-largest textile industry in pre-war Poland.

The Germans occupied Białystok from September 15 to September 22, 1939, before ceding it to Soviet occupation. Under Soviet rule, refugees from German-occupied Poland swelled the Jewish population to about 50,000.

The Germans recaptured Białystok on June 27, 1941. That day, members of Police Battalion 309 extricated hundreds of Jews from their houses and executed them in the public garden. Patients in the Jewish hospital were also murdered. Another 800 Jews, driven into the Great Synagogue, were burned alive. On July 3, Einsatzkommando 8, a subunit of Einsatzgruppe B, rounded up about 1,000 Jews and shot 300 of them, mostly intellectuals, near Pietrasze, a village just north of Białystok. On July 12, the Germans arrested about 4,500 young Jewish men. Members of Police Battalion 316 executed them in a forest near Pietrasze. In two weeks, 7,000 Jews had perished.¹

On Sunday, June 29, 1941, local German military authorities ordered Gedaliah Rosenman, the chief rabbi of Białystok, to establish a 12-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) within 24

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.002*0037; and repeated in VHF, # 21177, both testimonies of Charles Levine.

2. LG-Biel, 5 Ks 2/59.

3. LG-Köl, 24 Ks 1/57.

4. LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57.

5. IPN-Bi, S-415/71, vol. 1, p. 16 (deposition, Józef Rowiński); and USHMM, RG-50.002*0037.

6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 14, 46/1, pp. 1–2.

7. VHF, # 26675.

8. Ibid., # 21177.

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/1, pp. 1–2.

10. IPN-Bi, S-415/71, vol. 3, pp. 21–22 (depositions, Piotr Bondziul and Janina Derda).

11. Ibid., pp. 21–22, 27 (deposition, Waław Węgrzynowicz).

12. VHF, # 26675.



German soldiers surround a group of Jewish men who stand with their hands up in Białystok, ca. 1941.

USHMM WS #05681, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

hours. Rosenman formally served as its chair. However, the practical responsibilities of the chairmanship were assumed by Ephraim Barash, the administrative director and president of the Białystok Jewish community. The council was expanded to 24 people in August.

On July 26, 1941, the Judenrat announced that military authorities had ordered a ghetto established and had given the Jews five days to move there. The ghetto was located in an area immediately north of Kościuszko Square. The Germans ordered the Jews to construct a 2.5-meter-high (8.2-foot-high) wooden fence, topped with barbed wire, around the ghetto. On August 1, the main gate, on Jurowiecka Street, was closed on its 43,000 inhabitants. A Jewish police force of more than 200 men patrolled the ghetto from the inside and helped the Judenrat maintain order and carry out German orders. The Schupo guarded the ghetto gates from the outside.

The German-appointed mayor, or city governor, of Białystok officially served as the ghetto's civilian administrator. In practice, he oversaw its economic administration, and security officials exercised day-to-day control. From August 1941, the commander of the police and SD in Distrikt Białystok was Wilhelm Altenloh. Until October 1942, he carried out his responsibilities from Allenstein. A deputy, Theodor Paeffgen, represented him in Białystok. In April 1942, when the SD, Criminal Police (Kripo), and Gestapo in Białystok were united in a single operational framework, Altenloh was appointed Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (KdS). The first commander of the Białystok Gestapo was Waldemar Macholl. Richard Dibus was its deputy commander. From October 1942, Fritz Friedel was head of the Judenreferat (Department of Jewish Affairs). When Lothar Heimbach was named Gestapo chief in January 1943, Macholl became his deputy, and Friedel assumed direct responsibility for the ghetto.²

In September 1941, the German authorities demanded the Judenrat provide a list of 4,500 to 5,000 Jews to be moved to the ghetto in Prużana. The expulsions stirred popular anger because the Judenrat had targeted for removal widows of recent victims of the Germans, and the Jewish Police used force to remove them.³

Even though Barash had acted harshly, likely to demonstrate to the Germans his authority, he and the council members felt enormous responsibility for the residents of the Białystok ghetto. They established a very large administrative staff to care for them. By June 1942, the council employed more than 4,000 people, not including the approximately 8,600 industrial workers employed in ghetto factories. The Supplies Department supervised bakeries, a dairy farm, and factories, which produced for ghetto residents a range of processed foodstuffs, including jam, and transformed inedible meat provided by the authorities into sausage.⁴ It grew 190 tons of vegetables in gardens planted on vacant lots and distributed rations, including barley, flour, potatoes, sugar, oil, wood, and coal. The fact that the Judenrat initially ordered ghetto inhabitants to burn potato peels, to save on refuse collection, perhaps indicates that the Białystok ghetto was better provi-

sioned than most.⁵ A Welfare Department opened an old-age home for 200 residents and organized two orphanages. The Health Department established a hospital and provided the ghetto population with free or reduced-cost medical services, including standard vaccinations for children. A Sanitation Department imposed harsh penalties to prevent the outbreak of disease. The morbidity rate in the first year of the ghetto's existence nonetheless climbed to almost double the preoccupation rate, but the cleanliness drives also had prevented a single case of typhus in the ghetto.⁶

Barash maintained that Jewish survival depended on transforming the Białystok ghetto population into a productive source of cheap labor to meet the vital economic needs of the German Reich. He believed his strategy would protect the Jews from German violence, forestall deportations, and ensure Jewish survival. The extant reports of the Judenrat meetings indicate that its guiding principle was—as Barash put it—“to make the ghetto so useful to the German administration that it would be detrimental for them to destroy it.”⁷

By June 1942, 20 factories operated in the Białystok ghetto. A laundry, a glass-polishing workshop, sewing rooms, a tannery, and leather works also had been created. They manufactured a long list of items, including clothing and uniforms, shoes, saddles, barrels, electrical appliances, soap, chemicals, furniture, and bandages.⁸ To produce the finished products, most shops initially depended on raw materials, such as glass and ultimately potato peels, mainly collected in the ghetto. The largest orders came from the Wehrmacht. The Białystok ghetto laundry, for instance, reportedly cleaned the soiled clothes, uniforms, and bed sheets of every Wehrmacht unit on the Eastern Front.⁹ Private German companies and the German civil administration also ordered goods and services from the ghetto workshops and factories.

Barash's strategy likely prolonged the life of the Białystok ghetto. In early October 1942, the Reich Main Security Office in Berlin ordered the Security Police in Białystok to evacuate 12,000 Jews from the ghetto. However, several local German officials, including Brix, the deputy head of the civil administration, appealed to Berlin to spare the ghetto because of its importance to military production.¹⁰ When the Germans began on November 2, 1942, to liquidate almost all of the provincial ghettos in Distrikt Białystok, the Białystok ghetto was sealed temporarily but was untouched. However, as a result of the liquidation Aktion, control over the ghettos in Distrikt Białystok, in early November 1942, passed to the Security Police and the Gestapo. Barash also ceded about 25,000 square meters (6.2 acres) of land in the ghetto, including most of Zamenhof and Żydowska Streets and some of Biała, Brańsk, and Polna Streets. The Germans used the residences there to house some 5,000 Poles and Belorussians expelled from the Białowieża Forest area, with the latter brought there to assume the factory jobs of Jewish laborers, should they be transported to the extermination camps.¹¹

Barash curbed the excesses of the Jewish Police. On June 16–17, 1942, the Judenrat ordered 20 corrupt policemen sent to labor camps. When a search, on June 21, of the apartment

of policeman Grisha Zelikowicz, a notorious extortionist, revealed large sums of foreign currency, diamonds, furs, and other valuables, the Judenrat ordered him turned over to the Gestapo.¹² Barash appointed the popular Moshe Berman, a pre-war deputy chief of police in Białystok, to fill the position of police commander. Berman restored the force's public image, in part by recruiting policemen with a social conscience.¹³ The changes ultimately created a force that refused to help the Germans extricate Jews from hiding places during the expulsions.

Youth from a wide range of pre-war political movements organized resistance. In December 1941, the Communists established the first underground organization, known as the Anti-Fascist Committee. In early January 1942, two groups of activists from Wilno arrived in the Białystok ghetto. The first, from Hehalutz Ha-Za'ir-Dror was led by Mordecai Tenenbaum, who himself continued on to Warsaw. The second, from the Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, included Hajkah Grosman, a Białystok native, sent from the United Partisan Organization (Fareynikt Partizaner Organizatsye, FPO) to establish a similar organization to coordinate resistance. Her efforts failed because the Communists refused to abandon their tradition



Portrait of Mordecai Tenenbaum (1916–1943), commander of the Białystok ghetto underground, 1943.
USHMM WS #39074, COURTESY OF YVA

of ideological isolation. Cooperation between Dror and Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir also did not move forward smoothly, as Dror had not yet made armed struggle the focal point of its activities.¹⁴

In August 1942, news of a deportation Aktion in the Warsaw ghetto and a split among the Communists enabled Edek Boraks, from Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, to unite a part of the underground. His block, Front A, joined together the Communists, Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, and a faction of Bundist youth.¹⁵ In November 1942, Tenenbaum returned to Białystok, determined to establish a cohesive fighting organization. His efforts faltered because the Communists still refused cooperation with Dror, who they believed propounded a heretical ideology and was too close to the Judenrat. Seeing no alternative, in late January 1943, Tenenbaum consolidated a second resistance block known as Front B. It consisted of Dror, Betar, Hanoar Hazioni, and a Bundist group that had not joined Front A. Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir members operated in both fronts, providing the link between the two blocks.¹⁶

As a committed Zionist, Barash was sympathetic to the youth movements, although they did not share his view of the Jews surviving the war unharmed. Barash responded to Grosman's request for assistance for Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir, and they formed a real friendship, based on mutual trust. He met regularly with Tenenbaum to exchange information, likely to gain his confidence and eventually a shared sense of responsibility for the ghetto.

On February 4, 1943, Barash summoned Tenenbaum to tell him that the Gestapo had intended to deport 17,600 Jews from the ghetto, but he had managed to reduce the number to 6,300. Barash explained that the Germans had reassured him that the factory employees would be spared. Convinced of the necessity of sacrificing a few in the hope of saving the majority, Tenenbaum also knew that a shortage of arms made resistance futile.¹⁷

The Aktion, which began on February 5, 1943, lasted an entire week. About 8,000 Jews were rounded up and sent to the Treblinka or Auschwitz extermination camps; another 2,000 were killed on the spot. When the Jewish Police refused to cooperate, the Germans savagely beat them and turned to informers to find hidden Jews.¹⁸ Among those sent to Treblinka was a large group of Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir members, including Boraks. Many Dror members hid in the factories and survived. A few Jews, such as Itzhak Malmed, resisted.¹⁹

The expulsions divided the Białystok underground. Many youth contemplated escaping to the forests to join the partisans. The Communists were among the first to send their members into the forests; Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir followed their lead immediately after the Aktion. Tenenbaum refused to retreat from the idea of resistance within the ghetto; as a result, the vast majority of Dror members remained in the ghetto to fight to the bitter end.²⁰

Because the Germans did not deport the workers and their families hidden in the factories, the expulsions appeared to confirm Barash's assurance that the approximately 30,000 Jews left in the ghetto would survive the war. As a result, the

expulsions somewhat paradoxically enhanced Barash's status. After the Aktion, the Jews believed factory labor offered protection from expulsion. From March to August of 1943, the number of Jews requesting jobs grew. The economic condition of ghetto residents also improved because of an increase in production orders. In a period when the ghetto population would have been expected to sink into despair, the improved economic conditions created hope. On May 23, 1943, the holiday of Lag ba-'Omer, 30 weddings occurred.²¹

The resistance was reluctant to act, given Barash's now-unimpeachable authority and the atmosphere in the ghetto. Its necessary secrecy meant that virtually no one knew it existed. In late July 1943, as rumors circulated of an impending expulsion, the underground leaders formed a united front. Tenenbaum was appointed commander; Moszkowicz became his lieutenant.²²

In late July 1943, Heinrich Himmler ordered Odilo Globocnik to Białystok to plan the liquidation of the ghetto. Globocnik, a divisional commander of Operation Reinhard and the political director of the Ostindustrie camps in Distrikt Lublin, insisted on complete secrecy. The Gestapo did not forewarn Barash of its plans until August 15, when they summoned him to a secret meeting to inform him summarily that the next day police from Lublin would transport the Jews, their families, and the ghetto's factory equipment to Lublin.²³ That night, the liquidation forces, including three battalions from Police Regiment 26, composed mostly of Ukrainian auxiliaries, formed an armed three-ring cordon around the ghetto.²⁴ Early, on August 16, Barash ordered the 30,000 Jews to assemble at specific gathering points on Jurowiecka Street to await expulsion.

Because the final Aktion had started, the underground prepared to fight back. On Smolna Street, near the ghetto fence, a battle erupted between the Jews and the Germans and their Ukrainian auxiliaries. The Jews' ammunition ran out quickly. As the Germans fired incessantly to prevent the rebels from escaping through the ghetto fence, dozens of Jews were killed and hundreds wounded. The revolt continued elsewhere in the ghetto, especially in the factories. But thousands of Jews had reported to Jurowiecka Street rather than join the rebellion.²⁵

From August 17 to August 23, 1943, 14 transports carried over 25,000 Białystok Jews to the extermination camps. The first 2 transports went to Auschwitz. The other 12 were sent to Treblinka. On the latter, Jews already designated in Białystok to be left alive for labor remained on the transports and were taken to Lublin. They were then scattered among different labor camps in Distrikt Lublin, including Majdanek, Poniatowa, Trawniki, and Bliżyn. On August 17, about 2,000 children awaiting deportation near the train station at Pietrasze were taken from their parents. A rumor circulated that the children would be sent to Switzerland to be exchanged for German prisoners of war (POWs). On August 21, the children, about 1,260 in number, and 30 adult escorts were sent to the Theresienstadt ghetto. That same day, the adults were sent on to Auschwitz. After the exchange failed to materialize, the children and 50 escorts from Theresienstadt were



A group of survivors stands in front of a memorial to the fighters of the Białystok uprising, 1945–1947. The Polish text reads: "Mass grave for the Białystok ghetto fighters who fell in the heroic battle against the German barbarians for the freedom and honor of the Jewish people, 16–25 August 1943." To the right, there is text printed in either Hebrew or Yiddish. Note the Star of David atop the obelisk. USHMM WS #14404, COURTESY OF MEIR ORKIN

deported on October 7 to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where they were gassed upon arrival.²⁶

While the liquidation Aktion was unfolding in Białystok, thousands of Jews had hidden in bunkers they had prepared beforehand. The Germans discovered many of the bunkers each day, including one on the fourth day of the liquidation, on Chmielna Street, in which 71 Dror members had hidden. All of them were shot on the spot. When Tenenbaum and Moszkowicz discovered what had happened, they committed suicide.²⁷

About 1,000 Jews, mostly "essential" workers, their families, and important Judenrat officials, such as Barash and Rosenman, were held back from the deportation. They lived in what was known as the "Small Ghetto," an area bordered by Fabryczna, Jurowiecka, Ogrodowa, and Ciepła Streets. They cleared the machines and raw materials from the ghetto and cleaned it up. On September 8, 1943, the last Jews of the Small Ghetto were deported along with several hundred other Jews imprisoned in the city jail. Sent to Lublin, they were distributed among the forced labor camps in the region. Many of the nearly 15,000 Białystok Jews interned in these camps perished on November 3, during Aktion Erntefest (Harvest Festival), in which the Germans murdered some 42,000 Jewish prisoners of the concentration and labor camps of Distrikt Lublin.

In Białystok, some Jewish men remained confined in the Białystok prison. In May 1944, Macholl personally chose 43 of the prisoners for a Sonderkommando 1005 unit. Almost all of them were executed on the eve of the German retreat. On July 22, 1944, the day Białystok was liberated by the Red Army, the only Jews left in the city were a small group of women living on false papers.

SOURCES Nachman Blumental's *Darko shel Yudenrat* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1961–1962) contains important documentation from the Białystok Jewish Council, including decrees, placards, and minutes of Judenrat meetings.

Several yizkor books contain testimonies from survivors, including Y. Shmuleyitsh et al., eds., *Der Bialistoker Yizkor Bukh* (New York: The Bialystoker Center, 1982), available in English translation as *The Bialystoker Memorial Book* (New York: The Bialystoker Center, 1982), with an electronic version also at jewishgen.org; Srolke Kot, *Khurbn Bialistok* (Buenos Aires, 1947); Raphael Raizner, *Der Umkum fun Bialistoker Yidntum (1939–1945)* (Melbourne: Bialistoker Tsentr in Oystralye, 1948).

The most accessible memoir may be Hajkah (Chaika) Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret* (Tel Aviv: Moreshet and Sifriyat Po'alim, 1965), because it has been translated into English by Shmuel Beer as *The Underground Army: Fighters of the Bialystok Ghetto* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987). Other relevant diaries or memoirs include Mordecai Tenenbaum, *Dapim min ha-Delekab* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem and Bet Lohame ha-Gita'ot, 1984); Hadassa Levkovitsh (Lewkowicz) Shprung, "Der Letster Veg fun di 1,200 Bialistoker Kinder," *Fun letstn khurbn* (Munich), no. 7 (May 1984); Gustaw Kerszman, *Jak ginąć, to razem* (Montreal: Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada, 2003); Felicja Nowak, *Moja gwiazda* (Białystok: Versus, 1991), which appears to be available in a limited English translation, by Diana Kuprel, as *My Star: Memoirs of a Holocaust Survivor* (Toronto: Polish-Canadian Pub. Fund, 1996).

The journals *Bialistoker shtime*, published by the Bialystoker Center in New York, NY, and *Białostoccy Żydzi*, 1993–2002, a collaborative effort by the Australian Bialystoker Center and the Institute of History, University of Warsaw, Białystok branch campus, include pronouncements from the Judenrat, memoirs, interviews, and important secondary accounts about the Białystok ghetto. The testimony of Pesach Kaplan, YVA, M-11/18, appears in a Polish translation in *BŻIH* 60 (1966): 51–76.

The main secondary sources specifically focused on the Białystok ghetto include Sara Bender, *Mul Mavet Orev: Yehude Bialistok be-Milbemet ha-'Olam ha-Sbniya 1939–1945* (Tel Aviv: 'Am 'Oved, 1997), now in an English translation by Yaffa Murciano and Sara Bender, *The Jews of Bialystok during World War II and the Holocaust* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), which has an extensive bibliography of unpublished and published sources in Yiddish and Hebrew; Szymon Datner, *Walka i zagłada białostockiego getta* (Łódź: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna, 1946); Aleksander Omiljanowicz, *Zanikające Echa* (Warsaw: MON, 1978); Waldemar Monkiewicz and Józef Kowalczyk, *Zagłada ludności żydowskiej w Białymstoku* (Białystok, 1983); and Ewa Rogalewska, *Getto białostockie. Doświadczenie Zagłady—świadectwa literatury i życia* (Białystok: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2008), which has an exten-

sive bibliography of primary and secondary sources focusing on Polish-language documentation.

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Additional archival documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Białystok under German occupation in World War II includes: AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 204, 301 [e.g., 7, 12, 15, 19, 21, 79, 387, 396, 546–47, 550, 552, 746, 972, 981, 1080, 1121, 1217, 1253–54, 1259, 1267, 1273, 1280, 1282, 1285–87, 1289, 1456, 1458–61, 1465, 1469, 1473, 1834–35, 1838, 1840, 1845, 1859, 1974, 1991, 1999, 2000, 2003, 2005–08, 2115–20, 2122, 2124–25, 2128, 2131–33, 2157, 2251, 2256–61, 2263, 2265, 2409, 2413, 2419, 2587, 2589, 2590, 2594–95, 2601–04, 2855, 2949–51, 2954, 2958, 2961, 2970–71]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/14223); FVA (e.g., HVT # 76, 98, 189, 403, 430, 801, 1336, 1516, 1678, 1842, 1928, 1991, 2903, 2521, 3072, 3560, 3616, 3823); IPN (e.g., SAB [20, 79, 242], SOB [23, 107, 119, 120, 195, 260, 279–80], SWB [48–50, 57]); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/226, 1/763, 1/1639, 1/1648, 1/1762, 1/1800, 1/1810, 1/1922, 7/365, 7/995, 15/438, Ds [41/67, 48/67, 49/67], S [2/68/1–10, 4/75, 6/82]); USHMM (e.g., 2001.305.1, Acc.1995.A.582, Acc.1998.A.0301, RG-50.120*0159, RG-50.120*0264, RG-50.120*0273); and VHF.

Sara Bender
trans. Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. YVA, TR-10/721, 10/609; 10/813; M-11B/108.
2. Ibid., TR-10/661, 10/813.
3. Ibid., M-11/18, p. 29; Kot, *Khurbn Bialistok*, p. 104.
4. YVA, M-11/18, pp. 9, 12–13; Raizner, *Der Umkum*, p. 92.
5. Blumental, *Darko*, pp. 423, 455 (notices 227, 286).
6. YVA, M-11/18, pp. 25–26, and O-3/6227, testimony of Tuvya Citron (Tobiasz Cytron), pp. 13–15.
7. Blumental, *Darko*, pp. 217, 237.
8. Ibid., pp. 203, 551; YVA, M-11/18, p. 20.
9. YVA, TR-10/255, pp. 2–3.
10. Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, p. 53.
11. Blumental, *Darko*, pp. 269–271; Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, p. 63.
12. Blumental, *Darko*, pp. 187–189, 209, 256; Raizner, *Der Umkum*, pp. 94–95.
13. Raizner, *Der Umkum*, p. 68; YVA, M-11/18, p. 36; Blumental, *Darko*, p. 201.
14. Itzhak Zukerman [Antek], *Sheva' ha-Shanim ha-Hen* (Tel Aviv: Bet Lohame ha-Gita'ot, 1990), pp. 137, 142; Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, pp. 101–102; Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, pp. 45, 69–70, 82–83.
15. Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, pp. 73–76, 87–88, 105, 122–123, 127.
16. Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, pp. 16–19, 23–24, 31; Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, pp. 150–156.
17. Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, pp. 38–39.
18. Ibid., p. 41; Raizner, *Der Umkum*, p. 121.
19. YVA, M-11B/116, testimony of A. Gershuni (Abraham or Abrasza Gerszuni); M-11/17, testimony of Pesach Kaplan, pp. 3–7; Kot, *Khurbn Bialistok*, pp. 59–62.

20. Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, p. 190; Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, p. 84.
21. Nowak, *Moja gwiazda*, pp. 52, 111–113; Raizner, *Der Umkum*, pp. 155–157.
22. Tenenbaum, *Dapim*, pp. 158–159.
23. YVA, TR-11, testimony of Fritz Friedel. See also IPN, SAB 20.
24. YVA, TR-10/813, pp. 157–160.
25. Ibid., M-11B/147, testimony of Meir Zashkowsky (Zaszkowski), O-3/6013, testimony of Lisa Strauch, pp. 22–31, O-3/6239, testimony of Ewa Krakowska (Kracowska), pp. 47–59, O-3/6637, testimony of Yisrael Prensky, TR-10/661, TR-10/813; Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, pp. 276–287; Raizner, *Der Umkum*, pp. 166–167; Kot, *Khurbn Bialystok*, p. 82.
26. Levkovitch, “Der Letster Veg,” pp. 74–79.
27. Grosman, *Ansbe ha-Mabteret*, p. 330; Bronka Vinizka Klibansky, “My Memories of Mordecai Tenenbaum and of the Activities of the Underground in Białystok” [in Hebrew], *Yalkut Moresbet* 9 (October 1968): 66; YVA, M-11B/140, testimony of Tuvia Citron.

BIELSK PODLASKI

Pre-1939: Bielsk Podlaski (Yiddish: Bielsk Podliask), town, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bel'sk, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Bielsk, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Bielsk Podlaski, Bielsk powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Bielsk Podlaski lies 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Białystok. Its 1939 pre-war population of 8,200 included 3,280 Jews.

On September 15, 1939, the Germans occupied Bielsk Podlaski but ceded it a week later to Soviet occupation. Under Soviet rule, the Jewish population expanded to 5,000 to 6,000, as refugees from German-occupied Poland and April 1940 expellees from the Soviet border security zone arrived in Bielsk. In May 1940, local authorities deported about 1,000 Jewish refugees to the Soviet interior.

On June 22, 1941, German bombardment killed four Jews and destroyed about two thirds of Bielsk Podlaski. Upon occupying Bielsk, on June 24 or 25, a Wehrmacht unit discovered the local population looting Soviet warehouses. The soldiers shot dead several Jews reportedly for stealing, including Lejbce Bogacki, found carrying a bag of groceries. They compelled other Jews to clear war damage.¹ Within days, the Germans issued a number of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on leaving town without permission; mandates for those, from 14 to 60 years of age, to perform forced labor; and requirements to wear yellow stars on the back and chest of their clothes.

German authorities appointed a local collaborationist administration, headed by Herman, the pre-war (1939) mayor of Bielsk Podlaski. He reportedly attempted to blunt the anti-Jewish decrees.² They recruited a 10-man auxiliary police force, commanded by Leonczyk. The local police helped German soldiers search Jewish homes for valuables.³

In early July 1941, an SD detachment, perhaps the Einsatzkommando led by Hauptsturmführer Adolf Bonifer or the one led by Hauptsturmführer Wolfgang Birkner, executed about 30 Jewish intellectuals and business leaders at Osaszek, in the Piliki Forest. The victims were arrested from a list of names submitted by the non-Jewish population.⁴ On September 20, another SS unit executed 12 Jews, denounced as Communists.

In mid-July 1941, the Germans ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established. Its head was Shlomo Epstein. The Judenrat appointed a Jewish police force, headed by Weinstein, from Orla. Its recruits were all Soviet-era arrivals to Bielsk Podlaski.⁵ In July, the Germans demanded a “contribution” of 2.3 kilograms (5.1 pounds) in gold, 5 kilograms (11 pounds) in silver, and a cash payment, probably of 300,000 rubles.

In August 1941, a German civil administration replaced the military authorities in Bielsk Podlaski. The Kreiskommissar initially was Landrat von Büнау. In late 1942, Tubenthal replaced him. A German, perhaps first Brosch and then Reinhard, was appointed mayor. An 8-man Gendarmerie post, reinforced by 10 local auxiliaries, was stationed in Bielsk, as was a Schupo detachment, commanded by Franz Lamm. They were reinforced by a 3-man SD detachment from the Commander of the Security Police and SD (KdS) Białystok, commanded by Schröder.

In August 1941, German authorities established an open ghetto in Bielsk Podlaski by forbidding Jews from living under the same roof as Christians or renting homes from them. It gave Jews in this position one day to relocate.

The German mayor established a more formal open ghetto, most likely in September 1941, by ordering the Jews to move to a neighborhood composed of a few streets. It was located on the area bordered by what now are Mickiewicz, Kazimierzowska, Jagiellońska, and Kopernik Streets.⁶ The ghetto included parts of Widowska, Wąska, and Ogrodowa Streets. Some survivors believe the mayor issued the order under pressure from local antisemites.⁷ The Germans gave the Jews a short time in which to construct a fence around the ghetto. Because they lacked access to wood, the Jews dismantled much of their furniture to build it. Upon its completion, the Germans gave the Judenrat 24 hours to raise a “contribution,” likely of 2.5 kilograms (5.5 pounds) of gold and 300,000 rubles. The Germans demanded an additional payment of 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of gold for the privilege of living in the ghetto.

Survivors note that the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto population stood at 5,000 to 6,000.⁸ Postwar Polish officials and West German investigators placed its population at 3,000 to 3,500.⁹ Overcrowding in the ghetto was severe, as three to four families squeezed into ghetto apartments.

The Bielsk Podlaski ghetto inmates were conscripted for a variety of labor tasks, assigned to the Judenrat by Alex Nese-meier, a German in the Bielsk Podlaski magistrate's office. The conscripts dug peat, worked in forestry labor, and performed tasks associated with clearing war devastation and transforming the razed areas into parks. On Sundays, children,

women, and the elderly cleaned streets. About 30 Jews worked at a glazing workshop. Twice that number labored at a workshop established by the German firm Benz to produce felt boots for the Wehrmacht.

One day, German security forces stormed the ghetto and commanded the Jews to collect and burn their tallies, tefillin, Torahs, and religious works and for all male inmates to shave their beards. After subsequently discovering Shmuel Kac wearing a tallis on the way to an illegal prayer group, Gendarmes beat him severely before ordering him to burn the tallis.

Material conditions in the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto rapidly deteriorated, because the local authorities refused to distribute rations to its inmates. Moshe Ahron Bendes, the rabbi of Bielsk Podlaski, perished protesting the lack of rations with a hunger strike. Because the Jews had transferred to the ghetto a store of supplies looted from Soviet warehouses, most avoided starvation. However, after the Jewish Police reported the whereabouts of these supplies to German authorities, conscripted laborers working outside the ghetto were forced to forage for plants and to barter material possessions for food with the local population. Ghetto informers eroded community solidarity. The Jewish Police operated independently, blackmailing and robbing fellow inmates, in spite of the Jewish Council's efforts to restrain them.¹⁰

Some 24 Jews were executed for attempting to escape from the ghetto or for being found illicitly outside its gates. At least 6 others, including 2 Jewish policemen, were executed, based on a denunciation from inside the ghetto.

On November 2, 1942, the German Security Police and local security forces encircled the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto, in preparation for its liquidation. The KdS transformed the ghetto into a transit camp by transporting Jews from nearby localities, including from Boćki, Narew, Orla, Rutki (Orla gmina, Bielsk Podlaski powiat), and Brańsk to the ghetto. The Security Police illuminated the ghetto fence at night, shot dead anyone who approached it, and piled the corpses in front of it to deter others from fleeing. On November 6, the Germans transferred to the Białystok ghetto about 200 inmates from Bielsk and Orla, including Epstein, 48 to 49 craftsmen employed at the boot-making workshop, and their families.¹¹

Some survivors describe the Germans removing about 1,000 people each day from the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto, beginning on November 2, 1942, and sending them by train to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹² Others note the expulsions began about a week after the Brańsk Jews arrived in the ghetto, on November 7.¹³ Polish scholars, including Szymon Datner and Zbigniew Romaniuk, describe a gradual expulsion. The latter mentions the Brańsk Jews arrived in an emptied Bielsk ghetto, a point that suggests the Bielsk Podlaski community had been sent by then to Treblinka. Their German counterparts and postwar German criminal investigators rely on a diary from the 1st Company of Police Reserve Battalion 13, which notes it assisted local security forces on November 15–17 to march the Jews from the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto to the train station. They suggest a concentrated ghetto liquidation in which the 11,000 to 15,000 Jews consolidated in the ghetto

were sent to Treblinka over three days.¹⁴ On the day the last transport of Bielsk Jews left for Treblinka, survivors note the Security Police shot 78 to 200 Jewish elderly, hospital patients, and children at the orphanage.

The Bielsk Podlaski craftsmen and their families were returned to the empty Bielsk ghetto for about a month to work in the boot-making factory. In January 1943, they were transferred to Pietrasze, a village north of Białystok. In February, the men's wives and children were sent to their deaths at Treblinka. The craftsmen were sent separately, mostly to the Majdanek and Auschwitz concentration camps, with some subsequently transferred to other camps, including the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

On January 15, 1943, the Germans murdered the mayor Herman, in a mass execution of the Bielsk Podlaski Polish elite. In 1949, Antoni Szulc, a former auxiliary policeman in Bielsk Podlaski, was tried in Poland for his participation in the July 1941 murders of Jews and illegal searches and seizures of Jewish property. He received only a three-year prison term, because the court suspected the witnesses, including two Jewish survivors, may have confused him with Michał Szulc, another auxiliary policeman.¹⁵ Lamm was tried after the war in West Germany. The court found the evidence insufficient for a conviction.

SOURCES Published testimonies from survivors can be found in Haim Rabin et al., eds., *Bielsk Podlaski sefer yizkor le-zikhran ba-kadosh shel Yehude Bielsk she-nispu ba-Sho'ah hanatsit ba-shanim, 1939–1944* (Tel Aviv: Irgun ole Bielsk be-Yisrael, 1975). Its English-language section also appears at jewishgen.org. Two of the AŽIH testimonies cited below, 301/4769 and 301/1977 (Polish trans.), are available electronically, respectively, at the Cmentarze żydowskie w Polsce Web site, at www.kirkuty.xip.pl/bielskpodlaski.htm, and at Archiwum Etnograficzne, at www.archiwumetnograficzne.edu.pl/readarticle.php?article_id=28.

Secondary accounts include the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 170–175; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 40–44, though the descriptions provided of the liquidation of the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto are better read in conjunction with a range of archival sources listed below, including the AŽIH 301 testimonies and the documentation at USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN]) for mass graves, with the latter, in particular, providing no corroboration that the Germans, rather than sending the Bielsk Podlaski Jewish community to Treblinka, executed its members outside Bielsk Podlaski.

Secondary accounts more helpful for understanding the liquidation of the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto include, in Polish, Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60:25 (1966): tab. 3; Zbigniew Romaniuk, “Brańsk and Its Environs in the Years 1939–1953: Reminiscences of Events,” in *The Story of Two Shtetls Brańsk and Ejszyski: An Overview of Polish-Jewish Relations in Northeastern Poland during World War II*, 2 pts. (Toronto and Chicago:

Polish Educational Foundation in North America, 1998), pt. 1, pp. 78 ff; and in German, C.F. Rüter and D.W. de Mildt, eds., *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 33 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 718, pp. 247–262; Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 602.

Coverage of war crimes trials for Bielsk Podlaski includes, for Germany, the above-cited *JuNS-V* account, and for Poland, Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego, 2* vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, p. 226.

Archival documentation pertaining to the history of the Jewish community of Bielsk Podlaski during the Holocaust includes AŻIH (e.g., 2/123 [old, 46/149d], 301 [988, 1823, 1977, 3944, 4769]); BA-L (B 162/21136-37, 4759, 14210); GARF (7021-148-186); IPN (e.g., SAB [37, 91, 119], SOB [314]); IPN-Bi (e.g., S [5/72, 126/68]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN] 1/100-105, 46/36-37); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E [46, 1334], M-11 [138, 213, 304], M-49/E [e.g., 1270, 3145, 3943, 3944, 6640], O-3 [e.g., 3262], TR [10 (ZStL) (663, 900)]).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 37608, testimony of Renata Skotnicka-Zajdman.
2. AŻIH, 301/1977, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 1.
3. VHF, # 37608.
4. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 1/101, pp. 1–2, 1/104, pp. 1–3; AŻIH, 301/4769, testimony of Sonia Gleicher, p. 1.
5. Rabin et al., *Bilsk Podlaski*, p. 28 (testimony of Meir Pekar).
6. With various dates, from 1941, in Rabin et al., *Bilsk Podlaski*, p. 27 (Pekar), early July; AŻIH, 301/988, testimony of Henoah Piasek, p. 1, August; AŻIH, 301/4769, p. 1, the most detailed, September; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/36, pp. 1–2, fall; *JuNS-V*, vol. 33, p. 251, December 1.
7. AŻIH, 301/988, p. 1, 301/4769, p. 1.
8. Respectively, Rabin et al., *Bilsk Podlaski*, p. 27; AŻIH, 301/1977, p. 1.
9. Respectively, *JuNS-V*, vol. 33, p. 251; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/36, pp. 1–2.
10. Rabin et al., *Bilsk Podlaski*, pp. 28–32.
11. AŻIH, 301/3944, testimony of Szymon Teperman, p. 1.
12. Ibid., 301/988, p. 1, 301/1977, p. 3.
13. Ibid., 301/4769, p. 1.
14. GARF, 7021-148-186, War Diary, Reserve Police Battalion 13, November 15–17, 1942.
15. IPN, SAB 119.

BOĆKI

Pre-1939: Boćki (Yiddish: Bodki), village, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Botski, Bel'sk raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Bozki, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Boćki, Bielski powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Boćki lies on the Nurzec River about 16 kilometers (10 miles) southwest of Bielsk Podlaski and 65.8 kilometers (41 miles) south-southwest of Białystok. In 1931, the Boćki population stood at 2,342, including 1,158 Poles, 763 Jews, and 421 Belorussians. On the eve of World War II, 600 Jews likely resided in Boćki.

In the first days of World War II, perhaps as early as September 1, 1939, but more likely shortly after September 6, German aerial bombardment resulted in the deaths of many Boćki residents, including at least three Jews. The Germans briefly occupied Boćki before withdrawing at the end of September to make way for the Red Army.

A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Boćki on June 25, 1941. That day, the soldiers murdered seven Jews. The Germans expelled the Jews from their homes on July 7, 1941, giving them just two hours to report to a makeshift prison, erected in the most impoverished part of the Jewish neighborhood. They ordered the Jews to leave all of their personal possessions behind. Because only a few houses existed on the prison grounds, most inmates were forced to sleep outside. After several days, the Bielsk Podlaski military commander permitted the prisoners to return to their former homes, which, in the meantime, had been stripped of all their belongings. The Germans also organized a Polish auxiliary police force, which in turn rounded up Jews for forced labor to dismantle buildings and to repair roads destroyed during the recent military operations. Probably in early July 1941, the Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Shlomo Zimni, the rabbi of Boćki. A Jewish police force also was established.

After a Gendarmerie post was opened in Boćki in March 1942, the Gendarmes, assisted by members of the SS, supervised the resettlement that same month of the Jews into a ghetto. Some confusion exists over its size and location. Polish postwar court documentation describes the Boćki ghetto as composed of 40 houses, located in the preexisting Jewish neighborhood, on three streets: Żałośńska (now Antoniak), Brańsk, and a part of Bielsk Streets. Drawing on other sources, scholars in Israel note the Boćki ghetto consisted of four “dilapidated” houses. After they were occupied beyond capacity, the remaining Jews were directed to live in the Bet Midrash and the synagogue. According to this latter group of sources, when the Germans ordered the ghetto fenced in June 1942, the housing situation resulted in the establishment of two closed ghettos. The first ghetto was composed of the four homes. The second ghetto consisted of the Bet Midrash and the synagogue. The Polish documentation does not mention the existence of two ghettos.¹

The Polish documentation notes that approximately 750 Jews lived in the Boćki ghetto. The population may be too high, as works written by scholars in Israel place the number at about 600 people.²

In Boćki, ghetto residents were conscripted for a number of labor projects. They refinished and restored much of the furniture, which earlier had been stolen from them, for its new Slavic and German owners. Craftsmen worked in tailoring shops established in the ghetto. Others were conscripted

for agricultural labor on nearby estates. The Germans provided no rations to ghetto residents; rather, they expected them to secure food on their own.³

On November 2, 1942, the SS and members of the local Gendarmerie, likely including local Polish *Schutzmänner*, surrounded Boćki in preparation for the liquidation of the ghetto. They ordered the Jews to assemble on the square in front of the synagogue. The women, children, and elderly were loaded onto the carts of local Christian peasants, mobilized earlier for the liquidation Aktion. The men were ordered to follow behind them on foot to the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto. In Bielsk, the Germans permitted some male craftsmen to return to Boćki.

The rest of the Boćki Jews joined about 6,000 Jews already imprisoned in the Bielsk Podlaski ghetto and about 4,500 additional Jews from Brańsk, Narew, Orla, Rutki (pre-war Orla gmina, Bielsk powiat), and other localities. For two weeks, from November 2 to 14, almost daily roundups enveloped the Bielsk ghetto residents, with at least 1,000 Jews deported daily to the Treblinka extermination camp. According to one account, the Boćki Jews were sent to their deaths at Treblinka on November 11, though this same account also suggests the roundups were more arbitrary, with families and townspeople often separated from each other and sent to Treblinka in different transports.⁴ All of the Boćki Jews were gassed on arrival at Treblinka.

The male craftsmen returned to Boćki probably were confined to the four ramshackle houses, in a remnant ghetto. At the end of December 1942, the Germans organized the final liquidation of the Boćki ghetto. Many of the men attempted escape. While some managed to flee, most were shot. The craftsmen most likely were deported to the Białystok ghetto. They are believed to have been rounded up there and sent to Auschwitz and Treblinka during the first liquidation Aktion there in February 1943. None survived.

Almost all the men who had evaded deportation to the Białystok ghetto were discovered in subsequent searches of the area. Other fugitives were handed over to German authorities by Christians, some of whom had promised to shelter them for a fee. Only one former Boćki ghetto resident, Max Farber, survived the war. He was aided by a Christian friend, a farmer, whose first name was Julian.⁵

In 1951, three Poles, former *Schutzmänner* employed in the Boćki Gendarmerie, were convicted of various wartime crimes, including participating in executing Jewish fugitives at the Jewish cemetery in Boćki.⁶ In 1953, six Polish civilians were tried for having turned over to German authorities, in June 1943, four Jewish fugitives.⁷

SOURCES Useful are several accounts by Bernie M. Farber, the son of the only Jewish survivor of the German occupation of Boćki, including “Naming the Jews of Boćki,” *Globe and Mail*, September 30, 2004; and “Confronting Treblinka; On the Eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 15,” April 14, 2007, on the Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee Web site at www.cjccc.ca/inthenews/in_the_news_link11.html, with the second account unfortunately confusing the

Bielsk Podlaski and Sokołów Podlaski ghettos. Other secondary accounts include the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 136–138; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 44–47.

Archival documentation on the history of the Boćki Jewish community during the Holocaust includes IPN (e.g., SAB [183, 204]); IPN-Bi (e.g., S-60/67); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 14, 48/39); and YVA (M-1Q/526).

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NOTES

1. Compare USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 14, 48/39, pp. 1–2, and “Boćki,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:137.
2. Compare USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 48/39, p. 1, and “Boćki,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:138.
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 48/39, p. 1.
4. Farber, “Confronting Treblinka.”
5. Farber, “Naming the Jews of Boćki.”
6. IPN, SAB 183.
7. Ibid., SAB 204.

BRAŃSK

Pre-1939: Brańsk, town, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bransk, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Brańsk, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Brańsk is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) south-southwest of Białystok. In the summer of 1937, radical Polish nationalists smashed Jewish shop windows and beat up Jews in the town.¹ Brańsk had a population of about 4,600 inhabitants on September 1, 1939, of which more than half were Jewish.

On September 7, the town was bombed by the Luftwaffe, causing severe damage and loss of life. German tanks entered the town on September 10, and the German occupants set the Old Synagogue on fire almost two weeks later. But then they relinquished the area to the Soviet Union on September 24, 1939, in accordance with the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The Jews initially welcomed the Soviets for releasing them from German bondage, but Jews were also among those who suffered from the nationalization of private property and systematic Soviet deportations to Siberia.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, many Jews attempted to flee the town, but most were forced back by the rapid advance of the German forces, which reoccupied Brańsk on June 25, 1941. The town was severely damaged by aerial bombardment and military combat when German forces arrived, and shortly afterwards they killed eight Jews. The German military administration established a

Polish police force and a Polish mayor. The Polish police identified the Jewish houses to the Germans so that these houses could be robbed. The Polish mayor, Władysław Dąbrowski, terrorized the Jews, making them perform hard labor and repeatedly collecting large fines from the community. However, a German administrator, Barwinski, soon replaced him.

In the summer of 1941, the Jews were ordered to wear yellow patches. Some youths refused to obey this order, wearing the patches on a string around their neck and only making them visible when a policeman approached. However, the Jewish Police beat them severely for not wearing the patches. Many Jews complained bitterly about the “Jewish Gestapo.” After one particular beating, the Jews protested, and thereafter the Jewish Police arrested offenders rather than beating them on the street.²

At the same time, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of 12 people, headed by Alter Jamsin. Its functions included collecting money to meet the demands of the German authorities, assigning people to forced labor, allocating housing within the ghetto, distributing food, and overseeing the Jewish Police, which was headed by Itzhak Wasser. Members of the Jewish Council and their families generally enjoyed considerable privileges over other members of the community.³

Jews were obliged to perform forced labor. Among the tasks they performed were road and bridge construction, which may have involved working in the river submerged up to their necks in cold water, or cutting wood in the forest. The poorest Jews were generally assigned to the worst jobs.

In the fall of 1941, under a new civil administration, Amtskommissar Sturmann took charge of the town, just as the ghetto was being established. He was influenced by the Jews to delay its creation for as long as possible; ultimately he permitted them to decide in which part of the town it would be, endorsing also the idea of a second “Small Ghetto.” On its eventual establishment, many Jews were forced to abandon their homes and moved into the ghetto carrying on their shoulders the few possessions they had left. The main ghetto was bordered by present-day Sienkiewicz, Binduga, John-Paul II, and Kościuszko Streets. About 2,400 people, among them about 175 Jews from nearby villages, were forced into the two ghettos.⁴ There was terrible overcrowding there, with four or five families living in each room. Daily rations consisted of 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of bread. Inside the ghetto there was also a jail and a court administered by the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police. Jews in the ghetto sometimes obtained German newspapers, which they read collectively during their days off work.⁵

In the ghetto a boot factory was established, in which Jews supplied the labor. Conditions in the ghetto deteriorated when Jews from neighboring towns that had suffered from Aktions at the hands of the Germans arrived in Brańsk, seeking refuge. These people were assigned places to sleep and ate with a different family each night, as they were not officially registered and therefore did not receive rations.⁶ Since the ghetto

initially was not enclosed and the vigilance of the police was not strict (with the police accepting bribes), it was relatively easy for Jews to purchase or barter food from local peasants and then to conceal it inside the ghetto. Some food was even sent to help feed people in the Białystok ghetto, where it was exchanged for clothes, which could in turn be bartered.⁷

In the summer of 1942, the Germans ordered that a wooden fence some 4 meters (13 feet) high be erected around the ghetto. There were two gates by which people exited to go outside to work. Within the ghetto, the Jews actually felt more willing to go into the streets, where they would gather to discuss the situation in the war. Jews also gathered daily in private houses to pray. As news of the Aktions in other towns spread, Jews also prepared hiding places inside the ghetto in anticipation of its liquidation.

Jewish youth organized an underground resistance and purchased arms, in preparation for escaping to the forests to join the Soviet partisans and fight the Germans. There was even one sympathetic German soldier who helped to supply them with weapons. In the fall of 1942, the residents of the “small ghetto” were transferred into the main ghetto, making the overcrowding even worse.

On November 1, 1942, a Jew from Białystok arrived in Brańsk with news of German plans to liquidate all the ghettos of the region. The next day, the Germans and their collaborators (including Lithuanian and Ukrainian auxiliaries) surrounded the ghetto. On the night of November 2–3, several hundred Jews tried to flee, tearing down the fences and some seeking hiding places with local Christians. The Germans and their collaborators responded by shooting at the fleeing Jews, using flares to illuminate their targets. Nonetheless, several hundred escaped successfully. Most fled to the forests, as much of the Christian population was unwilling to assist them in finding hiding places. Some even returned to the ghetto when they were unable to find refuge.⁸

The cordon around the ghetto remained in place until November 7, 1942. On November 6, a Polish member of the Amtskommissariat and a member of Polish Home Army (AK), Waław Klukowski, warned the Jews that they would soon be exterminated. On November 7, hundreds of wagons arrived to transport the Jews to the nearby ghetto of Bielsk Podlaski. From there, on November 9, some 2,000 Jews of Brańsk commenced their journey to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were murdered the next day.⁹

Over the following days the hunt for Jews that had escaped continued. In the village of Oleksin, the mayor Józef Adamczuk forced some inhabitants to help track down Jews, resulting in the deaths of 14 people. Other locals who participated in the area were Kaminski and the Rycz brothers.¹⁰ Inside the former ghetto, 23 people were murdered when they had to abandon their bunker due to an accidental fire.¹¹ There were also a number of local inhabitants who helped Jews, including 10 groups who have been recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. Among them are Jan Kozłowski and his family who helped Jack Rubin to survive.¹²

After Brańsk was liberated, 64 Jews returned to the town, having survived in hiding or fighting with the partisans. Living together in one building, the survivors felt depressed, isolated, and threatened, as there was an atmosphere of lawlessness, and many peasants had now moved into former Jewish homes. After 2 young Jewish women were murdered in March 1945, the group of Brańsk Jews decided to move to Białystok, and by 1948 most had immigrated to Israel or the United States.¹³

SOURCES The book by Eva Hoffman, *Shtetl: The Life and Death of a Small Town and the World of Polish Jews* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), is focused on Brańsk and deals sensitively with the issue of Polish-Jewish relations, including a chapter on the Shoah. It should be read also in connection with Zbigniew Romaniuk, “Brańsk and Its Environs in the Years 1939–1953: Remiscences of Events,” in *The Story of Two Shtetls Brańsk and Ejszyski* (Toronto and Chicago: Polish Educational Foundation in North America, 1998), pt. 1, pp. 71–107. The yizkor book edited by Alter Trus and Julius Cohen, *Brainsk sefer ha-zikaron: A basbraybung fun unzer beym* (New York: Bransker Relief Committee, 1948), contains a series of personal portraits of the town; the memoir of Josef Broide, *Zikbroynes fun a Yidishn partizan in di Braynsker velder* (Tel Aviv: Urli, 1969) [an English MSS translation titled *Men of the Forest* is available], also includes a few details about the ghetto. Other relevant publications include Elhanan Man, *Ner le-Brainsk: Tragedyah shel ‘ayarah Yehudit Yedu’ah be-Mizrah Eropah* (Tel Aviv: A. Narkis, 2001).

Testimonies by survivors from Brańsk can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1256, 1988, 2100-1, 2103-4, 2110, 2112, 3526, and 3530); FVA (HVT/1516, testimony of Jack Rubin); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Hoffman, *Shtetl*, pp. 179–180, 194–199.
2. Trus and Cohen, *Brainsk sefer ha-zikaron*, pp. 251–289.
3. Ibid.
4. Romaniuk, “Brańsk and Its Environs,” pp. 75–76.
5. Trus and Cohen, *Brainsk sefer ha-zikaron*, pp. 251–289; Broide, *Zikbroynes*.
6. Trus and Cohen, *Brainsk sefer ha-zikaron*, pp. 251–289.
7. Broide, *Zikbroynes*.
8. AŻIH, 301/2100, testimony of Lejb Trus.
9. Broide, *Zikbroynes*; Romaniuk, “Brańsk and Its Environs,” pp. 77–78.
10. AŻIH, 301/2101, testimony of Alter Trus; 301/2104, testimony of Jankiel Rubin.
11. Adamczuk was sentenced by a Polish court in 1948 to life imprisonment, which was later commuted to 10 years; see Hoffman, *Shtetl*, pp. 223–224.
12. See the list prepared by Zbigniew Romaniuk, “Poles from Brańsk and Its Environs Who Helped Jews during World War II,” in *The Story of Two Shtetls Brańsk and Ejszyski*, pt. 1, pp. 108–112. The files regarding these cases can be found in the collection YVA, M.31. Rubin’s video testimony is held at the Fortunoff Video Archive (HVT/1516).
13. Hoffman, *Shtetl*, pp. 239–240.

CIECHANOWIEC

Pre-1939: Ciechanowiec, town, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Tsekhanovets, raion center, Balostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Ciechanowiec, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Ciechanowiec is located about 133 kilometers (83 miles) northeast of Warsaw. The Nirzec River divides the town into two parts, the Old Town (Stare Miasto) and the New Town (Nowe Miasto). In 1921, the Jewish population was 1,649, or about 50 percent of the total. The precise Jewish population in September 1939 is unknown but probably was between 2,500 and 4,000 people.

Ciechanowiec was bombed on the first day of World War II. German troops entered the town on September 9 and attacked the Jews at once. They robbed their stores and forced a number of Jewish men into trucks that took them to New Town, where they were ordered to remove and bury the bodies of Polish soldiers who had died in the fighting. On September 17, in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the German army pulled out. This was followed by a period of anarchy, with no one in authority. Jewish Communists were released from prison in accordance with the pact. They joined with other freed prisoners to decorate the town and welcome the Soviet army, which arrived on October 4. Stores were reopened, but there were long lines of people trying to buy food or fabrics. The Soviets reorganized the labor force into cooperatives. The Jewish population swelled with the arrival of refugees from other parts of Poland, including a number of Jews brought in from the nearby town of Nur. A typhus epidemic broke out among the refugees, but the Soviets organized a hospital, and the epidemic was contained.

In the spring of 1940, the Soviet authorities ordered everyone to carry a passport (identity card), but some Jews declined to give up their Polish citizenship, which made the authorities suspicious of them. Also at this time many wealthy or politically active Jews in Ciechanowiec were declared to be “untrustworthy elements,” and their property was nationalized. People in both of these groups, as well as those evacuated from the border area, were sent to Siberia, which, in the course of events, ensured the survival of most of them.¹

On June 22, 1941, at 4:00 A.M., Ciechanowiec was shelled by German artillery, causing much damage in Old Town and the deaths of a number of Jews. After occupying Ciechanowiec, the Germans closed the synagogues and forbade even private prayer. A reign of torment and torture ensued, with arrests, forced labor, beatings, and killings a daily occurrence. Long lines for bread were occasions for further harassment. Vicious dogs were let loose to attack the Jews. A cruel German, Romanus, was appointed mayor and took command of the town. He pursued a course of daily terror and destruction until the final liquidation. Among those collaborators also noted for their sadism towards the Jews were the postmaster Pietrowski and a man named Dawidczuk.²

All Jews over the age of 12 were ordered to wear white armbands with a yellow Star of David and were not permitted to use the sidewalks. Men and women aged 14 to 60 were taken out each day for forced labor. They worked on road construction and in German factories. Their daily “wage” was 300 grams (about 10.6 ounces) of bread.

In November 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Ciechanowiec. It was located in the area of Drohiczyn, Wspólna, and Kościuszkó Streets, on the left-bank side of the town, as well as around Łomża and Kuczyńska Streets on the right bank of the Nurzec River. Therefore, it was divided into two sections, separated by the river but linked by a bridge.³ A barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto. Anyone caught outside could be shot on the spot. However, the Jews also were permitted to establish workshops outside the ghetto for artisans, such as locksmiths, carpenters, and cobblers.

In the winter of 1941–1942, Jews deported from the nearby towns of Zaręby and Czyżewo were sent to the Ciechanowiec ghetto, which grew in number to 4,000 inmates. At the end of January 1942, 18 Jews from the ghetto were arrested as Communists. The Germans beat and tortured them cruelly before murdering them. The attempts of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Wolf Kagan, to ransom them with bribes were to no avail. Two months later, 6 more Jews were arrested. One of the Jews, Lew Manes, attacked Mayor Romanus, who then shot him.⁴

On October 31, 1942, on the order of Romanus, 245 young men and women with particular skills were rounded up allegedly for work in the village of Pobikra. Instead, they were escorted away tied up with ropes, and most were shot trying to escape or later inside the ghetto. Some historians consider that this Aktion was probably a German attempt to forestall any resistance during the ensuing roundup of the ghetto population.⁵

At 5:00 A.M. on the morning of November 2, 1942, German and Polish police surrounded the ghetto. Many Jews tried to flee, but most of these people were shot in the ghetto or discovered in their hiding places and turned in by the local populace. Only 31 people managed to elude capture. The remaining Jews were taken from the ghetto on horses and carts to the railroad station in Czyżewo and then deported directly to the Treblinka extermination camp. The liquidation of the ghetto was completed by November 15, 1942.⁶

The fate of the Ciechanowiec ghetto was somewhat unusual for a ghetto in Distrikt Białystok. Since the ghetto was located very close to Treblinka, the Jews were deported directly there, rather than first being concentrated in a transit camp, as was the case for almost all other ghettos in the Distrikt.

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by Eliezer Leoni, *Ciechanowiec: Meboz Białystok, sefer edut ve-zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Chechanovitzer Immigrant Association in Israel and the USA, 1964), includes several contributions covering the war period and the Holocaust; English translations of three of the essays appear in the 79-page supplement. There is also a brief article

on the town, “Ciechanowiec,” in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 392–395. Additional information can be found at the Web site www.sciaga.pl/tekst/12694-13-historia_zydow_na_podlasiu; and in Shmuel Krakowski and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004).

Testimonies by survivors and other relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/386, 975, 1829, 2795); IPN-Bi (S-29/67/1-2, S-36/68/1-2); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Berl Lew, “Under Soviet Rule, 1939–41,” in Leoni, *Ciechanowiec*, p. 577; see also the partial English translation available on the Web at jewishgen.org. And see “Ciechanowiec,” in Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 4:394.

2. On Romanus, see especially Yehuda Rydz, “The Savage Murderer, Romanus,” in Leoni, *Ciechanowiec*, p. 636; AŻIH, 301/1829, testimony of Simkha Bursztajn.

3. See www.sciaga.pl/tekst/12694-13-historia_zydow_na_podlasiu. AŻIH, 301/975, testimony of Ephraim Winer, however, gives the date of July 20, 1941. Other sources indicate the fall of 1941.

4. AŻIH, 301/1829, testimony of Simkha Bursztajn.

5. See www.sciaga.pl/tekst/12694-13-historia_zydow_na_podlasiu.

6. AŻIH, 301/1829; “Ciechanowiec,” in Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 4:395; AŻIH, 301/975, testimony of Ephraim Winer. There are several contradictions in the various accounts of the liquidation Aktion.

CZYŻEWO (AKA CZYŻEW OR CZYŻEW-OSADA)

Pre-1939: Czyżewo (Yiddish: Tshizsbeve), village Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Chizhev, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Czyżewo, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Czyżew-Osada, Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Czyżewo lies 70 kilometers (44 miles) southwest of Białystok and 51.7 kilometers (32.1 miles) southeast of Łomża. Its 1921 population of 1,895 included 1,595 Jews.

Upon occupying Czyżewo on June 22, 1941, the Germans started a program of extortion, abuse, and forced labor, in which they forcibly enlisted the help of a five-person Jewish Council (Judenrat), with Zevulon Grossbard as its chair.¹

The Germans appointed a Polish civil administration. Its head, or wójt, was Jan Nienaltowski. They also recruited a Polish auxiliary force, mostly from a civil guard that had patrolled Czyżewo after the Russians fled.² By the end of August, a Gendarmerie post and a civil administration, led

by an Amtskommissar, had replaced the German military administration.

Either on August 20 or 28, 1941, the Judenrat received orders for all Jews to assemble the next day at 4:00 A.M. for labor assignments outside of Czyżewo. Some German officials charged with appointing local Polish administrators told their Jewish translators to evade the assembly. Aware that the Germans had already murdered several nearby Jewish communities, others decided to flee to Ciechanowiec.³ However, most Czyżewo Jews reported as ordered. The Amtskommissar ordered about 110 people held back for a special labor assignment at an estate near Czyżewo. The group consisted of male craftsmen and a few women employed by the German administration.

A Gestapo force, perhaps either from Małkinia or Łomża, told the remaining Jews, about 1,500 to 1,750 people, they were being relocated to Zaręby Kościelne.⁴ The SS commander halted the march about halfway, at Szulborze Wielkie village and ordered the Jews confined to a school. The captives were brought in small groups to a forest behind Mi-anówek village, and executed in a Soviet-era antitank ditch. Among the victims that day also were about 500 members of the Jewish community of Szulborze-Koty, located across from Szulborze Wielkie.

The skilled workers held back from execution were returned to Czyżewo about a month after the mass killings and ordered to live in an open ghetto. The remnant ghetto was composed of five or six houses. Some survivors note they were all located on Polna Street.⁵ Another describes a larger ghetto area, composed of Polna, Niecała, and Przytorowa Streets.⁶ In August 1942, the ghetto was probably surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.⁷ Its only gate was guarded from the inside by a member of the reconstituted Judenrat, led by Alter Wolmer. The Polish police patrolled the fence from the outside. At least two Jews were shot dead for leaving the ghetto at night.⁸

Besides the craftsmen, the Czyżewo ghetto included more than 100 people who had hidden during the executions or had escaped other nearby Aktions, such as the mass execution, on September 2, 1941, of the Jewish residents (1,500 to 1,900 people) of Zaręby Kościelne.⁹ The Gendarmerie commander, likely in October, ordered the auxiliary police to round up about 30 orphans from the ghetto. At least two Polish policemen beat one child severely for resisting arrest. The Gendarmes executed the children.¹⁰ In the winter of 1941–1942, the German authorities deported many inmates to the ghetto in Ciechanowiec. After the expulsion, the Czyżewo ghetto population stood at around 200.¹¹

The Czyżewo ghetto resembled more of a labor camp, with its mostly young, single population; yet a few families survived partially intact, including three Węgierko (or Wengerko) siblings, whose parents and brother had perished in the execution, along with an aunt and her three young children, and parts of two related Kitaj families. The Judenrat assigned the Jews to the few houses. Family members lived together, though usually with others, as at least 5 unregistered and 10

registered people resided in each house. Because of the mass execution, most believed the future bleak. For this reason, a survivor notes, there were no marriages, pregnancies, or children born in the ghetto.¹²

The ghetto inhabitants performed a variety of tasks, mostly for German officials. Some skilled carpenters worked personally for the Amtskommissar, making furniture. (So impressed was he with the craftsmanship that he issued special orders exempting the furniture makers from wearing the yellow patches that all Jews in Czyżewo were required to wear on the chest and back.) Other ghetto inmates were assigned to kitchen details at a local Gestapo headquarters and at a mess hall for German soldiers. Women worked for German civilian officials as domestic servants and cooks. Some performed hard labor, paving the road to Wysokie Mazowieckie, sorting recovered Soviet armaments, and completing a rail spur from the train station to Czyżewo. Local Poles hired teenage boys through the local Arbeitsamt to work as shepherds. The boys lived with their employers. Conditions were not as bad as in most ghettos, because the corrupt Amtskommissar, in exchange for bribes, eased material conditions, even providing the Jews a few hours each day to barter material possessions with the local population for food.¹³ The local administration also provided potato rations.

In the fall of 1942, the ghetto residents learned of the mass killing of Jews at the Treblinka extermination camp from an escapee. In late October, rumors spread that German authorities had ordered peasants to bring their carts to Czyżewo to transport the Jews to Treblinka. A large number escaped from the ghetto and sought shelter in attics across Czyżewo, including in the Gestapo headquarters, and in the countryside.¹⁴

On November 2, 1942, members of the SS and the Gendarmerie, including local Polish Schutzmänner, liquidated the Czyżewo ghetto. They expelled its inmates to a transit camp in Zambrów, located 23.4 kilometers (14.5 miles) north of Czyżewo. The Czyżewo Jews were incarcerated there together with 17,300 to 19,800 Jews from nearby localities. In mid-January 1943, the Germans drove about 2,000 of the Zambrów inmates, including Jews from Czyżewo, Śniadowo, and Łomża, to the railway station in Czyżewo and ordered them onto a transport destined for the Auschwitz killing center. On January 17, at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp, 1,775 people from the transport were gassed upon arrival. The remaining 225 people were men held back as concentration camp prisoners. Most of the prisoners from Czyżewo, including Bejnysz Lipa, Jankiel Gromadzyn, and Moszek Wysocki, perished before the end of January. Less than a handful survived until liberation. Mosheh Rajczyk (Raychik) was among the survivors.

Out of the dozens of Czyżewo and Zaręby Jews who had evaded the deportation to Zambrów, fewer than 25 survived the war. Etki Żółtak worked on false identity papers for a German family in Czyżewo for 18 months before joining a group of Jewish partisans from Siemiatycze.¹⁵ Another 14 Jews from

Zaręby and at least 2 from Czyżewo were assisted by local Poles. Almost all the other fugitives were caught by Gendarmes or turned in by Polish informers and murdered.¹⁶ On March 20, 1942, during a search of a Polish family's property in Czyżewo-Sutki village, Gendarmes from the Czyżewo post discovered 18 Jews hidden there. The Gendarmes executed 15 of the fugitives and Franciszek Jędrzejczyk, their Polish aid-giver.¹⁷

The Amtskommissar held back from execution Simcha (Seymour) Moncarz and his brother Israel, his former furniture makers. Mosze Zylbersztein reportedly turned over a large sum of gold to the Gendarmes to remain alive. The three men worked as cabinetmakers for German officials, first in Czyżewo and then in Łomża. Some of the only Jews known to be still alive and officially working for the Germans in Distrikt Białystok in August 1944, they were sent to the Gross-Rosen concentration camp on the eve of the Red Army's arrival in Łomża, as part of a transport of 1,000 Poles.¹⁸ The two brothers survived the war.

In 1949, Stanisław Michałczyk, a former local Schutzmann at the Czyżewo post, received a 10-year sentence for rounding up children from the Czyżewo ghetto and beating one of them severely. After the conviction initially was overturned in 1951, he was sentenced to a 6-year sentence, reduced by half under the 1956 amnesty.

SOURCES A number of the archival sources cited below have appeared in publication in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZ-pNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 137–138 (AK, 203/III-59, pp. 2–6), p. 145 (202/III-7, vol. 1, pp. 7–8), p. 148 (AAN, 202/III-8/64), p. 152 (AAN, DR, 202/I-45, vol. 4, pp. 944–952, excerpts), pp. 370–371 (AŻIH, 301/383, Polish trans.), pp. 372–374 (AŻIH, 301/386, pp. 1–3, Polish trans.). Published memoirs from Czyżewo survivors are found in Shimon Kanc, ed., *Yizker-bukh: Nokh der borev-gevorener Yidisher kehile Tshizsheve* (Tel Aviv: Tshizsheyer Landsmanshafn in Yisrael un Amerike, 1961). There also is a yizkor book for Zaręby Kościelne, edited by Zelig Dorfman et al., *Le-zikbron 'olam; di Zaromber Yidn vos zeynen umgekumen 'al kidush ba-shem* (New York: United Zaromber Relief, 1947). A partial English translation of the first and a complete translation of the second are available at jewishgen.org.

Also valuable are several secondary accounts, including the entries in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 218–221 (Zaręby Kościelne), pp. 381–384 (Czyżewo); and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 60–62 (Czyżew Osada), pp. 240–243 (Zaręby Kościelne). Coverage of the Czyżewo ghetto also is included in Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi 2* (1997): 174; Mariusz Nowik, *Zagłada Żydów na ziemi łomżyńskiej* (Warsaw: Bellona, 2006); and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie

latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1; *Studia*, pp. 220–221.

Polin, the Web site of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage Poland, contains much coverage on the history of the Czyżewo Jewish community, including photographs, a brief history of the ghetto, and a chapter from a forthcoming book by Karol Głębocki.

Documentation on the persecution and destruction in World War II of the Czyżewo and closely related Zaręby Kościelne Jewish communities can be found in the following archives: AAN (e.g., AK [203/III-59, pp. 2–6], DR [202/I-45, vol. 4, pp. 944–952, 202/III-132, p. 5, 202/III-7, vol. 1, pp. 7–8]); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 301 [283, 383, 386, 545, 5095, 6558]); IPN (e.g., SAB 150); IPN-Bi (Ko [e.g., 52-53/88, 65/88, 96/88, 160/87, 207/88], S [7/80, 104/68/1-2, 109/68]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN] [reel 1, 2/253-54, reel 13, 43/486-87, 489, reel 14, 46/124]); and VHF (# 5893, 9607, 10305, 16542, 37721).

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NOTES

1. Simcha Moncarz, “In the Circle of the Agony of Death,” in Kanc, *Yizker-bukh: Tshizsheve*, p. 981.
2. IPN, SAB 150, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 220–221 (deposition, J. Nienałowski).
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/19, pp. 1–2.
4. For Małkinia, AAN, AK, 203/III-59, pp. 2–6, DR, 202/III-132, p. 5; for Łomża, Moncarz, “In the Circle,” pp. 982–983; victim ranges from Yentil (Israel) Kitaj, “Terrible Days and Nights,” in Kanc, *Yizker-bukh: Tshizsheve*, p. 863; VHF, # 9607, testimony of Michael Kitaj (Kitaj); and lowest figure, 700, in Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia,” p. 173.
5. Shmuel Kanc, “Der Umkum,” in Kanc, *Yizker-bukh: Tshizsheve*, p. 856; same terrain cited in USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/124, pp. 1–2.
6. AŻIH, 301/544, p. 1.
7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/124, p. 1, with late date here likely the date the ghetto was closed.
8. VHF, # 9607 and # 10305, testimony of Dora Rosenthal.
9. AŻIH, 301/386, testimony of Mindel and Rachela Olszak, in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:373; IPN-Bi, S-104/68/1-2 and S-7/80, pp. 1–17, cited by Nowik, *Zagłada*, p. 153, listing 1,500 victims from Zaręby.
10. IPN, SAB 150; VHF, # 10305.
11. AŻIH, 301/386, in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:373; with a zero likely dropped from the population of 20 reported at USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/124, p. 1.
12. VHF, # 10305.
13. USHMM, Acc.-2006.246, p. 2.
14. VHF, # 10305.
15. AŻIH, 301/283, testimony of Etki Żółtak, p. 1.
16. VHF, # 9607; AŻIH, 301/386, p. 3.
17. IPN-Bi, Ko-5/88, cited by Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia,” pp. 173–174, including documentation that the aid-giver's surname was Jędrzejczyk and not Andrzejczyk, as reported by Moncarz.
18. Moncarz, “In the Circle,” pp. 982–985.

DĄBROWA BIAŁOSTOCKA (AKA DĄBROWA GRODZIĘŃSKA)

Pre-1939: Dąbrowa (Yiddish: Dombrova), town, Sokółka powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Dombrova raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dombrowa (from late 1942, Gartenstadt), Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Dąbrowa Białostocka, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Dąbrowa is located about 64 kilometers (40 miles) north-northeast of Białystok and 32 kilometers (20 miles) west of Grodno. Its alternate name, Dąbrowa Grodzieńska, which dates to 1842, was used after World War II in official documentation until at least 1950. Subsequently renamed Dąbrowa Białostocka, the town today lies about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) west of the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus.

In 1921, the population of the larger Dąbrowa gmina stood at 3,015, including 1,218 Jewish residents. The Jews were concentrated in the town of Dąbrowa, where they made up 90 percent of the overall population. By the outbreak of World War II the Jewish population of the town was less than 1,200. In September 1939, the first month of World War II, the Germans occupied Dąbrowa for less than two weeks before evacuating it to make way for the Red Army.

During the German invasion of the Soviet Union, which began on June 22, 1941, a Wehrmacht unit destroyed the Jewish homes outside of Dąbrowa on June 25, as it crushed a pocket of Soviet resistance there. When the Germans entered the town early the next morning, the military commander claimed that the Jews had murdered a German officer the evening before. In retribution, he ordered his men to set Dąbrowa on fire. The number of Jews who perished in the blaze is unknown. Most survivors fled to Nowy Dwór (Nowy Dwór gmina, Sokółka powiat), Sokółka, or Suchowola. Between 300 and 600 Jews returned to Dąbrowa in the week following the fire.¹ They were subjected to further violence at the beginning of July, when a group of Germans arrived and ordered 27 young Jewish adults to accompany them for forced labor, outside of Dąbrowa. After the laborers did not return home, they were presumed to have been murdered by the Germans.²

After the murders, the Germans likely ordered the remaining Dąbrowa Jews confined to the borders of the town, in part to conscript them more easily for forced labor. Initially, a Polish guard supervised the brigades of Jewish forced laborers. The Jews razed structures destroyed in the fire. Likely from September 1941, ultimate authority for the open ghetto was transferred to at least five German Gendarmes permanently stationed in Dąbrowa. The Jews lived in the basements of burned-out homes and sheds. They suffered from starvation, as there was little food available in the devastated town.³

In the fall or perhaps the winter of 1941, the Germans established a closed ghetto for the Dąbrowa Jews. The date the ghetto was created varies in the sources. Some scholars believe the Jews were confined to the theater and *mikveh* imme-

diately following the fire. Others note that the Germans in May 1942 first deported to the Suchowola ghetto between 100 and 300 Jews, largely those they deemed unfit for forced labor. They next ordered the remaining 200 members of the community to reside in the two buildings, the only habitable structures in Dąbrowa.⁴ The Jews in the Dąbrowa ghetto were conscripted for labor, widening and paving the road from Sokółka to Janów Sokółski, together with labor brigades from the Sokółka ghetto. The Dąbrowa Jews likely worked on the more northern section of the road, from Makowlany to Dąbrowa.

On November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Dąbrowa ghetto. They ordered the surviving Jews into marching order and commanded them to run most of the way to a transit camp, just south of Grodno, located in Kiełbasin, about 28 kilometers (17.4 miles) from Dąbrowa. Those who could not keep up were shot.⁵

At Kiełbasin, the Dąbrowa Jews were reunited with surviving family members from the Suchowola ghetto, among the 22,000 to 29,000 local Jews imprisoned at the transit camp. On December 14, 1942, the Germans drove the Dąbrowa community from Kiełbasin to the train station at Łasośna and sent them from there to the Treblinka extermination camp. The next day, at Treblinka, all but 1 perished there. The survivor, Sonia Grabińska-Lewkowicz, was among a handful of women held back from the transport to work at the camp laundry, cleaning and pressing the uniforms of the Ukrainian guards. She also is the only woman known to have survived the August 1943 Treblinka uprising.⁶

Grabińska-Lewkowicz returned to Dąbrowa after its liberation in the summer of 1944 only to discover a Polish family constructing a home on the property of her parents. She spent the winter of 1944–1945 with another local Polish family. Five other Jewish survivors, who had fled to the Soviet Union shortly after June 22, 1941, also returned to Dąbrowa. After a group of Poles murdered David Weinstein, one of the returnees, the few remaining Jews migrated to larger cities before leaving Poland for other countries, most notably Israel.⁷

SOURCES Published primary and secondary sources include Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985), 1:447–449 (testimony of Sonia Lewkowicz); Michael A. Nevins, *Dubrowa. Dąbrowa Białostocka. Memorial to a Shtetl*, 2nd ed. (River Valley, NJ: M.A. Nevins, 2000); and the Dąbrowa entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 244–246; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Bialystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 62–65. Also valuable is the extensive explication of the YVA testimonies by Sonia Lewkowicz, in Yoram Lubling, *Twice-Dead: Moshe Y. Lubling, the Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007).

Archival documentation on the World War II history of the Jewish community of Dąbrowa Białostocka under German occupation can be found at IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/160 [former S-41/72]); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1560 and O-3/4181).

Laura Crago

NOTES

1. Nevins, *Dubrowa*, p. 20, for low figure; and “Dąbrowa,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:244–246, for high figure.

2. Testimony of Sonia Lewkowicz, in Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 1:447.

3. Nevins, *Dubrowa*, p. 20; and Lewkowicz, in Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 1:447.

4. Compare “Dąbrowa,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:244–246; and Nevins, *Dubrowa*, p. 20.

5. Lewkowicz, in Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 1:447.

6. Nevins, *Dubrowa*, pp. 20–21; and Lubling, *Twice-Dead*, pp. 12, 121–122, 151.

7. Nevins, *Dubrowa*, p. 21.

DROHICZYN (AKA DROHICZYN NAD BUGIEM)

Pre-1939: Drohiczyn (Yiddish: Drohitchin), town, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Drogichin, Semiatichi raion, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Drogitschin, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Drohiczyn, Siemiatycze powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Drohiczyn lies on the Bug River, about 90 kilometers (about 56 miles) south southeast of Białystok. Its pre-war 1939 population, of about 2,800, included some 700 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Drohiczyn in September 1939 but soon ceded it to Soviet occupation. Because of its location on the border with German-occupied Poland, Soviet officials, in April 1940, expelled almost the entire Drohiczyn population to Siemiatycze.

On June 22, 1941, German forces rapidly overran Drohiczyn. They burned the synagogue to the ground and plundered Jewish homes. During the first few weeks, a German military commandant recruited a local Polish auxiliary police force. As Jewish men returned from Siemiatycze, the auxiliary police rounded them up for forced labor. Some conscripts were not seen again. One week later, German forces arrested and then murdered 31 to 36 Jews, for allegedly cooperating with former Soviet authorities.¹

In August 1941, a German civil administration replaced the military occupation authorities. The first commander of the Drohiczyn Gendarmerie post was named Treptow. From the end of 1941, Lindert commanded eight Gendarmes at the post. Hans Frank replaced him in the summer of 1942.² Because of its small size, the Gendarmerie continued to rely on the Polish auxiliary police, particularly to enforce anti-Jewish policies. Survivors divide about the treatment they received

from the Polish police, with some noting their brutality and others suggesting that because they knew the Jews, they looked the other way, particularly at moments seminal to survival.³

In August, German authorities in Siemiatycze officially permitted Jews from Drohiczyn to return home. About half are believed to have done so, though a survivor notes that 550 Jews, mostly Siemiatycze returnees, lived in Drohiczyn during the German occupation.⁴

In the summer of 1941, the Germans ordered the Drohiczyn Jews to wear white armbands. After the order was changed in the early fall to yellow stars, on the back and chest, the Jews crafted and wore metal lapel pins instead of the cloth patches worn everywhere else in Distrikt Białystok.⁵ The Germans, likely regional authorities in Siemiatycze, ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) established for Drohiczyn. Its head, Eliezer Reznik, was a livestock trader. The council, in turn, organized a Jewish police force, commanded by M. Panczyk. The council and the Jewish Police collected “contributions” for the Germans and organized forced labor, which in practice applied to all Drohiczyn Jews 11 to 45 years old.⁶

Authorities established an open ghetto in the late summer of 1941 by forbidding Jews from leaving Drohiczyn's borders and by reordering Jewish residential patterns. In August, local German officials forbade Jews from living with Christians or renting homes owned by them. The order forced many to move into houses in the old Jewish neighborhood.⁷

The Drohiczyn ghetto inmates mostly were conscripted for labor by the Gendarmerie. They worked at a number of tasks, including razing and constructing buildings for a new Gendarmerie post and cleaning the houses, offices, stables, uniforms, and horses of the Gendarmes. The Judenrat organized children to sweep Drohiczyn's streets. The Jews were beaten on the way to work by the Polish auxiliary police and the Gendarmes, especially by the Gendarme Johann Moczko (Motke) from near Oppeln.⁸

In March or April 1942, the authorities concentrated the Jews into a more formal open ghetto, established on one or two streets, including Bielsk Street and a street known in Yiddish as Breiter. In May 1942, the Jews were ordered to enclose the ghetto with a barbed-wire fence. The closed ghetto was guarded from the inside by the Jewish Police and externally mostly by the Polish auxiliary police.

The material existence of the Drohiczyn Jews deteriorated, largely because they were prohibited from bringing food into the ghetto. To provision the ghetto, the Judenrat transformed its main street into a vegetable garden. The young snuck out of the ghetto at night to trade material possessions for food with Poles in nearby villages. The poor diet combined with the overcrowded conditions in the ghetto, in which one large family shared a room, bred illnesses. Morbidity rates increased. The Gendarmes permitted the pre-war Burial Society to bury the dead at the Jewish cemetery.⁹

The Drohiczyn Jews learned about the deportation of other Jewish communities to the Treblinka death camp from fugitives who had fled from the liquidation of several different

ghettos in the Generalgouvernement, including in Kosów Lacki and Sokołów Podlaski.¹⁰ After discovering on October 31, 1942, that the Germans had ordered local peasants to bring 50 to 100 carts to the ghetto on November 2, the Jews knew what to expect. Some considered setting the ghetto on fire as an act of resistance, but this plan was rejected because it only would expedite German plans for the ghetto's destruction. Instead, about half the inmates evaded the deportation, with most escaping before the ghetto was encircled.¹¹

At 6:00 A.M., on November 2, 1942, an SS unit, their Ukrainian auxiliaries, and members of the Gendarmerie, including the Polish Schutzmannen, surrounded the Drohiczyn ghetto. Eight people were shot on the spot for resisting deportation. The other Jews were expelled to the Siemiatycze ghetto. On the outskirts of Siemiatycze an elderly man jumped from one of the wagons. As the armed German guards pursued him into what then was forest, even more Jews escaped into the woods. Among them were Pesach Blumsztajn, who joined his wife and children already in hiding, and Hinda (or Inda) Sroszko.¹²

The Drohiczyn Jews were deported by rail to the Treblinka extermination camp in two deportations, together with the Siemiatycze Jewish community and a number of other smaller communities also expelled to the Siemiatycze ghetto. In the first deportation, on November 4 or 8, 1942, the Germans drove 2,450 people to the Siemiatycze railway station and ordered them onto trains destined for Treblinka. In the final expulsion, on November 10–11, approximately 3,200 Jews were expelled to Treblinka. Almost all those in the two transports were gassed immediately upon arrival, as the Germans held back just 153 men from the second transport for work at the Treblinka I labor camp. Whether any Drohiczyn Jews were in this group is unknown.

About 30 Drohiczyn fugitives received assistance from local Poles. In Miłkowice, Jadwiga Kosk and the Zaleska family, including sisters Józefa and Maria (Lewczuk), hid eight members of the Reznik family.¹³ In Makarki, the Żero family sheltered Hinda Sroszko and also Benyamin Blusztajn (Bashan), from the Ciechanowiec ghetto, and the Kopiec family aided Chaya Perlsztajn, a Sokołów Podlaski ghetto refugee, who had fled to Drohiczyn.¹⁴ In Koczery, the family of Adolf and Bronisława Milkowski sheltered Sara Mężyńska (Gold), orphaned after other Poles reported her family's hiding place.¹⁵ Yad Vashem has recognized all of the families as Righteous Among the Nations.

However, most Drohiczyn fugitives were refused shelter by local Poles. Forced to hide in fields and small forested areas, most were captured and killed in searches organized by SS auxiliaries and the local Gendarmerie following the ghetto liquidation and again during the late summer months. Some suffocated in the bunkers they dug. Others, including the three children of Pesach Blumsztajn, died of hunger and disease.¹⁶ Many Poles also reportedly expelled, turned over, and even murdered Jews they had promised to protect.¹⁷ To protect the fugitives, Shlomo Grude and Shlomo Warszawski established self-defense organizations, which organized paid shelter and distributed warm clothing to fugitives and joined

partisan units of Siemiatycze Jews to threaten retaliation against Poles who denounced Jews to authorities.¹⁸ As a result, 72 Jews from Drohiczyn and Siemiatycze survived the war.

However, after Soviet forces liberated Drohiczyn in the summer of 1944, the ongoing effort by some partisans to revenge the wartime deaths of Drohiczyn (and Siemiatycze) Jews provoked tensions, which most likely contributed to a group of local Poles murdering almost all of the partisan leaders, including Warszawski, Grude, his brother, and his cousin, Shlomo.¹⁹ The attacks culminated in April 1945 in an armed assault in nearby Siemiatycze on the house of another former partisan, in which 28 survivors, including many Drohiczyn Jews, lived.²⁰ The Jews repelled the attack, but not before the Poles, reportedly from the anti-Communist National Armed Forces (NSZ), murdered yet another survivor.

SOURCES Published testimonies from Jewish survivors can be found in David Sztokfisz, ed., *Sefer Drohitchin: Yiskorbukh* (Tel Aviv, 1969). Its substantial English section is available online at jewishgen.org. The testimony of Wolf Wisznia (Zev Wiśnia or Vishnia) appears in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 185–186 (AŻIH, 301/973, pp. 1–2), and is available under the Drohiczyn link on the Cementarze żydowskie w Polsce Web site at www.kirkuty.xip.pl/drohiczyn.htm. Because the Drohiczyn community lived for a part of the war in Siemiatycze and shared its fate, also useful, from two survivors of the latter community, is Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998). The Web site Ruch na rzecz Ziemi includes a section titled “Podlascy Żydzi” at www.nawschodzie.pl/podlascyzydzi/index.html, which includes, among other materials, interviews with Christians recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for sheltering Drohiczyn Jews.

Secondary accounts include Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 262–265; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 65–68; and for aid, Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 371, 452, 518, pt. 2, p. 936; and Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi* 2 (1997): 176–177, 189–191, 204. Because the wartime origins of the postwar tensions between Poles and Jews in Drohiczyn (and Siemiatycze) are poorly understood in the existing literature, it is better read together with the yizkor book, the AŻIH, 301/1257 testimony of Gerzon Lew, and the relevant sections of Kuperhand and Monkiewicz.

Documentation pertaining to the history of the Drohiczyn Jewish community during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301 [e.g., 973, 1257, 2130, 3145]); BA-L (ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 59/71); IPN (e.g., SAB [142, 218], SOB 254); IPN-Bi (e.g., Ko [44/88, 46/88, 51/88, 57/88, 70/88, 71/88, 73/88, 201/87], S-31/68); VHF (e.g., # 10644,

13985, 15406, 17626, 18121, 21468, 22924, 30031, 32574, 32719, 32879, 32889, 37064, 41607); and YVA (e.g., O-3 [3928, 6596], M-31, M-49/E [e.g., 2592, 3145, 6640]).

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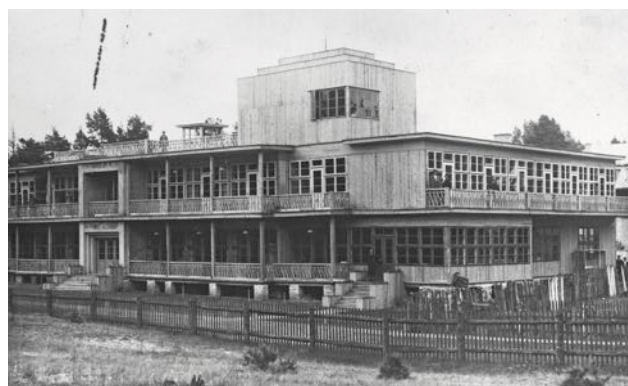
NOTES

1. VHF, # 41607, testimony of Ester Fiszgop.
2. BA-L, ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 59/71, pp. 32–35 (deposition, Czesław Terlikowski, October 22, 1968); VHF, # 41607.
3. Compare VHF, # 41607 with # 30031, testimony of Helen (Reznik) Kotkin. See also # 32574, testimony of Józefa Zaleska.
4. AŻIH, 301/973, p. 1.
5. VHF, # 41607.
6. Ibid., # 13985, testimony of Zev Vishnia, and # 30031.
7. Ibid., # 41607.
8. Ibid., # 13985.
9. AŻIH, 301/1257, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 1; VHF, # 41607, 13985.
10. VHF, # 30031; AŻIH, 301/973, pp. 1–2, though, compare with VHF, # 13985.
11. AŻIH, 301/2130, testimony of Gerzon Lew (Gershon Lev), p. 1, and 301/1257, p. 1.
12. Ibid., 301/3145, testimony of Pesach Blumsztajn, p. 1; Janina Żero testimony, Ruch Web site.
13. VHF, # 30031, 32574, and 32719, testimony of Maria Lewczuk.
14. Ibid., # 33917, testimony of Binyamin Bashan (or Blusztejn).
15. Ibid., # 32879, testimony of Maria Wislocka.
16. AŻIH, 301/3145, p. 1.
17. Ibid., 301/2105, testimony of Gerzon Lew, pp. 1–2.
18. VHF, # 13985, 15406; Lev, in Sztokfisz, *Sefer Drobitchin*, pp. 42 ff; Saul Kuperhand (Kalman Krawiec) testimony, in Kuperhand and Kuperhand, *Shadows*, pp. 140–141.
19. VHF, # 13985; Sztokfisz, *Sefer Drobitchin*, p. 562.
20. VHF, # 15406.

DRUSKIENIKI

Pre-1939: Druskieniki (Yiddish: Druzgenik), town, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Druskeniki, Porech'e raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1940–1941: Druskininkai, Alytus apskritis, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Druskieniki, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Druskininkai, Republic of Lithuania

Druskieniki, on the Niemen River, lies 45 kilometers (almost 28 miles) north of Grodno. By 1897, 613 Jews (49.7 percent of the total population) resided there. In 1921, in interwar Poland, Jews numbered 294 (29.7 percent) of its 989 residents. However, with the first postwar spa season, in 1923, and the rebuilding of the town and spa, hundreds more people settled in Druskieniki, which recorded a 96 percent population growth rate in the 1920s. Prominent Jewish physicians from Grodno, such as Chaim Blumstein, reestablished Jewish sanatoria there. By the 1930s, 500 to 600 Jews likely lived in Druskie-



A pre-war photograph of a sanatorium in Druskieniki, Poland, once owned by Dr. Chaim Blumstein. Blumstein and his family survived the Grodno ghetto during the Holocaust.

USHMM WS #19698, COURTESY OF ALEXANDRE AND RITA BLUMSTEIN

niki. About another 200 Jews lived in Rotnica, a residential community of Druskieniki, located 16 kilometers (9.9 miles) to the east.

In September 1939, the first month of World War II, Druskieniki came under Soviet occupation. Communist officials imposed their own economic and social order by nationalizing the sanatoria, transforming them into retreats for workers and Communist youth groups, and deporting the wealthiest Jews to the Russian interior. These efforts continued after September 7, 1940, the day Druskieniki was transferred from the Belorussian to the Lithuanian SSR.

With the German invasion of the Soviet Union, on June 22, 1941, only a small number of Jews evacuated eastward to the Soviet Union. Among them were 80 Jewish campers from Białystok. Known as the children of Druskieniki, they are the largest single group of Polish-Jewish children saved from the Holocaust.¹ The German military occupied Druskieniki on June 23, 1941. The military commander fired all Jewish employees of the spas and sanatoria. German soldiers there recruited young male Jews to clear bombed-out roads located hours from home. Several Jews perished from beatings they sustained there. The Germans ordered the Jews to wear a Star of David on a white armband. In August, the order was changed to yellow markings, worn on the back and the chest. By July, the Germans also had ordered the Jews to nominate a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its members included Leib and Nison Frenkel (or Frankel), Pinchas Wolgel, Judel Talkowski, Moldel Tykocki, and Chaim Kagen.²

Although Druskieniki had belonged to the Lithuanian SSR, the Germans did not subject Jews there to the mass executions, which by fall 1941 had effaced almost all the Jewish communities of Lithuania. Some Jewish refugees from Marcinkańce sought refuge in Druskieniki in September 1941 after rumors indicated that their village was to be incorporated into Lithuanian territory. The Germans exerted direct civil control in Marcinkańce at the end of September, and the refugees almost all returned home.³

The German military administration in Druskieniki was replaced by a civil administration, led by an Amtskommissar surnamed Mariell. On October 1, 1941, Druskieniki, as a part of Kreis Grodno, was joined to Distrikt Białystok. A Gendarmerie post, under the command of Meister Schmitt, was established there.⁴ When the Germans in 1942 established the Staatsbad at Druskieniki, a retreat for German nationals and foreign visitors from neutral countries, they divided the administration of Druskieniki, creating an Amtskommissariat for Bad-Druskieniki (also known as Staatsbad Druskieniki) and Druskieniki-Land, for matters related to the local civilian population outside of the town.

Likely sometime in July 1941, the Germans expelled the Druskieniki Jews to a ghetto.⁵ Most sources describe the ghetto as occupying a group of damp wooden buildings, or huts, on the outskirts of town. However, the structures also seem to have formed part of a pre-war Jewish vacation center or sanatorium, as an itemized list of property subsequently cleared from the ghetto contains large quantities of household items on which such operations depended, including 5,000 pieces of cutlery and 3,000 washbasins. The German administration used the property to replace similar items in the rooms at the State Baths. The ghetto formally remained open throughout its existence, though some kind of fence likely existed there before its creation, given the terrain's former use.⁶

The Jews in the Druskieniki ghetto were ordered to surrender to the Germans all of their valuable possessions, including an opera glass, an iron, a gramophone, 63 records, two hotplates, two electric tea kettles, and 54 fur coats.⁷ They were conscripted for a variety of labor tasks. Besides roadwork and agricultural labor, some Jews worked behind the scenes at the spa, including at its laundry and kitchen facilities. Other Jews provided off-site labor in ghetto workshops, including at one that made shaved ice, seltzer water, and lemonade. The workshop ceased operations shortly after August 22, 1942, the date the physician for Kreise Grodno and Solkolka issued a memorandum blaming the Jews, the reputed carriers of filth and disease, at the bottling workshop for an epidemic of an intestinal infection at the spa.⁸

The Druskieniki ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. The Jews were expelled together with the Jews of Rotnica to a transit camp in Kielbasin, just south of Grodno. Some young Jews fled from the liquidation of the two Jewish communities; 6 were shot dead on the spot.⁹ The remainder, some 805 people, joined 22,000 to 28,000 Jews from about 22 other places in the Grodno and Sokółka regions also deported to Kielbasin from November 2 to 5, 1942.¹⁰ Leib Frankel headed the transit camp's Judenrat.

Some sources note that the Druskieniki Jews were still at Kielbasin when the Germans closed the camp shortly after December 21, 1942, and sent its remaining 2,000 to 3,500 prisoners to the Grodno II ghetto. However, death records issued in 1943 at the Auschwitz death camp suggest they were deported there from the Kielbasin transit camp. A large part of the Druskieniki Jewish community likely arrived there on No-

vember 9, 1942, in a transport officially listed as carrying 1,000 Jews. A part of the Skidel Jewish community also was on the transport. The Germans held back 109 men and 104 women as prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp. The remaining Jews, at least 787 people, were gassed on arrival.¹¹

The Druskieniki Jews who had fled the deportation to Kielbasin also almost all perished. One Jew was killed in the Druskieniki Amtskommissariat on November 3, 1942. Nine more were murdered two days later, and another was shot dead there on November 10.¹² More Jews were killed during a raid, in the fall of 1943, on the farm of Maria and Hipolit Jaskielewicz, Lithuanians executed by the Germans in October for sheltering Jews. The few remaining survivors mostly joined a group of Marcinkańce and Porzecze fugitives, organized by the Kobrowski family, in the nearby forest. In 1943, the group joined the Soviet partisans of the Davidov brigade. Aron Frenkel, from Druskieniki, left the group to command another Soviet partisan unit.¹³ Also counted among Druskieniki survivors are the four-member Blumstein family. Assisted by Janina and Antoni Docha, they escaped the Grodno ghetto liquidation and were sheltered by Aniela Staniewska and Helena Zaniewska in a village near Indura.¹⁴

SOURCES Secondary accounts include the Druskieniki entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 273–274. An English translation of the entry is on the Druskieniki community page at jewishgen.org.

Documents pertaining to the Jewish community of Druskieniki under German occupation in World War II include AŽIH (301/736); GAGO; GARF (7021-86-40, p. 4); LCVA; RGVA (e.g., 1323-2-244, pp. 99–100); USHMM (RG-11.001M [RGVA], and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 38, and reel 2, 1-1-121, p. 142, and 1-1-150, pp. 10, 71–74, and 1-1-167, pp. 201–202; and reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 31, 74–75, and 1-1-365, pp. 15–17); VHF (# 10713 and 48659); and YVA (e.g., O-3/8323, O-33/3472, and M-1/E/16-1-14). Some of the material above appears in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992), which includes testimony from a Druskieniki survivor, about the Kielbasin transit camp, in volume 1 (pp. 133–135).

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NOTES

1. “Saving the Children,” and Chana Lin-Kizelstein, “A Rescued Child Speaks,” in I. Schmulewicz et al., eds., *Der Bialystoker Yizkor Buch* (New York: The Bialystoker Center, 1982), pp. 133, 134–136, with an English translation of the yizkor book on jewishgen.org; and Lena Jedwab Rozenburg, *Girl with Two Landscapes: The Wartime Diary of Lena Jedwab, 1941–1945* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 2002).

2. VHF, # 48659, testimony of Nelia Ostrovski; and USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 2, 1-1-150, pp. 71–74.

3. YVA, O-33/2112, Collective Eyewitness Report by Shloyme Peretz, Khane Garfing, Lyb Kobrowski, Khaeyem

Kobowsky, written down by Leyb Konikhovsky, Ulm, August 1948, with pagination from the Jonathan Boyarin translation, on the Kobrowski family history Web site at www.kobrowski.com.

4. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 3, 1-1-280, pp. 5, 7.
5. Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 1:133–135.
6. Judenrat membership from the itemized list of confiscated property at USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-365, pp. 15–17.
7. *Ibid.*, reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 28, and reel 2, 1-1-150, pp. 10, 71–74.
8. *Ibid.*, reel 2, 1-1-121, p. 142.
9. *Ibid.*, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99.
10. *Ibid.*, RG-53.004M, reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 38; and also at GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4.
11. *Sterbebücher von Auschwitz*, 3 vols. (Munich: KG Saur, 1995), vol. 2, *Namensverzeichnis, A–L*, p. 71 (4002/1943), p. 310 (10698/1943 and 13905/1943), p. 530 (7466/1943); and vol. 3, *M–Z*, p. 888 (6766/1943), p. 1001 (10799/1943), p. 1013 (7355/1943 and 9582/1943), p. 1042 (8537/1943), p. 1065 (9156/1943), p. 1206 (6641/1943), p. 1362 (13906/1943), p. 1337 (6884/1943), and p. 1375 (7388/1943); and Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne. Polish Jews in KL Auschwitz: Name Lists* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 99–100, for Jacob (or Josef) Rejzner, listed too in the 10799/1943 death record.
12. USHMM, RG-11.001M, reel 81, 1323-2-244, pp. 99–100.
13. *Ibid.*, RG-53.004M, reel 2, 1-1-167, pp. 201–202; and AŻIH, 301/736, testimony of Aron Frenkel, pp. 1–4 (typescript).
14. Alexandre Blumstein, *A Little House on Mount Carmel* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2002), pp. 152–154, 190–321, 421–422. In 1979, Yad Vashem recognized the aid-givers as Righteous Among the Nations.

GONIĄDZ

Pre-1939: Goniądz (Yiddish: Goniondz), town, Białystok powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gonendz, Mon'ki raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Goniadz, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Goniądz, Mońki powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Goniądz lies 52.8 kilometers (32.8 miles) northwest of Białystok and 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) east-southeast of the Osowiec Fortress. Its 1921 population of 2,643 included 1,135 Jews.

The Germans occupied Goniądz for 10 days in September 1939. They burned the synagogue before evacuating the town to Soviet forces.

A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Goniądz on June 26, 1941. Its military commander, after consulting with the local priest, appointed a collaborationist town council, led by Jan Balonowski. Balonowski named a night watch, commanded by Bronisław Perkowski, and a 25- to 30-man auxiliary police force. Bernard Kemp, rumored to have entered Goniądz with German forces, recruited and organized the force, to which he also belonged.¹ Its commander was Adam Potocki, a local Pole.



Królewska Street, ca. 1922, which subsequently became the Goniądz ghetto. The Yiddish caption reads, "The old market in Gonyandz [Goniądz]."

USHMM WS #02716, COURTESY OF RELLA SLOMAN

On July 3, 1941, the German military commander ordered all Jews to return to Goniądz. Although the order was issued in anticipation of the arrival of an SS unit the next day, it effectively established an open ghetto in Goniądz, because the Jews could no longer leave the town without permission. The penalty for evading the order was death.

On Friday, July 4, 1941, at an assembly, the SS humiliated elderly Jews and ordered the Polish police to identify and to beat about 40 former Jewish and Polish Communist officials and activists. Before leaving Goniądz, the SS gave the Polish authorities a free hand with the alleged Communists.² Held captive in a store cellar, some prisoners were released in exchange for payments. Others, particularly Jews, were tortured. On July 7, the night watch and auxiliary police, reportedly acting on SS orders, beat the prisoners to death. A Jewish survivor initially maintained 41 people were murdered but subsequently reduced the number to 20, including 14 to 17 Jewish men and women.³ Another survivor, just 13 years old at the time of the murders, noted the collaborators had killed 180 Jews and Poles.⁴

On July 6, 1941, the Polish police arrested five Jewish youths found outside Goniądz. German soldiers executed the teenagers, most likely for ignoring prohibitions on leaving Goniądz. To prevent Jews from fleeing the town, the night watchmen held captive in a barn another group of able-bodied Jews, conscripted for forced labor by the SS. The men were released about two weeks later.

Acting on German orders, the Polish administration issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, though initially with some confusion. On July 14, 1941, Balonowski invited three Jews to serve on the town council. Within a week, he demanded the men resign and commanded them instead to form a six-member Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Judenrat chair was Pinkewicz. The Jews were ordered to wear yellow markings on their chests. Shortly before evacuating Goniądz, on July 20, the local military commander demanded a monetary "contribution," in American dollars, from the Jewish community.

On July 20–21, the Polish policemen, probably supervised by a small SS unit, unleashed a pogrom in which they murdered 20 Jews, including Josel Kobryński, burned alive in the Bet Midrash under a heap of desecrated religious texts.⁵ When the perpetrators threatened violence the next day, 15 Jewish women, conscripted for labor at the German military command in Osowiec, appealed to the colonel in charge there to intervene. He ordered a military police unit to Goniądz to arrest seven perpetrators, including Potocki. After members of the Goniądz town council claimed the SS had given them permission to murder the Jews, the commander released one underaged perpetrator and ordered the others shot for stealing Jewish property during the pogrom.⁶ In revenge, the Polish police arrested another 11 to 15 Jews, but the Osowiec military command ordered the prisoners released. The frustrated Poles appealed to the Gestapo in Białystok to arrest the Jews.

A Jewish eyewitness maintains the Polish administration next ordered a closed ghetto established on the old market square, supposedly in consultation with an SS commander, but the Judenrat succeeded, by paying a bribe of 750 grams (26.5 ounces) in gold, to suspend the order. However, another eyewitness, a non-Jew, suggests the collaborators demanded the payment not to forestall ghettoization but to prevent the loss of additional Jewish lives.⁷ In August 1941, the Polish authorities ordered a closed ghetto established. The Judenrat bribed authorities to halt construction of a fence around the old market square. The fence probably was never removed, as a local Pole remembers some members of the Jewish community living behind it.⁸

The establishment of a German Gendarmerie post in late August 1941 and the arrival of an Amtskommissar in early September imposed additional demands. Upon arriving in Goniądz, the Gendarmerie commander gave the Judenrat 24 hours to furnish his new house. The Amtskommissar demanded the Judenrat secure similar household items and provide him a residence. However, Polish threats abated as the Amtskommissar transformed the mayor into a figurehead and dissolved the town council by October. The Gendarmerie also subordinated the auxiliary police and night watch to its command, though, on September 11, the Gendarmes, acting on SS orders, rearrested the 11 Jews previously denounced by Polish authorities. When 1 prisoner escaped, the SS ordered the auxiliaries to arrest 5 Jews. The Poles rounded up 2 members of the Judenrat, including its secretary, A. Brzeziński. For a bribe, the Amtskommissar issued documentation enabling the prisoners' families to travel to Knyszyn to plead for the men's freedom. An underaged captive was released; the SS already had executed the other 14 men.⁹

The German civil administration expanded forced labor in Goniądz, conscripting about 500 Jews at a number of Wehrmacht enterprises established at the Osowiec Fortress. By the summer of 1942, 30 Goniądz Jews worked for a sapper unit commander on road and fortification projects. Another 150 produced uniform trousers at a tailoring shop. Others sorted abandoned Soviet munitions. The largest group of conscripts

labored at the Osowiec train station, loading and unloading supplies destined for the Eastern Front.

In late September or October 1942, the Amtskommissar ordered a ghetto established, but the Judenrat provided coats to him and his wife to suspend the order. However, on a subsequent Sunday, the Amtskommissar ordered the Jewish residents of Dolistowo Street expelled from their houses, likely in an effort to establish either a discrete Jewish residential quarter or a ghetto. Three days later, the Jewish residents of Kościelna Street received similar orders. The Judenrat secured a temporary suspension of the second order.

On November 2, 1942, an SS unit, supported by the local German Gendarmerie, including local Polish Schutzmannen, surrounded Goniądz.¹⁰ The SS informed the Judenrat that it had been ordered to evacuate the approximately 900 to 1,280 Goniądz Jews to a labor camp closer to Osowiec. The Jews were driven instead to a transit camp in the village of Bogusze, located 4.8 kilometers (about 3 miles) north of Grajewo, near the railway station in Prostken, East Prussia. About 30 to 35 people who had evaded the deportation found refuge in the ghetto in Jasionówka. Most others, perhaps 70 people, were rounded up following the evacuation by a small SS force, German Gendarmes, and Polish Schutzmannen. They were brought to the Bogusze transit camp, where the Germans had ordered 5,000 to 9,000 Jews from nearby localities imprisoned to facilitate their deportation to extermination camps.

On December 15, 1942, the SS deported 2,500 to 5,000 inmates from the Bogusze transit camp, via Prostken, to the Treblinka extermination camp. The remaining 2,000 or so inmates were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp on January 3, 1943. Upon arriving at Auschwitz II-Birkenau on January 7, 1943, at midnight, 1,489 people from the transport were gassed. Another 296 men and 215 women became Auschwitz concentration camp inmates. About 10 Goniądz Jews survived the Bogusze deportations, including 9 Auschwitz prisoners and 1 Treblinka deportee. The latter, Awrom Lejzer Rubin, a participant in the August 1943 Treblinka uprising, subsequently joined a partisan unit of Białystok ghetto survivors. He perished in war operations in June 1944.

Another approximately 10 Goniądz Jews survived hiding near Goniądz. Kazimierz and Agnieszka Łuszcz in Krzecz village sheltered four members of the Jewrejski family. In Oliszki village (Goniądz gmina), Antoni Wasilewski, under pressure from his sister, provided assistance to Herszel Piekarz (Herschel Baker). In May 1944, Gendarmes arrested and shot dead three Jews and their aid-givers, Bolesław and Helena Kulikowski, in Goniądz.

In 1949, 10 Polish collaborators, mostly former auxiliary policemen and night watchmen, were tried together for murdering 25 Jews and Poles in Goniądz on July 7, 1941. One received a six-year prison term; another, Perkowski, was sentenced to life in prison.¹¹ In 1950, Franciszek Kuczyński, a former auxiliary policeman, received a six-year prison term for having supervised Jews under German watch and for the murder of Kobryński.¹²

SOURCES Published eyewitness accounts can be found in I. Ben-Meir (Treshansky) and A.L. Fayans, eds., *Sefer yizkor Gonyondz* (Tel Aviv: Va'ade yots'e Gonyondz be-'Artsot ha-Berit uve-Yisrael, 1960); with an eyewitness account by survivor Herschel Baker, "World War Two" also included in Julius L. Baker and Jacob L. Baker, eds., *Sefer Yedwabneh: Hist'oryah ve-zikaron* (Jerusalem and New York: Yedwabner Societies in Israel and in the United States of America, 1980), pp. 91–100. A partial translation of the first and the complete English translation of the second are available at jewishgen.org.

Secondary works include the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 195–198; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Bialystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 70–76; Waldemar Monkiewicz, "Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej," *Białostoccy Żydzi* 2 (1997): 180, 198–199, 210; and Andrzej Żbikowski, "Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych," in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 186–194. And in spite of their titles, also touching on the war are Arkadiusz Studniarek, "Żydzi goniący w okresie międzywojennym," *Białostoczczyzna*, nos. 61–62 (2001): 130 ff; and Artur Wiśniewski, "Sztetl Goniący," in Artur Markowski and Wojciech Śleszyński, eds., *Sztetl- Wspólne Dziedzictwo. Szkice z dziejów ludności Żydowskiej Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej* (Białystok: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2003), pp. 169–179.

Documentation pertaining to the Goniądz Jewish community under German occupation in World War II includes: AŻIH (e.g., 301/1847); IPN (e.g., SAB 101, SOB [42, 115–115a], SWB [6–6d, 119]); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/1488, Ko [55/87, 67/87, 134/87, 227/88]); VHF (e.g., # 33938, 36694, 43390); and YVA.

Laura Crago

NOTES

1. IPN, SOB 42, Tewel Jewrejski (Tuviah Ivri) deposition, cited by Żbikowski, "Pogromy," pp. 187–188.
2. Compare in IPN, SOB 42, Jewrejski and Pejsach Tykocki, depositions, cited by Żbikowski, "Pogromy," pp. 188–189.
3. Compare IPN, SOB 42, Jewrejski deposition, cited by Żbikowski, "Pogromy," p. 188, with Tuvia Ivri (Tewel Jewrejski), "The Destruction," in Ben-Meir and Fayans, *Sefer yizkor Gonyondz*, pp. 591–676; and 25 victims in IPN, SWB 6–6d, sentencing documents, cited by Żbikowski, "Pogromy," pp. 191–192.
4. IPN, SOB 42, Wolf Zarenczański deposition, cited by Żbikowski, "Pogromy," p. 189.
5. See depositions and interrogations in IPN, SAB 101, SOB 42, SWB 6–6d.
6. Ivri, "The Destruction," pp. 591–676.
7. IPN, SOB 42, Józef Dąbrowski deposition, cited in Żbikowski, "Pogromy," p. 189.
8. Studniarek, "Żydzi goniący," p. 131.
9. Ivri, "The Destruction," pp. 591–676.

10. Baker, "World War Two," p. 96.
11. IPN, SWB 6–6d.
12. Ibid., SAB 101.

GRAJEWO

Pre-1939: Grajewo (Yiddish: Grayeve), town, Szczuczyn powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Graewo, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1945: Grajewo, Kreis center, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Grajewo, Grajewo powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Grajewo lies 71 kilometers (44.1 miles) northwest of Białystok. Its 1937 population of 9,500 included 3,000 Jews.

The Germans occupied Grajewo for about three weeks from September 6–7, 1939. They set fire to the synagogue and the Bet Midrash and deported about 300 Jewish men to a forced labor camp in East Prussia. Four months after Soviet forces occupied Grajewo, on September 21, 1 survivor returned home.

On June 22, 1941, German border guards shelled and then occupied Grajewo. Two days later, the Wehrmacht established a military command post there. On June 25, Stadtkommandant Geiss ordered the Jews to wear yellow markings on the back and chest and made forced labor obligatory for all adult Jews.

On June 29, 1941, local Polish antisemites unleashed a one-hour pogrom after Sunday mass. Appeals by the priest Aleksander Pęza and Communist Party of Poland (KPP) activist Henryk Sobolewski failed to stem the bloodshed. Ten Jews perished and dozens of others were injured. Rumors circulated that the perpetrators had secured permission from a local Gestapo commander named Opper for the attack.¹ However, most scholars believe the Gendarmes' decision to end the violence at 3:00 P.M. by shooting dead three of the perpetrators and taking injured victims to the hospital indicates the pogrom did not have German authorization.

The next day, at 4:00 P.M., a Gestapo unit surrounded about 500 Jewish men already assembled at the market square. (Believing they had little to fear from the local German authorities, the men had reported there willingly.) The Jews were surprised to see the surviving instigators of the pogrom assisting the Gestapo as members of a Polish auxiliary police force. The Germans ordered the police to identify the Soviet collaborators from among the Jews. The men arbitrarily chose about 100 people and then, on German orders, brutally beat them. On Thursday, July 3, the Gestapo returned to Grajewo, with a photographer, and in an almost identical Aktion ordered the Polish police to drive about 300 Jews into the horse market. The Gestapo joined the Polish police in beating 97 alleged Communists. The Germans invited local Poles, gathered to watch, to participate.

The 300 men were held prisoner for about a month in a theater that Soviet authorities had constructed on the site of the Old Synagogue. The auxiliary police drove the Jews in the general prison population out daily for forced labor, subjecting

them to meaningless, exhausting physical labor and beating them. The “Communists,” imprisoned in a separate isolation cell, were tortured by their Polish jailers. The Communists who did not perish were executed by the Germans in small groups, either at the Jewish cemetery or in the Kosówka Forest.² The auxiliaries reportedly offered, for a fee, to exchange Communist internees slated for execution with Jewish prisoners from the general prison population.

On August 5–6, 1941, the SS organized a “show trial” of the Communist prisoners as a supposed precondition for the emergence of the Grajewo ghetto. At the trial, the Polish auxiliaries signed affidavits identifying 70 to 120 Jews as Communists. A panel of SS officers, serving as “judges,” sentenced the “guilty” to death. Among the condemned Jews were about 30 to 80 men, including from the Communist cell block and some elderly religious leaders, and about 40 women, arrested because of their former employment in the Soviet administration or Komsomol membership.³ German guards supposedly comforted other Jewish prisoners, telling them that the death sentences were required in order for the remainder of the Grajewo Jewish community to remain alive. The Germans and Polish auxiliaries tortured the condemned and raped many of the women. On August 7, the Germans executed the survivors of those condemned at a mass grave at the Jewish cemetery.

Polish investigators initially believed the German perpetrators of the show trial were from Einsatzkommando 8 and maintained that its commander, Karl Strohammer, had played the role of chief judge. However, more recent research has shown that the head of Einsatzkommando 8 was not Strohammer but rather SS-Sturmbannführer Otto Bradfisch, who, on July 7, the date cited for the show trial by early investigators, was in Minsk (now in Belarus). More recently, historian Andrzej Żbikowski has suggested an operational group subordinated to the Tilsit State Police may have overseen the Grajewo show trial.⁴ Confusion exists, too, about the show trial victims. Postwar documentation for their mass grave notes that 193 Jews, Poles, Russians, and Red Army soldiers were executed there, a point that suggests that non-Jews were among the condemned.⁵ Uncertainties also remain about the number of Jews who perished in Grajewo in the summer of 1941. The postwar Polish documentation, for example, provides no insight into the comment of survivor Zelig Tenenbaum that just 1,600 Grajewo Jews were alive at the conclusion of the show trial.

On a Tuesday in August 1941, after the show trial, likely on August 10, Stadtkommandant Geiss informed the Jews at an assembly that now that the community had been “cleansed” of its “Communists,” the Germans would provide them an opportunity to live in peace, in a ghetto, with a Jewish administration.⁶ He ordered the 24 remaining Jewish prisoners released from jail to assist their families to relocate to a ghetto on Dolna Street. He gave the Jews five days to move there. The ghetto terrain, which spanned 7 hectares (17.3 acres), also included Rudzka and Łazienna Streets. It was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence.⁷

At the assembly, Geiss also had nominated Zuker Saltzman as the chair of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). On Geiss’s orders,

the Judenrat established a Labor Office a few days later. It also organized a police force, initially to patrol the ghetto from Polish marauders. Karbowski, a lawyer from Łomża, was its commander, and Meier Klecki, its deputy commander. Two weeks later, Geiss ordered the Judenrat to pay a 1-million Reichsmark (RM) contribution to the town treasury, threatening to expel the Jews from Grajewo if they failed to raise the sum. The Jews sold whatever they could to local Poles to meet the demand.

The Grajewo Judenrat created workshops in the ghetto to meet the needs of its inhabitants. A bakery, a food store, and a shoe-making facility provided them low-cost goods. The sanitation force ordered swamps drained and vegetables planted throughout the ghetto. Ghetto residents were conscripted for road improvement work. Others cleaned roads and worked on construction projects for the German Gendarmerie, established in late August 1941. They left for work each morning without an armed guard but were required to have passes, issued by German authorities, permitting them to be outside the ghetto. The Amtskommissar, Hans Pogoda, who assumed responsibility for Grajewo that same month or in early September, permitted peasants from local villages to enter the ghetto twice weekly on market days to sell potatoes as well as peat and wood for fuel. Ignoring German orders forbidding Jews to purchase poultry and livestock, the peasants smuggled live chickens and calves into the ghetto to sell.

According to a Jewish eyewitness, the preexisting tensions between Christians and Jews remained. When the peasants began bypassing the square to sell their goods exclusively in the ghetto, local Christians complained to German authorities that the ghetto was better provisioned than the town.⁸ Polish eyewitnesses also noted that local German authorities furthered tensions by ordering Jewish forced laborers to dig the mass graves of Poles slated for execution.⁹

Early on November 2, 1942, members of the SS surrounded the Grajewo ghetto in preparation for its liquidation. The next day, they drove its residents to a transit camp, located 4.8 kilometers (3 miles) to the north in Bogusze, a war-devastated village near the railway station in Prostken, East Prussia. At least six families were murdered for evading the deportation orders.¹⁰

The Grajewo Jews lived at the Bogusze transit camp for about a month with about 5,000 to 9,000 Jews from other nearby localities. On December 15–16, 1942, German camp guards sent 3,000 to 5,000 inmates, including Saltzman, from the Prostken railway station, to the Treblinka extermination camp. The second and final deportation, of about 2,000 Jews, occurred on January 3, 1943. Four days later at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau killing center, the Germans held back 296 men and 215 women from the transport for labor. The remaining 1,489 Jews were gassed on arrival. Incomplete records indicate that at least 32 people from Grajewo were prisoners at Auschwitz. Of these, only a handful survived the war.

Also counted among Grajewo survivors are Runia (Rachel) Lunia and her husband, a physician. Refugees to Grajewo in

the Soviet period, the two recognized their hometown of Częstochowa when the Auschwitz transport train stopped there briefly. They exited from the passenger cars to which Bogusze medical personnel had been assigned and were reunited with family.¹¹

SOURCES A published account by Nachmann Rapp, “History of the Grayevo Ghetto,” in George Garin et al., eds., *Grayeve yisker bukb* (New York: United Grayever Relief Committee, 1950), pp. xix–li, remains the standard work on the history of the ghetto. The authors also have relied on the testimony deposited in the underground archives of the Białystok ghetto, also known as the Mersik-Tenenbaum Archives, cited as AŻIH, 204/10, and titled “Testimony of Zelig Tenenbaum and a few other boys from Grajewo about events in the town from the beginning of the German occupation.” The Tenenbaum testimony is summarized in Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia* (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), pp. 180–183. Żbikowski also discusses here the initial Polish investigations into the German perpetrators of anti-Jewish violence in Grajewo during the summer of 1941 and proposes some alternatives in chapter 5 of his *U genezy Jedwabnego. Żydzi na kresach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej, wrzesień 1939–lipiec 1941* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2006).

Also useful is Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 77–81, an English-language account based on the Grajewo entry in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its District* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 165–166.

Documentation on the history of the Jews of Grajewo under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 204/10 [old 10/131], 301/2600); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/1151, 1/227-28, S-15/66 [Bogusze]); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN], 2/232, 46/106); VHF (e.g., # 3129); and YVA (e.g., M-11 [i.e., AŻIH, 204/10]).

Laura Crago and Monika Tomkiewicz

NOTES

1. Rapp, “History,” pp. xxxi–xxxiv, xl.
2. AŻIH, 204/10 (old 10/131), pp. 1–22.
3. Ibid., for low figures; and Rapp, “History,” p. xxxviii, for high victim range.
4. See Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 183; and Żbikowski, *U genezy Jedwabnego*, p. 225.
5. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/235, pp. 1–2.
6. Rapp, “History,” p. xl.
7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/106, pp. 1–2; and IPN-Bi, 1/227, vol. 1, pp. 66–67, 226 (depositions, Antoni Zieliński and Alfred Neuman, respectively).
8. Rapp, “History,” pp. xlii–xliv.
9. IPN-Bi, 1/227, vol. 1, p. 13 (deposition, Bronisław Kraśniński), vol. 2, pp. 47–49 (letter, Grajewo police commander).
10. IPN-Bi, vol. 1, p. 33 (deposition, Józef Olszewski).
11. VHF, # 3129, testimony of Runia (Rachel) Lunia.

GRÓDEK BIAŁOSTOCKI

Pre-1939: Gródek (Yiddish: Horodok), village, Białystok powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodok, Zabłudov raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Grodek, Kreis and Distrikt Białystok; post-1999: Gródek, Białystok powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Gródek is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) east-southeast of Białystok. According to the 1921 population census, 1,508 Jews lived in Gródek. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were 1,150 Jews in Gródek, about 50 percent of the total population.¹

In September 1939, German forces briefly occupied the town before the arrival of the Soviets. Under Soviet rule, a number of people, mainly Poles, were deported to the east. German forces occupied Gródek again on June 27, 1941. After two hours, the Germans started searching Jewish houses on the pretext of looking for arms, but they took any valuable items they found, such as gold or leather. Initially, the German military controlled Gródek, but after a few weeks, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Gródek was incorporated into Kreis Białystok, within Distrikt Białystok, which was in most respects treated as territory incorporated directly into the Third Reich.

A German Amtskommissar, Paul Melzer, was in charge of the administration in Gródek, and he introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. His first decree was to forbid Christians from selling food to Jews. He also spread anti-Jewish propaganda among the Christians, blaming the Jews for the war, and argued that the first step to help the Germans in eradicating the Jews was not to sell them food. The Amtskommissar named the Belorussian Serenko as head of the municipal administration (gmina) because he supported antisemitic policies. Further new decrees followed daily: Jews were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks; they were forced to wear distinguishing yellow badges; and they had to perform forced labor, during which the local auxiliary police, composed of Poles and Belorussians, frequently beat them.

In order to assist with the implementation of their decrees, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 10 people, which was chaired by former teacher Shmuel Zbenowicz. After some time, members of the Gestapo arrived in Gródek. Despite efforts by the Judenrat to bribe them, the Gestapo men beat all the members of the Judenrat 50 times each. Zbenowicz had his fingers broken and his teeth knocked out before they shot him. The Gestapo also demanded that the Jews supply them with watches and suits before leaving. This treatment of the Judenrat had a devastating impact on the community. The German Gendarmerie (Order Police) also made daily demands for the Jews to deliver items such as furniture or 20 pairs of boots within a few hours, threatening to shoot everybody if they did not comply.²

In the fall of 1941 (probably at the end of October), or according to some sources in the late summer of 1942, the Amtskommissar ordered the establishment of a ghetto.³ Within 24

hours, all the Jews had to move into the so-called Piaski quarter, which they could not leave without special permission. Non-Jews who lived there moved into the former “shtetl” area. There was also an 11-man Jewish militia, which provided the internal guards at the ghetto gate.⁴ Forced labor was organized by the Judenrat, and the tasks included construction work on the main road from Białystok to Baranowicze, which entailed a long march on foot to the work site. In the winter of 1941–1942, hunger and cold added to the misery of the Jews in Gródek.

At the start of 1942, the first Aktion was carried out in the ghetto. The German police shot 13 people declared “mentally ill,” and shortly afterwards they arrested 15 Jews alleged to be Communists. When 1 of the 15, a man named Botovitski (or Borovitsky), succeeded in escaping, the Germans took his wife and children hostage and threatened to kill 100 others or even the entire ghetto if he was not surrendered. Shortly afterwards, he was handed over to the Germans. After three weeks in prison under terrible conditions, the Germans shot the 15 prisoners.⁵

On November 1, 1942, there was a mood of unease in the ghetto, as the Jews had received news of the arrival of many peasant wagons from the surrounding countryside. During the night, German police and their collaborators surrounded the ghetto. Early the next morning, the Gestapo visited the Judenrat. They ordered all the Jews to appear at the marketplace within one and a half hours, as the Jews were going to be transferred to another place. At 6:30 A.M., while it was still dark, the Jewish Police went from house to house to inform the Jews to get ready to leave. Most Jews expected that this would be the end. The Gendarmerie and local police began to drive the Jews out of the houses, and the Jews did not know where to run or hide. A number of them tried to break out of the ghetto and were shot by the guards. There were heartrending decisions to make. The mother of a man named Sima urged her son to leave his family behind and try to save himself and take revenge; yet the close guard made it impossible to escape.⁶

The remaining Jews then assembled on the square with their meager possessions in small bundles together with their children. At about 7:00 A.M., they received an order to form a column in family groups to leave through the gate. The Jews then boarded the wagons under close guard. Anyone who did not move quickly enough was severely beaten. After waiting for the similar convoy of carts from the nearby ghetto of Michałowo to join them, the Jews were escorted initially to the transit camp in Białystok, located in a former cavalry barracks. Only a few, such as Nachemiasz Szuklaper and his sister, managed to escape from the convoy on the way.⁷ In the transit camp they were held together in terrible conditions with other Jews from the region; 40 Jews who tried to escape were shot by the Germans.⁸ From the transit camp they were sent on to the Treblinka extermination camp by train at the end of November 1942. Three groups of Jews designated as craftsmen were transferred to the Białystok ghetto from the transit camp, thanks to the intervention of the head of the Białystok Judenrat, Ephraim Barash. Only a

handful of Jews from Gródek managed to escape to the partisans or survive the German occupation in hiding or with false documents.

After the war, Paul Melzer, the former Amtskommissar in Gródek, was one of the few leading officials in Distrikt Białystok to be tried by the Polish authorities. He was tried specifically for his role in the shooting of seven members of the Polish underground movement in 1942.⁹

SOURCES Publications on the fate of the Jews of Gródek during the Holocaust include Moshe Simon, ed., *Horodok: A Yizkor Bukh* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Gorodok Residents in Israel and Argentina, 1963); there is also a brief article in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 231–234; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 81–83.

Documentation concerning the extermination of the Jews of Gródek can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/978 and 3593); IPN (e.g., SAB 140, SOB 398, SWB 260, 280–281); IPN-Bi (e.g., 7/9777, 1/1656, S-136/68/1–2); and YVA (e.g., M-11/48). It should be noted in particular that IPN-Bi, 1/1656 [old N-1/43], reportedly contains a list of all the Jews imprisoned in the Gródek ghetto.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/978, testimony of Josef Abramicki.
2. Ibid.; YVA, M-11/48; Simon, *Horodok*, p. 90, dates the murder of Zbenowicz in the winter of 1941–1942, following impossible demands for fresh flowers by the Gestapo.
3. YVA, M-11/48, dates the establishment of the ghetto at the end of October 1941 and is the source written closest to the actual events. Other sources indicate the ghetto was not formed until August or September 1942. See Simon, *Horodok*, pp. 86, 90; and AŻIH, 301/978.
4. YVA, M-11/48.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.; Sima (his surname is unknown) is the author of this report, which was preserved in the Tenenbaum archive from the Białystok ghetto, now located in Yad Vashem.
7. AŻIH, 301/3593, testimony of Nachemiasz Szuklaper. He managed to escape to Warsaw and survived in hiding there.
8. Ibid., 301/978.
9. IPN, SOB 398.

GRODNO

Pre-1939: Grodno (Yiddish: Grodne or Hurodno), city and powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Grodno raion, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Grodno (from 1942, Garten), Kreis center, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Hrodna, voblasts' center, Republic of Belarus



Jews move their belongings into the Grodno ghetto, 1941–1942.
USHMM WS #74339, COURTESY OF ŻIH

Grodno lies 85 kilometers (53 miles) northeast of Białystok. In 1931, 21,159 Jews comprised 42.5 percent of the population of the city of Grodno.

During the Soviet occupation, Grodno swelled with refugees fleeing from German-occupied Poland. By the summer of 1941, the city numbered 50,000 inhabitants, about half of them Jews.

The Germans captured Grodno on June 23, 1941. A local military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) initially administered the city. The Schutzpolizei and the Wehrmacht established regional headquarters in Grodno. From December 1941 to March 1943, SS-Obersturmführer Heinz Errelis commanded the local Security Police post, which was subordinated to the Security Police (KdS) in Białystok, under the leadership, from April 1942, of Dr. Wilhelm Altenloh.

The Wehrmacht initiated the first German anti-Jewish measures in Grodno: the formation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), wearing of markings, confiscations, and forced labor. Units of Einsatzgruppe B also committed murders, and some local Poles took advantage of the situation to steal from the Jews.

The Germans established two closed ghettos in Grodno on November 1, 1941. The main ghetto, known as Ghetto I (or Ghetto A), was located in the old Jewish quarter around the Old Synagogue. Dominikańska and Zamkowa Streets became two of its borders. Ghetto II (or Ghetto B) was about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the first ghetto, on the other side of the Niemen River, in Słobotka, the poorest suburb of Grodno. The authorities conceived of Ghetto I as a place for working people with skills, and Ghetto II as a residential area for the elderly and those unable to work. In practice, many artisans lived in Ghetto II because they either worked there for the Judenrat or had been unable to find housing in Ghetto I. Orders to move into the ghettos left people with little time to pack and just six hours to transport their belongings. Snowfall and the construction of 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) barbed-wire fences around the ghettos on the resettlement day further complicated the process.

Until November 1942, both ghettos were the responsibility of the Stapoleitstelle in Białystok, in cooperation with the Grodno city administration, led from August 1941 by German mayor George Stein. The Schutzpolizei, commanded by Captain Franz Osterode, with a force of approximately 40 to 50 German and 30 local policemen, patrolled the outside of the ghettos. A Jewish police force, under the command of Aaron Rubinczyk, maintained law and order inside the ghettos and patrolled the fences from the inside and at their gates, located in Ghetto I at Zamkowa Street and in Ghetto II at Skidel Street, near Artillery Street.

The average living space in the ghettos was about 2 square meters (21.5 square feet) per person. In Ghetto I, between 15,000 and 20,000 people lived in an area of about 0.5 square kilometers (less than 0.2 square miles). They resided in stone dwellings previously inhabited by impoverished Jews. The approximately 4-square-kilometer (1.5-square-mile) area of Ghetto II offered more physical space, for about 10,000 people, but fewer houses. The housing there consisted of small, wooden houses formerly owned by poor Christians.

Brawer, the head of the Jewish Council, oversaw a ghetto administration divided into two parts, with Ghettos I and II supervised, respectively, by Icchak Gorzański and Abraham Zadaj, both lawyers. The council's offices included provisioning, housing, health care, police, legal matters, social welfare (including synagogue operations in Ghetto I), statistics, trade, and employment. The two administrations employed 850 people.

The council established a reputation for its abilities to address questions of material survival. Brawer, for example, negotiated from German authorities a larger food allocation for the ghettos. The organizational talents of Jakub (or Jakow) Efron, head of the provisioning department, enabled the Judenrat to distribute rations to all registered ghetto inhabitants; to offer subsidized or free daily meals to as many as 3,000 residents, for example, in Ghetto I; to provide workers with thousands of cups daily of ersatz coffee; and to grow food in ghetto gardens. The Judenrat's finance department, led by Jehoszua Suchowlański, a former deputy mayor of Grodno, imposed stiff taxes to meet the council's new responsibilities, which also included fulfilling demands of the German authorities for furniture, fur coats, alcoholic beverages, and other valuables. It even used a sign tax to collect revenue from proprietors of illicit stores, which provided a variety of services and unobtainable goods, such as oil produced from sunflower seeds on a press smuggled into the ghetto. Survivors remember the Grodno ghettos as places in which people, although hungry, did not starve, as happened in some other large ghettos.¹

The Jewish Council also oversaw labor conscription. Some Jews worked on road and railway construction projects. The most secure employment was thought to be at workshops outside of the ghetto organized by the Grodno Kreiskommissar, Landrat von Ploetz, to produce clothing, shoes, and even snowshoes and skis for the Wehrmacht and the Gestapo.

An underground youth movement organized resistance. It initially focused on reestablishing educational activities and on material assistance. In early 1942, Mordecai Tenenbaum (Tenenboim) (Dror) and Tosia Altman (Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir) traveled to Grodno to tell the youth and the Judenrat that they believed the Germans intended to murder the Jews and to appeal for armed resistance. They discovered the Judenrat more committed to the idea that the contributions of Grodno Jews to the German war industry would secure their survival. The Grodno youth endorsed the positions of its leaders but divided over a course of action. According to activist Liza Chapnik (or Tzepnick), "One group urged us to prepare for armed resistance, that is, for an uprising in the Grodno ghetto. . . . The other group argued for leaving the ghetto at night and going to the neighboring forests where we could join the partisans and fight against the Nazis with them."² Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir created a ghetto laboratory to forge documents, enabling the establishment outside the ghetto of a network of mostly women couriers, including Chapnik, to maintain contact with the Białystok resistance.

On November 2, 1942, in conjunction with the liquidation of the ghettos in Distrikt Białystok, the Security Police assumed responsibility for the Grodno ghettos and ordered them sealed. Gestapo officers Kurt Wiese and Otto Streblow, appointed the commandants, respectively, of Ghettos I and II, subjected the Grodno Jews for the first time in the war to sustained, arbitrary violence. On November 2, for instance, they entered Ghetto II to shoot at Jews, who—unaware of the closure order—had gathered by the gate to leave for work.³ The Security Police ordered searches of the few workers it permitted to leave the ghetto, beginning on November 3, mainly the artisans employed at Wehrmacht and Gestapo enterprises. It shot dead those discovered smuggling food back to the ghetto. A curfew was imposed; electricity and water supplies to the ghettos were circumscribed.

The Security Police next launched a five-month-long liquidation of the Grodno ghettos, beginning in Ghetto II. The Germans ordered the Jewish Council there to draw up a list of 1,000 to 4,000 people to be transferred to Ghetto I. The transferees included artisans with "useful" professions and those with family in Ghetto I.⁴ On November 15, 1942, about 1,000 to 2,000 of the remaining Ghetto II residents were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp. On November 21, a second transport carried to Auschwitz the rest of the Jews from Ghetto II, between 2,000 to 3,500 people. From the two transports, which likely included about 4,000 ghetto residents, the Germans held back just 598 people (470 men and 128 women) as concentration camp prisoners. The rest were gassed on arrival.⁵

The liquidation of Ghetto I began at the end of November 1942. To make room for the transferees from Ghetto II, approximately 4,500 Jews from Ghetto I were expelled to the Kielbasin transit camp, just outside of Grodno, where almost all the Jews of the Sokółka and Grodno regions also had been concentrated before being deported to extermination camps. Wiese relied on violence, including public executions, to secure compliance. The Jewish Council members drew up the depor-

tation lists and read out sentencing orders at the executions. However, in mid-December, Errelis began publicly humiliating the council leaders and interfering in the operations of the Judenrat, as the Security Police turned to its Jewish liaison men and the Jewish Police. Gorzański and Rubinczyk were among a group of expellees driven to Kielbasin in early December, with the Jewish Police commander sent there reportedly for refusing to tie nooses on the first public hanging victims.⁶ Because of a shortage of railway cars, many Kielbasin inmates were transported in mid-December to the much closer extermination camp at Treblinka. A group of Grodno youth on one of the transports launched a spontaneous rebellion at Treblinka, which resulted in the deaths of three SS men. Shortly after December 21, the Germans closed the Kielbasin transit camp and marched its remaining 2,000 to 3,500 inmates, including the Jews from Suchowola and Sopoćkinie, to the Grodno I ghetto.

The liquidation of Ghetto I continued in January and February 1943. The first large Aktion, remembered as "Operation 10,000," began on January 18, 1943. Over a period of five days, some 11,650 people were deported to Auschwitz on transports that carried between 1,500 and 3,650 Jews. Of these, 9,851 were murdered upon arrival, while 1,799 (1,096 men and 703 women) were held back as prisoners of the concentration camp.⁷ During the deportations, three members of the Zionist underground attempted to assassinate Streblow, the Ghetto II commandant. Others had broken open the doors and windows of the Great Synagogue in an attempt to stir a revolt among the thousands of Jews incarcerated there, pending their expulsion to the Łosośna train station. Both efforts met with bloody reprisals.⁸ Even though the Germans shrunk the ghetto after each deportation, declaring the empty structures just beyond its new borders a "no-man's land," about 1,500 people still managed to evade deportation. Fearing the personal repercussions of not fulfilling the deportation quota, the Jewish Police extricated people from hiding and seized off the streets many of the "useful artisans" and their families, given dispensations from the deportation.

During the second Aktion, on February 13–16, 1943, known as "Operation 5000," only a few hundred "essential workers" were held back from deportation. On February 13, the remaining Jews, including the surviving Judenrat members, led by Brawer, were incarcerated in the synagogue. When several Jewish liaison officers were found hiding in the no-man's land, just beyond the new borders of the ghetto, Wiese shot Brawer dead. Accounts of the February deportations vary. One interpretation estimates that beginning on February 13, 1943, at least three transports departed for the Treblinka extermination camp, including a train designated as leaving from Białystok but having been rerouted to Grodno. Another version notes that surviving railway schedules confirm just two transports from Grodno to Treblinka, on February 14 and 16, and estimates they carried, respectively, 2,500 and 1,600 Grodno Jews to their deaths.⁹

Because most of the Jewish Police had exercised less vigilance during the February Aktion, a number of people managed

to escape from the ghetto. Some of them reached the Wilno or the Białystok ghettos and joined the underground movements there. Another 26 to 30 youths, led by Leib Rejzer, from the Communist underground, fled to Skidel, where a Belorussian, Kostia Bucko, transported them to the Radun Forest. In May 1943, they joined the Soviet partisans.¹⁰ Others found shelter with Christians, including the Łosośna peasant Paweł Harmuszko, a Żegota member, attributed with directly assisting 8 Grodno Jews and arranging false documents and transporting to shelters about 200 other Jews from the Grodno and Warsaw ghettos.¹¹

Another approximately 500 Jews lived illegally in the ghetto with about 650 Jews (and some of their families) declared “useful artisans” by the Security Police. The ghetto now encompassed three buildings between the Zamkowa entrance and the synagogue. It was administered by a Judenrat, headed by the new Jewish Police commander. In mid-March 1943, the Security Police in Grodno transferred all but 10 to 15 male artisans to the Białystok ghetto. Shortly after August 15, 1943, the last Jewish artisans in Grodno were transferred to a Łomża prison, where they joined a group of craftsmen, including some Grodno Jews, expelled there from the Białystok ghetto. The men were deported to the Stutthof concentration camp.¹² Of the 25,000 Jews residing in both ghettos, only a few hundred survived the war.¹³

In March 1966, Altenloh and Errelis were tried in Bielefeld, Germany, for various wartime crimes, including murder. They were found guilty as accessories to murder through their participation in the deportation of at least 3,500 people from Ghetto I in Grodno during the Aktion in February 1943 and of at least 6,500 people from the Białystok ghetto. They, respectively, received 8- and 6.5-year prison terms.¹⁴ At another major trial, which began in March 1968 in Cologne, Germany, Errelis and Wiese were accused of active participation in the persecution and deportation of the Grodno Jews. Due to insufficient evidence, Errelis was acquitted. Indicted on many separate counts of murder, Wiese received seven consecutive life sentences.

SOURCES Some of the archival documentation cited below, as well as firsthand accounts of the Grodno ghettos, can be found in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992). Published survivor accounts also are included in Dov Rabin, ed., *Grodnab-Grodne* (Jerusalem: Hevrat Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1973); and in *Grodner Opklangen* (Buenos Aires), nos. 1–18 (1949–1968). Grodno survivors have authored a number of memoirs and accounts, including, in English, Alexandre Blumstein, *A Little House on Mount Carmel* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2002); the interviews of Liza Chapnik and Bronka Klibanski, in Dalia Ofer and Lenore Weitzman, eds., *Women in the Holocaust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999); Harold Gordon, *The Last Sunrise: A True Story. A Biography of a Ten-Year-Old Boy in Nazi Concentration Camps during World War Two* (Salinas, CA: H&J Publishers, 1989); Daniel Klovsky, *The Road from Grodno* (Samara: OFORT Press, 2003); and Felix Zandman, *Never the Last Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995).

The most comprehensive secondary account of the Grodno ghettos by Tikva Fatal-Knaani, *Zo lo otah Grodnob, Kebilat Grodnob u-sevivatab ba-milhamah uva-sho'ah 1939–1943* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001), forms the basis for the English-language “Lost Jewish Worlds—Grodno,” on the Yad Vashem Web site (www.yadvashem.org); and “Grodno ghetto,” on the Aktion Reinhard Camps Web site www.deathcamps.org.

Documentary evidence for the Grodno ghettos and the destruction of the Grodno Jewish community includes AŻIH (e.g., 204 [unnumbered, i.e., YVA, M-11/30, below] and 301 [e.g., 555, 748, 885, 1903, 2128, 4921, and 5387]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/2062-94, 14223, 14309, and 27316-19); FVA (e.g., HVT/76, 1962, and 3560); GAGO; GARF (e.g., 7021-86-40); NARA; NARB (845-1-8 and 861-1-7); IPN-Bi (old numeration, e.g., Ko-58/93); USHMM (e.g., RG-53.004M [GAGO] [7 microfilm reels], RG-10.052*01, RG-50.030*0372, RG-50.120*0074 and *0159, RG-50.378*0024, and Acc. 1995.A.653); VHF (e.g., # 715, 959, 6485, 19914, 23708, 25406, and 34555); and YVA (e.g., M-11/30 [also at AŻIH, 204], M-11/B, O-3/6588, and O-33/297, 303, 2434, and 6815).

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NOTES

1. Klovsky, *The Road*, pp. 26–31.
2. Liza Chapnik, “The Grodno Ghetto and Its Underground: A Personal Narrative,” in Ofer and Weitzman, *Women in the Holocaust*, p. 114.
3. Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 4:60 and 5:331, 438–446.
4. Zandman, *Never*, pp. 60–61.
5. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: Wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 105–107, 119, providing the low and official estimates.
6. Zandman, *Never*, pp. 60, 64–75.
7. Mączka, *Żydzi polscy*, pp. 155–161.
8. With Mordechai Tenenboim-Tamarof, *Dappin min ha-Delekhah*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984), p. 23, noting three underground members killed for attacking Streblow.
9. Compare Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 5:121–122, 443–445, and Fatal-Knaani, *Zo lo otah Grodnob*, p. 206.
10. YVA, O-33/287, testimony of Eliezer Kaminski, in English translation on the Lida ShtetLinks page, at jewishgen.org; and YVA, M-41/141-70632, Matrosov partisan accounts.
11. Emanuel Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations during the Second World War*, ed. Joseph Kermish et al., trans. Danuta Dabrowska et al. (repr., Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1992), pp. 239–240.
12. Klovsky, *The Road*, pp. 48–85.
13. GARF, 8114-1-964, includes a list of 147 Jewish survivors from Grodno.
14. Klarsfeld, *Documents*, vols. 4 and 5.

GRODZISK (AKA GRODZISK KOŁO SIEMIATYCZ)

Pre-1939: Grodzisk, village, Bielski Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodisk, Bransk raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Grodzisk, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Siemiatycze powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

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Grodzisk lies 44 and 93.5 kilometers (about 27 and 58 miles) southwest of Bielsk Podlaski and Białystok, respectively. Before World War II, it was a private estate. In 1921, 34 Jews lived there.

The Germans occupied Grodzisk for a few days in September 1939 before evacuating it for Soviet occupation.

The Germans retook Grodzisk a few days after June 22, 1941. They initially established an outpost of the Siemiatycze Gendarmerie to administer and patrol the area around Grodzisk. According to Polish documentation, from the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes (OKBZH) in Białystok, the men responsible for the Jews in Grodzisk before May 1942 were Jan Jaczewski, Jan Aleksiejuk, Jozef Kobus, Jozef Wojciuk, Konstanty Balejko, and Bazyli Bale[j]ko.¹ By the spring of 1942, a regular Gendarmerie post had been created in Grodzisk. Among those assigned there from May 1942 were Wiktor Waloch, Jozef Koletschke, and three additional men, surnamed Matt [or Mott], Gertsman, and Kall [or Kahl or Kohl].² Shortly after the Gendarmerie post was created, an Amtskommissariat was established in Grodzisk. It was led by a person surnamed Klein.

In May 1942, the Grodzisk Amtskommissar ordered a formal ghetto established. Its terrain consisted of one house, on a half hectare (about 1.2 acres) of land. The Polish postwar documentation does not mention whether the ghetto was open or closed.³ However, it seems likely the ghetto was closed, as several survivors from other ghettos in Kreis Bielsk note the Kreiskommissar, in the spring of 1942, ordered the establishment of closed ghettos in the Kreis.⁴ Klein, the Amtskommissar, oversaw the ghetto.

About 40 Jews resided in the Grodzisk ghetto. They labored in workshops established in the ghetto and in agricultural work outside the ghetto. The Germans provided neither rations nor food to ghetto residents; rather, they expected the Grodzisk Jews to use their own resources to locate and purchase food.⁵

In late October 1942, the Germans ordered the Grodzisk ghetto liquidated. At the command of the Gendarmes from the Grodzisk precinct, local peasants brought their carts to the ghetto to transport the Jews to the ghetto in Siemiatycze, located about 17.4 kilometers (10.8 miles) west-southwest of Grodzisk. There the Grodzisk Jews shared the fate of the Siemiatycze Jews. They were sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp in two railway deportations, the first on November 4 or 8 and the second on November 10 or 11.⁶ Almost all the approximately 5,500 people in the two transports were gassed immediately upon arrival at Treblinka. Only about 152 men from the second Siemiatycze transport were held back for labor at the Treblinka I labor camp. It is not known whether any Grodzisk Jews were among the prisoners. The only 2 survivors were from Siemiatycze.⁷

Szajko Kajlis (Kejles), the only Grodzisk Jew known to have escaped from the Siemiatycze ghetto before its liquidation, sought shelter with the local population and later in a bunker in a local forest.⁸

After the deportation, Gendarmes in Grodzisk ordered the ghetto effaced. They commanded its only house be demolished.⁹

The Gendarmes searched regularly for Jews who had evaded the November 1942 liquidation of Distrikt Białystok's provincial ghettos. In 1942, they shot dead three Jews in the forest near the villages of Porzeziny-Mendle and Kosianka-Trojanówka. Because the Gendarmes had extricated the victims from hiding places in Grodzisk, OKBZH investigators in Białystok concluded they were escapees of the liquidation of the Grodzisk ghetto.¹⁰

Whether Kajlis or any other member of the Grodzisk Jewish community survived the war is unknown.

SOURCES Documentary evidence about the Jewish community of Grodzisk during the Holocaust is located at IPN (e.g., ASG, SOB 331); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/236, 1/1030, S-33/68); and USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN] 46/47).

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NOTES

1. IPN-Bi, 1/236, vol. 1, p. 10. The Polish documentation suggests the men were Gendarmes; it is possible also that they were members of an auxiliary police unit directly subordinated to the German Gendarmerie in Siemiatycze.

2. Ibid., p. 114.

3. IPN (also USHMM, RG-15.019M), reel 14, 46/47, pp. 1–2.

4. See, for example, AŻIH, 301/1463, testimony of Jehoszua (Joszua) Kejles, pp. 1–3, in Polish trans. in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Dokumenty* (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), p. 335.

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/47, pp. 1–2.

6. With different dates for the deportations provided in AŻIH, 301/4086, testimony of Kalman Krawiec (Saul Kuperhand), p. 1 (Polish trans.); AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:334–336.

7. Saul Kuperhand, “Escape from Treblinka,” in Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), pp. 104–142, 173–174; AŻIH, 301/4086, pp. 1–73; VHF, # 7713, testimony of Binyamin Rock.

8. IPN-Bi, 1/236, vol. 1, pp. 90–91 (deposition, Jan Prokopiuk, January 8, 1976).

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/47, p. 1.

10. IPN-Bi, 1/236, vol. 1, pp. 33–34.

INDURA

Pre-1939: Indura (Yiddish: Amdur), village, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Grodno raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Hrodna raen and voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Indura lies about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) south of Grodno. In 1921, its Jewish population stood at 1,709. With the outbreak of World War II, and the subsequent occupation of

Indura by the Red Army shortly after September 17, 1939, refugees from German-occupied Poland likely brought the Jewish population to around 2,500.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Indura within days of the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. The local military command likely made forced labor compulsory for all Jews, as 3 Jews are known to have been murdered in late June or early July for reporting late to a labor assignment. The bodies of the victims were tied with barbed wire to telegraph poles to remind the Jewish community of the penalties for defying German orders. In July, an SS unit from Grodno arrived in Indura and ordered all the Jews expelled from their homes and assembled at a meadow outside the town. The SS took away 33 men and executed them.¹ The SS likely also issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on leaving the borders of the town without permission and mandates to wear yellow identifying marks, on the chest and back. German authorities appointed a collaborationist local administration, led by Mayor Bronisław Chmielewski.²

German authorities ordered the appointment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). One of the council members was a local teacher, surnamed Gutman. A Jewish police force, commanded by Jozef Karlinski, also was appointed.

With the establishment of a German civilian administration in Indura in the late summer or early fall of 1941, local German authorities ordered a ghetto established. The order likely was issued before the Jewish community of Grodno was confined to a ghetto on November 1, 1941, as Grodno survivors mention that by then the Jewish communities in the smaller towns and settlements near Grodno, including in Indura, already had been confined to ghettos.³

By November 1942, the Indura ghetto population was composed largely of women and children.⁴ Some of the remaining men had been conscripted for forced labor. Feivel Wolf, a survivor of the Krynki ghetto, who had lived in Indura with his sister during the Soviet occupation, notes in his testimony that 50 Indura Jews were among at least 300 Jews conscripted from a number of nearby ghettos and settlements in the spring of 1942 for road and agricultural labor in the southern part of Kreis Grodno. The Indura conscripts lived in a large school close to Massalany (or Masalany), near Wielkie Ejsymonty. They worked on widening and paving the road from Massalany to Łunna-Wola.⁵

In preparation for the liquidation of the provincial Jewish communities of Distrikt Białystok, the Germans on either November 1 or 2, 1942, drove to the Indura ghetto the Jews of Odelsk, a small Jewish community, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) west of Indura.⁶ Likely included in the Odelsk expulsion were Jews from a number of other nearby communities, including the residents of the Jewish agricultural settlement Kolonja (or Kolonia) Izaaka, located 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) southwest of Odelsk. (In 1921, the Odelsk Jewish population had numbered 164. In 1931, 139 Jews had lived in Kolonja Izaaka.) Although the documentation for the inclusion of Jews from Kolonja Izaaka in the Odelsk expulsion to Indura is sparse, evidence from other parts of Distrikt Białystok and

subsequent events in Indura suggest that SS commanders in charge of the liquidation Aktion consolidated nearby Jewish communities and expelled them together to a number of transit camps or larger ghettos closer to railway stations to facilitate their expulsion to the region's killing centers.

On November 1, 1942, German security officers, Gendarmes, and Polish auxiliary police also had rounded up the remaining 300 Jews still working in the southern part of Kreis Grodno, including the approximately 50 former residents of the Indura ghetto. Held overnight in Massalany, the captives were driven early the next morning towards Indura.

Early in the morning of November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Indura ghetto by expelling the Jews of Indura, Odelsk, and Kolonja Izaaka to a transit camp, located just south of Grodno, at Kielbasin; 2 Jews were shot, either during the expulsion Aktion or in the days following it.⁷ About 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) outside of Indura, the 300 Massalany prisoners were joined to the Indura prisoners. The two groups, a total of about 2,800 people, were driven together to the Kielbasin transit camp.⁸

The Germans also used the Indura ghetto to carry out the expulsion of the Jews of Krynki, a town located 25 kilometers (15.5 miles), by road, south-southwest of Indura. Because more than 60 kilometers (37.3 miles) separated Krynki from the Kielbasin transit camp, the SS commander in charge of the Krynki deportation halted the forced march in Indura on the evening of November 2, 1942. The Wolf testimony, which mentions that upon reaching Indura, "the Krynki Jews spent the night in the emptied ghetto," is one of only two known sources to mention the existence of the Indura ghetto.⁹

At Kielbasin, some of the Indura Jews debated their subsequent fate, particularly from November 9, 1942, when the Germans began sending the 22,000 to 28,000 inmates to the Auschwitz and Treblinka extermination camps. Some Indura Jews believed the dire circumstances at the transit camp suggested the Germans were sending the Jews not to labor, as they claimed, but to their deaths. However, most contemplating escape from Kielbasin came under pressure from family members not to abandon them. As a result, less than a handful of Indura Jews fled from the transit camp.¹⁰ Days after the Krynki Jews were expelled from Kielbasin, the Indura community, either on November 17 or 27, also was driven to the train station at Łosośna and ordered onto trains destined for Treblinka.¹¹ (The Indura Jews are presumed to have been murdered at Treblinka, because no documentation in Auschwitz records exists to indicate that they were sent there.) A similar absence of Auschwitz documentation for the Jews of Odelsk and Kolonja Izaaka suggests they, too, were sent to Treblinka. Because neither community was among the handful of communities known to have been at Kielbasin after the Indura deportation, they were sent to Treblinka on an earlier transport. The Jews from Indura, Odelsk, and Kolonja Izaaka all were gassed on arrival at Treblinka.

SOURCES The only known eyewitness accounts to touch on Jewish life in Indura during the German occupation and subsequently at Kielbasin remain the testimonies of Fajwel (or

Feivel) Wolf, including at AŽIH, 301/3600, cited below, and “The Struggle for Survival (from Krynki until Kelbasin),” in Dov Rabin, ed., *Pinkas Krinki* (Tel Aviv: ha-Irgunim shel yots’e Krinki bi-Medinat Yi’sra’el uva-tefutsot, 1970). The Krynki yizkor book is available in a complete English translation, by Dora Rytman and Judie Goldstein, at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Krynki/krynki.html.

Important, too, are the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 93–94 (Odelsk), pp. 132–135 (Indura), and pp. 544–546 (Kolonja Izaaka). English translations of the Odelsk and Kolonja Izaaka entries, by Irwin Keller, are available under the links section on the Kolonja Izaaka ShtetLinks page, also authored by Keller, at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kolonja/links.html. The ShtetLinks page details the challenges of documenting the wartime fate of the Jewish community of Kolonja Izaaka and the wartime and postwar destruction of the settlement. Because the available documentation is so sparse, it is impossible to determine whether the Germans during World War II confined the Jews of Kolonja Izaaka and Odelsk to ghettos.

Documentation pertaining to the Jewish communities of Indura, Odelsk, and Kolonja Izaaka under the World War II German occupation includes AŽIH (301/3600); GAGO (e.g., 1-1-280, p. 80); GARF (7021-86-39, pp. 2 verso, 10, and 73); NARB (845-1-8, pp. 48–49, 861-1-7, p. 7 verso, and 861-1-8); and USHMM (RG-22.002M [GARF], reel 13, 7021-86-39, and RG-53.002M [NARB], reel 5, 845-1-8, reel 7, 861-1-8, and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., 1-1-280).

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NOTES

1. Wolf, “The Struggle,” pp. 280–281.
2. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-280, p. 80.
3. See, for example, Daniel Klovsky, *The Road from Grodno* (Samara: OFORT Press, 2003), p. 24.
4. USHMM, RG-53.002M (NARB), reel 5, 845-1-8, pp. 48–49.
5. Wolf, “The Struggle,” p. 283.
6. Ibid.
7. USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF), reel 13, 7021-86-39, pp. 2 verso and 10.
8. Wolf, “The Struggle,” p. 284; and USHMM, RG-53.002M, reel 5, 845-1-8, p. 49.
9. Wolf, “The Struggle,” p. 284.
10. Ibid., pp. 287–288.
11. The Indura deportation date is dependent on two varying dates provided for the Krynki expulsion, in Wolf, “The Struggle,” p. 287; and Lola Wolf-Resnick, “The Downfall of the Jewish Community of Krynki,” in Rabin, *Pinkas Krinki*, p. 272.

JANÓW SOKÓLSKI

Pre-1939: Janów (Yiddish: Yanova), village, Sokółka powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ianov, Sokulka raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Janow,

Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Janów, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Janów lies 49 kilometers (30.4 miles) north of Białystok and 24.5 kilometers (15.2 miles) west-northwest of Sokółka. Because its name is shared with many other towns and villages in Poland, it usually is referred to as Janów Sokólski, for the Sokółka powiat in which it is located. In 1921, its Jewish population stood at 1,027.

In World War II, the Germans initially occupied Janów but soon evacuated the town to make way for the Red Army, shortly after September 17, 1939. Under the Soviet occupation, the Jewish population grew, perhaps to 2,500, as refugees from German-occupied Poland settled there.¹ With the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, many Janów Jews sought shelter in larger, nearby towns, including Sokółka and Suchowola.

The Germans reoccupied Janów on June 26, 1941. They imposed a number of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on walking on sidewalks and mandates to wear yellow distinguishing marks on clothing. They made forced labor obligatory. The Germans ordered the establishment of a Judenrat. It largely organized the Jewish community to meet German demands for forced labor. It is not known whether the Jews were subjected to either popular or SS antisemitic violence in the summer of 1941, as happened in many other places in Distrikt Bialystok, including in Korycin, located 11.3 kilometers (7 miles) west-southwest of Janów, where members of an auxiliary police force terrorized the Jewish population for two months before the establishment of a German civil administration at the end of August.² Postwar Polish documentation for Janów notes only that between June 1941 and 1943 the SS together with Gendarmes assigned to the village murdered 13 of its Polish and Jewish residents.³

The Germans also established a ghetto in Janów. In the first days of the occupation, military authorities prohibited Jews from living under the same roof as local Christians or from maintaining contact with them. With the establishment of a Gendarmerie post at the end of August or perhaps in early autumn 1941, the Jews were expelled from their homes and moved into a separate residential quarter or an open ghetto.⁴ Because the housing in the ghetto was not adequate to accommodate everyone, the Germans, in September, deported a substantial part of the Janów community to Suchowola. Based on a testimony of a survivor, historian Szymon Datner concluded that 1,500 Jews from Janów were sent to the Suchowola ghetto. However, another survivor places the Janów ghetto population at 1,600, a figure that suggests that less than 800 people were expelled to Suchowola.⁵

The Janów ghetto was never enclosed by a fence. However, its Jewish residents were not permitted to leave the ghetto without special permission. The Jewish quarter was guarded closely by German Gendarmes and members of a local Polish auxiliary police force. Even after the expulsions, overcrowded conditions remained. Three or four families crowded into the

small houses located in the ghetto. Resulting problems with sanitation gave way to a typhus epidemic. Morbidity was high. In the spring of 1942, the Jews were conscripted for forced labor on the Janów-to-Sokółka road construction project, mostly on the road between Janów and Korycin. Filipowicz, the Polish supervisor of the Jewish labor brigade, routinely beat the prisoners with a rubber truncheon. Blows he inflicted led to the death of Szolem Tawaliński.⁶ A small number of Jews, employed by local Christians through the German labor board, were permitted to live outside the ghetto, usually in the barns or workshops of their employers.⁷

On November 2, 1942, the Germans, including SS troops and Gendarmes, with assistance from local Polish auxiliary policemen, surrounded the Janów ghetto in preparation for its liquidation. The Jews were told they were being sent to a labor camp, with much better material conditions, and given two hours to pack their belongings and to report to the market square. Several people took advantage of the packing period to hide or to escape. Some of the fugitives fled to Jasionówka to seek refuge in the ghetto there.⁸ At the market square, the women and children were loaded into carts, and the men were ordered to follow behind on foot. The Jews were brought first to the Sokółka ghetto. On November 5, they were marched, together with almost all of the Sokółka Jewish community, about 38 kilometers (23.6 miles) to a transit camp, located in Kiełbasin, a former estate outside of Grodno. The Korycin Jews, a community for which little documentation exists, also were rounded up on November 2, 1942, and marched, via the Suchowola ghetto, to the Kiełbasin transit camp.

At Kiełbasin, the Janów Jews were reunited with family members, who earlier had sought refuge in Sokółka or had been expelled to the Suchowola ghetto. (With the exception of about 600 Jews from the Sokółka ghetto and 250 to 350 Jews from the Krynki ghetto, the Germans, between November 2 and 5, 1942, had concentrated all of the Jews of Kreis Sokolka at the Kiełbasin transit camp.) The Janów community lived there in terrible conditions for five or six weeks. Most sources note the Janów Jews were sent in mid-December to the Treblinka death camp. However, a survivor remembers the Janów community among those sent, on December 5, with his community, Łunna, to the Auschwitz death camp.⁹ The Korycin community likely was sent to Auschwitz, in a different transport, which arrived on November 14 at Birkenau.

Only two Janów Jews are believed to have survived the war. Abram Lipcer (or Lipzer) jumped from the train taking the Janów Jews to their deaths. He made his way back to the Janów area, to Trofimówka village, where he was given shelter by Waław Andresiewicz (or perhaps Andrusiewicz). (Lipcer and his family had assisted Andresiewicz during the Soviet occupation; the Pole, in turn, had employed Lipcer as an agricultural laborer during the German occupation, enabling him to live outside the ghetto.) The second survivor, Abraham Kantorowski, though born in Janów, had resided in the Sokółka ghetto.¹⁰ There were four survivors known from Korycin.

SOURCES The existing documentary material for Korycin, including AŻIH, 301/1251, remains too sparse to determine whether a ghetto existed there.

Two testimonies appear in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 244–245 (AŻIH, 301/1251, orig. Polish), and pp. 218–222 (AŻIH, 301/3518, Polish trans.).

Secondary sources include Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 369–371 (Janów Sokółski) and pp. 548–549 (Korycin); and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 85–87 (Janów Sokółski) and pp. 113–115 (Korycin). Though more cursory, also useful, particularly for population and deportation figures, are Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60:47 (tab. 7, 1966.); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 203.

Archival documentation on the World War II history of the Janów Sokółski and Korycin Jewish communities under German occupation can be found at AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety [un-numbered], 204 and 301/391, 1251, 1260, and 3518); IPN-Bi (e.g., old numeration, S [e.g., 5/79, 12/79, 13/79, 609/71 (Korycin)]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 1, 1/197, and reel 14, 46/83); and YVA (e.g., M-11/198 and M-11B/132).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1251, testimony of Samuel Goldberg, p. 1.
2. Ibid.
3. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 1, 1/197, pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., reel 14, 46/83, pp. 1–2, reported no ghetto; but on the basis of subsequent responses by postwar officials in Janów to the Ankiety questionnaire, a still unnumbered collection, at AŻIH, Polish historians subsequently have described the Jewish quarter as a ghetto. See Pilichowski et al., *Obozy*, p. 203.
5. Compare Datner, “Eksterminacja,” p. 47 (tab. 7); and AŻIH, 301/1251, pp. 1–2.
6. AŻIH, 301/1251, p. 2; and 301/1260, testimony of Abram Lipcer (or Lipzer), p. 2.
7. Ibid., 301/1260, p. 2.
8. Ibid., pp. 1–2; and 301/3518, testimony of Szymon Złotoryński, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2: 220.
9. Testimony of Eliezer Eisenschmidt, information from Ruth Marcus to Laura Crago, March 2009.
10. AŻIH, 301/391, testimony of Abraham Kantorowski, pp. 1–4.

JASIONÓWKA

Pre-1939: Jasionówka, town, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Yashinovka, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR;

1941–1944: *Jasionówka, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok*;
 post-1998: *Jasionówka, Mónki powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland*

Jasionówka is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) north-northwest of Białystok. In 1897, the Jewish population was 1,154 (of a total population of 1,565). In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were more than 1,500 Jews living in Jasionówka.¹ In September 1939, German forces briefly occupied the town before retreating to make way for the Soviet occupying forces. The Jews greeted the Red Army warmly as liberators at this time.

German forces again occupied the town on June 27, 1941, five days after the start of their invasion of the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) controlled the town, but by the fall of 1941, authority had been transferred to a German civil administration. Initially, Jasionówka was governed by the Amtskommissar in Knyszyn, but in June 1942 it became an administrative center with its own Amtskommissar within Kreis Białystok. In Jasionówka, the Germans established a Polish auxiliary police commanded initially by Leon Kownacki, which in the fall of 1941 became subordinated to the Gendarmerie post in Knyszyn.

Around the time of the German arrival in Jasionówka, local antisemites and German soldiers staged a pogrom lasting several days, during which at least 70 Jews were killed and many Jewish houses were robbed and burned. Torah scrolls were taken from the synagogue and burned. The pleas of the local priest Cyprian Łozowski for the looting to stop went unheeded.² In July 1941, during the course of a series of raids conducted by the Security Police assisted by local collaborators, around 50 additional Jews and Belorussians, mainly from among the more established citizens, were arrested and shot.³ A local Polish schoolteacher named Władysław Grodzki was appointed to run the town and assisted the Germans in selecting young Jews to be shot, sometimes releasing them in return for a hefty bribe.⁴ Jews were also made to

perform forced labor, which initially comprised the clearing up of rubble and construction work. After work, the Jewish forced laborers were on occasion forced to undress, sing, and dance.⁵

As most of the houses had been burned, the Jews were forced to move together into a few buildings, living in very overcrowded conditions. The Jews also elected a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of seven persons, which tried to appease the authorities with bribes. By 1942, Szloma Szuster, the owner of a tannery, was appointed as its head. There was no Jewish police force, but messengers were used to assist with the implementation of German orders. Jews were not permitted to trade with the local peasants and were supposed to survive on meager rations that were much less than those distributed to non-Jews. The Judenrat also organized forced labor, which included work on the surrounding farms as well as in the remaining factories and workshops in the town. The Amtskommissar and the German Gendarmerie in Knyszyn demanded frequent contributions in money, gold, furs, and clothing from the Jews.⁶

At the end of 1941, a large group of Jews, mostly refugees from other places, were expelled to Suchowola, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) to the north. Around this time, Jews were obliged to wear white armbands bearing the Star of David; after two months these were exchanged for yellow patches to be worn on the chest and back. The Jewish community experienced several scares during the summer of 1942, especially after the arrest of David Stolar for alleged anti-German activity. This caused the Jews of Jasionówka to flee the town briefly in July, as they feared the Germans would kill them. After this, many families prepared hiding places or made arrangements with local peasants, in case of an Aktion. In the late summer of 1942, a squad of four German Gendarmes was also stationed in Jasionówka, which resulted in raids on Jewish houses and closer German supervision.⁷

In the fall of 1942, an order was issued to the German Amtskommissar in Jasionówka for the establishment of a ghetto there. The order was difficult to implement, as large parts of the town had burned in 1941, and the Jews were already living with four or five families in each house. The Amtskommissar designated the ghetto be established in a small area near the monastery. The Jewish Council attempted to defer this order due to the serious effects on hygiene that would result from concentrating 250 families into this small space. However, the Jewish Council expected in any case that the Jasionówka ghetto would soon be dissolved and the inhabitants evacuated, as they learned from Jewish resistance forces in Białystok that the Germans planned to liquidate most ghettos in the region in November 1942.⁸

In early November 1942, a number of Jews from the surrounding villages were brought into the Jasionówka "ghetto," which was now designated as a labor camp (*Arbeitslager*). The Amtskommissar claimed that his intervention had assisted in having the Jews of Jasionówka temporarily spared from the evacuations that had struck most other Jewish communities nearby. In exchange for further bribes, the Jewish Council



Soldiers of the Waffen-SS and the Wehrmacht confront Jews who have been rounded up in Jasionówka, June 28, 1941.

USHMM WS #32525, COURTESY OF DHM

was even able to accept some 400 Jewish refugees who came to Jasionówka, having escaped from the Aktions in the surrounding towns.⁹

In January 1943, the Jews took heart from news of the German defeat at Stalingrad, and young Jews began to plan armed resistance, as they expected a deportation Aktion. Then, on January 24–25, 1943, a force of some 300 German police and their collaborators surrounded the town. The Aktion was organized by the head of the Security Police in Białystok, Dr. Wilhelm Altenloh. All the Jews (some 2,000 people) were rounded up and assembled on the market square. Then they were transported on sleighs to the Knyszyn railway station and loaded into railway wagons. About 30 Jews were killed on the spot in Jasionówka during the Aktion. Initially the trains reached Białystok after three days. The prisoners received neither food nor water. From here, most Jews were deported to the extermination camp at Treblinka, although one group selected for work was sent to a labor camp in Częstochowa.¹⁰ On the way to Treblinka, about 300 Jews managed to escape by jumping from the railway wagons.

In addition, about 100 Jews hid in bunkers in Jasionówka during the roundup. Bernhard Schuster described their situation:

After most of the Jews were taken away from Jasionówka, an eerie silence fell upon the town. Now and then the silence was broken by shots fired at Jews who had been hiding and were trying to flee town under cover of darkness. We stayed in the hiding place for two days and two nights, without food or warm clothing, but could stay there no longer. We decided to make a run for it, two at a time, until we reached the woods where we planned to meet up and go to the farmer who had promised to give us shelter.

Unfortunately, Schuster's mother and youngest sister, Tzipe, did not make it past the armed guards.¹¹ Some of the escapees subsequently found shelter with Polish peasants, survived in the forests, or smuggled their way into the Białystok ghetto, where they shared the fate of the Jews there. However, the majority of those who escaped and hid were soon captured and killed by the Germans and their collaborators, many being betrayed by local peasants. Only a few local inhabitants, such as Józef and Waleria Kownacki and Stefan and Józefa Gołębicki, risked their lives to hide Jews at this time.¹²

After the Red Army drove out the German occupation forces in August 1944, about 80 Jewish survivors returned to Jasionówka. The Germans and local inhabitants had taken virtually all their property. The survivors soon left Jasionówka and also Poland for Palestine (Israel) and other countries in the West.¹³

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Jasionówka and its fate under German occupation can be found in the following publications: Bernhard Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow But Not Today: Memoirs of Bernhard (Berl) Schuster*

(Rochester, NY: Winterman Ink, 2002); Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 205; and Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 372–374.

Documentation on the extermination of the Jews of Jasionówka can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1274, 1466, 4923); IPN (e.g., “Ob,” syg. 177; SAB 49; SOB 47, 50, and 366; SWB 242 and 243); IPN-Bi (e.g., 20/67, S-267/58, 3/126, 3/127); StA-Det (D21A, No. 6252); USHMM (1996.A.0100; and RG-10.055*01 [English trans. of AŻIH, 301/1274]); VHF (# 7458, 17143, 21899, and 48379); and YVA (e.g., M-11/58, 150, 197-98 and B104).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1274, testimony of Fajga Szuster-Rozenblum, November 24, 1945; and 301/4923, testimony of Bernard Jehoschua, May 28, 1945.

2. Ibid., 301/1274, 4923, and 1466, testimony of Szloma Szuster and Izrael Goniadzki, October 17, 1944; Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow*, p. 26.

3. AŻIH, 301/1274. IPN, SOB 47, case of Antoni Forenciewicz (1945–1950), who was acquitted, indicates that 150 Jews were killed on the first day of German occupation (June 27 or 28, 1941) and 40 Jews and Belorussians one week later.

4. In 1950, Grodzki was tried for participating, as a member of the Polish auxiliary police in Jasionówka and from 1943 as the town's police commander, in the murder of several Jewish Communists in a nearby forest, as well as in the murder of other Jews. He was sentenced to death and executed. See IPN, SAB 49, case of Władysław Grodzki (1947–1959).

5. AŻIH, 301/4923; USHMM, RG-10.055*01 (English trans. of AŻIH, 301/1274).

6. AŻIH, 301/4923.

7. USHMM, RG-10.055*01; Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow*, p. 29, includes a sketch of the hiding place prepared by his family over the tannery they owned.

8. AŻIH, 301/1274, p. 14; Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 205; AŻIH, 301/1466, however, states that there was no ghetto in Jasionówka.

9. AŻIH, 301/1274.

10. Pilichowski et al., *Obozy hitlerowskie*, p. 205; AŻIH, 301/4923; Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow*, p. 31.

11. Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow*, p. 33.

12. Israel Gutman, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust—Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), p. 392.

13. AŻIH, 301/1274, 4923; Schuster, *I Will Die Tomorrow*, p. 35.

JEDWABNE

Pre-1939: Jedwabne (Yiddish: Yedwabne), town, Łomża powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Edwabno, raion

center, *Belostok oblast*, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: *Jedwabne, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok*; post-1998: *Łomża powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland*

Jedwabne lies 21 kilometers (13 miles) northeast of Łomża. Its 1921 population of 1,222 included 757 Jews, 442 Roman Catholics, and 23 Protestants.

A Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied the Jedwabne area in September 1939. The Germans deported about 300 men to East Prussian labor camps before ceding the region to Soviet occupation.

A Soviet report, from mid-1940, listed the population of the larger Edwabno raion as composed of 37,300 Poles, 1,400 Jews, and 185 Belorussians. The Jewish population figures include the residents of Jedwabne, Wizna, Przytuły, and Radziłów. The survey recorded a population for the Edwabno sel'sovet, composed of Jedwabne and its surrounding villages, of 2,385, including 563 Jews, and for the Vizna sel'sovet, of 3,187, including 476 Jews. Another source claimed the 1940 population in Jedwabne proper included 1,763 Poles, 562 Jews, and 97 Belorussians. Locals remember 700 to 1,400 Jews residing in Jedwabne prior to June 22, 1941.

A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Jedwabne by June 23, 1941. The Germans immediately established a Feldgendarmerie post (subordinated to the Wehrmacht), commanded by Hauptwachtmeister Adam, and appointed a collaborationist civilian town council, led by Mayor Marian Karolak. Other council members included Eugeniusz Śliwiecki, Józef Sobotka, Józef Wasilewski, and perhaps Karol Bardoń, also employed by the Germans as a translator. Karolak recruited a local police force.¹ Its members included Jerzy Laudański and Eugeniusz Kalinowski.

On June 25, 1941, a group of Poles, including Sobotka, Kalinowski, and Jerzy Laudański, rounded up and tortured local former Soviet administrators before turning them over to the Feldgendarmerie. The Feldgendarmes executed six of the accused, including three Jews.² Tubin Kornecki likely was among the Jewish victims. Other Jews, including Eljahu (Eliasz) Krawiecki, who was brutally tortured (according to hearsay by Sobotka), died from their injuries.³ Chaja Kubrzańska and Basia Binsztejn, whose husbands had evacuated with Soviet troops, drowned their children and themselves, rather than fall into Polish hands.⁴

After the local priest ordered the violence to cease, insisting the Germans would soon settle accounts with the Jews, Jedwabne became a refuge for many local Jews. When, on June 26, 1941, the Polish civil head (wójt) ordered the Jewish residents of Wizna expelled, supposedly because of extensive war devastation there, about 230 to 240 Wizna Jews sought shelter in Jedwabne. (That day, or perhaps during two visits, a small SS unit, of one to six men, had executed about 50 Jewish men in Wizna.)⁵ Refugees also arrived from Radziłów, where on July 7 local Polish collaborators had driven the Jews into a barn and burned them alive.

Early on July 10, 1941, a small (two- to eight-man) German unit, likely from the SS, arrived in Jedwabne to order

the Jews to assemble at the town square, ostensibly for weeding duties. The unit commander and perhaps also the Feldgendarmerie commander had met earlier with Karolak and Sobotka, probably to permit the local population to settle accounts with the Jews.⁶ However, the Germans did not participate directly in the ensuing violence. Rather, Karolak had the tacit support of almost the entire non-Jewish population and is known to have mobilized directly 92 to 115 local men to drive the Jews to the square and surround them there. The Polish collaborators humiliated, raped, and beat to death some of the assembled Jews. About 50 to 70 men were forced to dismantle the Lenin statue and to carry its pieces to a nearby barn, in which the Polish collaborators beat them to death. The collaborators drove the rest of the assembled Jews to the barn, doused it with accelerant, and set it afire.

Some set the number of victims at 2,000, including 230 Wizna Jews, and others at 1,400, including refugees from Wizna and Radziłów. Until recently, the most widely accepted death toll was 1,600, likely drawn from the testimony of Szmul Wasersztejn.⁷ However, the Soviet population figures and an incomplete and controversial forensic investigation in 2002, which estimated 300 to 400 people perished in the barn, have led some to argue the fire claimed fewer lives. The number of survivors also varies, with Rywka Fogiel (Rivka Fogel) remembering 125 and Menachem Finkelsztejn, a Radziłów survivor, mentioning 302.

Although many survivors fled to Łomża and other localities, a ghetto was established within a few days to a few weeks after the fire for the rest of the survivors.⁸ Official postwar Polish documentation, from 1945, notes the ghetto was created on July 20, 1941.⁹ The date suggests the ghetto already existed before a regular Gendarmerie post (subordinated to the Order Police), commanded by Alois (August) Achilles, and a German civil administration, led by Amtskommissar Hermann Zimmermann, were established in August.

The Jedwabne ghetto occupied a 5,000-square meter (1.2-acre) area on the Old Square. It consisted of two houses, near the Gendarmerie post.

The 1945 documentation places its population at 50; a 1951 survey noted a population of 200, including 100 Jews from Stawiski.¹⁰ However, no eyewitnesses remember Jews from beyond Jedwabne ever consolidated in the ghetto. Polish eyewitnesses described its population as made up of Jedwabne Jews “who by chance had escaped” or “all Jews saved from the pogrom, who had hidden.”¹¹ Others provided figures ranging from “over 50” to “about a few hundred Jews found in the town or caught in the surrounding area.”¹²

Some Jedwabne ghetto inmates worked for the Gendarmerie, either as craftsmen or in agricultural labor. The local authorities also permitted local Poles to contract Jewish labor. About 15 ghetto inmates perished in a still not elucidated incident, described by Finkelsztejn as a “provocation” in which local Poles hung up anti-German posters and then held the Jews responsible for them.

Most eyewitnesses note the Jedwabne ghetto was dissolved from one to three months after it was established, with the fall

of 1941 most often cited and November listed in the 1945 documentation as the month its residents were expelled to the Łomża ghetto.¹³ From there, they were deported on November 2, 1942, together with the Łomża Jews to a transit camp, located in Zambrów. However, survivor Izrael (Józef) Grądowski maintains the Jedwabne ghetto existed until November 2, 1942, when the Gendarmes deported its inmates to the Zambrów transit camp.¹⁴

The Jedwabne survivors at the Zambrów transit camp were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp as a part of the four transports of Łomża Jews that arrived there on January 13, 17, 18, and 19, 1943. They almost all were gassed on arrival. The existing documentation notes that only 3 people were held back as concentration camp prisoners. Two, Mosze (Mietek) Lasko and Itzhok Yankel Neumark, survived the war. Although both men were in Jedwabne the day the community was murdered, only the first had lived in the Jedwabne ghetto. The third person, Benjamin Kosacki, perished at Auschwitz in 1942. Because his death record only notes he had resided in Szczepankowo prior to his expulsion to Zambrów, it is not possible to determine if he ever resided in the Jedwabne ghetto.

A large number of Jedwabne Jews fled from the 1942 liquidation of the Łomża and Jedwabne ghettos. Hersz Goldberg and his son sought shelter in Przestrzele village but were caught and shot dead. In Janczewo village (Jedwabne gmina, Łomża powiat), Aleksander and Antonina Wyrzykowski sheltered seven Jews, including Wasersztejn, Jakub (Jankiel) Kubrzański (Kubran), Berek and Mojżesz Olszewicz, Lejka Amrufel (Kubran), Elka Sosnowska (Olszewicz), and Izrael Grądowski.¹⁵

Avigdor Nieławicki (Kokhav) and Rywka Fogiel, both Wizna refugees in Jedwabne the day the Jews were murdered, also are counted as Jedwabne survivors. Another approximately 10 Jedwabne Jews survived the war either in the Soviet interior or the Red Army.

In 1947, Całka Migdał, a pre-war émigré from Jedwabne, demanded Polish authorities investigate the mass murder of the Jewish community. The letter prompted a criminal investigation and two trials. At the first, in 1949, 12 of the 22 accused were convicted. They received prison terms ultimately ranging from 8 to 15 years.

SOURCES The Jedwabne yizkor book, Julius L. Baker and Jacob L. Baker et al., eds., *Sefer Yidvabneh: Historyah ve-zikaron* (Jerusalem: Hotsa'at ya'ad yots'e Yidvabne, 1980), includes accounts by Jedwabne and Wizna survivors. Its English sections are available at jewishgen.org. Survivor Szmul Wasersztejn is the author of a separate account, Samuel Wasserstein Kahn, *La denuncia: 10 de Julio de 1941* (San José, Costa Rica: Editorial Guayacán Centroamericana, 2001), published posthumously by his son. By the time of its publication, however, the documentary film *Neighbors*, by Agnieszka Arnold, about Polish complicity in the Jedwabne murders, had already aired on Polish television in April 2000.

It was the book by Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), that unleashed a wide-ranging national debate in Poland and abroad, focused on

events in Jedwabne, the larger question of Christian-Jewish relations during World War II, and the postwar neutralization and falsification of Polish historical memory about the war.

Representative articles from the debates, which occurred on the pages of the Polish national press, have been translated into English and compiled in a wide range of publications, including Jacek Borkowicz and Israel Gutman et al., eds., *Thou Shalt Not Kill: Poles on Jedwabne* (Warsaw: Więź, 2001); Antony Polonsky and Joanna B. Michlic, eds., *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). English translations of many other articles can be found virtually on, among others, the Web site of Pogranicze (www.pogranicze.sejny.pl), the publisher of the Polish-language edition of *Neighbors*, *Sąsiedzi: Historia zagłady żydowskiego miasteczka* (Sejny: Pogranicze, 2000); José Gutstein's Jewish community of Radziłów Web site (www.radzilow.com); and the We Remember Jewish Jedwabne! zchor Web site (www.zchor.org), with the latter including mostly English-language press coverage.

The books and Web sites almost all contain contributions by Anna Bikont, a journalist for *Gazeta Wyborcza* and the author of *My z Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, 2004), which intersperses her press articles about the murder of the Jedwabne (and Radziłów) Jewish communities with a compelling diary of her experiences investigating the massacre and commemorates the Jedwabne Jewish community by physically reconstructing its topography, including details of the specific fates of its members.

Other secondary sources include Alexander B. Rossino, "Polish 'Neighbors' and German Invaders: Contextualizing Anti-Jewish Violence in the Białystok District during the Opening Weeks of Operation Barbarossa," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 16 (2003); and Dariusz Stola, "Jedwabne: Revisiting the Evidence and Nature of the Crime," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17:1 (Spring 2003): 139–152, which places the murder of the Jedwabne Jewish community in the larger German context of the war in Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *The Massacre in Jedwabne, July 10, 1941: Before, During, and After* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2005), is polemical but provides insight into the arguments forwarded by Gross's opponents. Unfortunately, because the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 241–243, was written before the publication of Gross's book, it presents an earlier view of the Jedwabne massacre, which its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 92–103, 275–280, overcomes by adding English-language translations of excerpts from Bikont, *My z Jedwabnego*, from the IPN investigation, and from YVA, including in the latter case the documentation related to the 1976 nomination of Aleksander and Antonina Wyrzykowski as Righteous Among the Nations.

The IPN investigation, Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZPNP, 2002), includes in its first volume eight essays that all touch on the Jedwabne Jewish community in some way: the most detailed information about the July 10, 1941, murder included in Edmund Dmitrów, "Oddziały operacyjne niemieckiej Policji Bezpieczeństwa Służby Bezpieczeństwa a

początek zagłady Żydów w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku,” pp. 273–351; the postwar trials covered by Andrzej Rzepliński, “Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej?” pp. 353–459; the most substantive of the limited coverage about the ghetto presented at the end of the contribution, on demographics, by Marcin Urynowicz, “Ludność żydowska w Jedwabnem,” pp. 83–104; and Tomasz Szarota, “Kalendarium,” p. 470 (AŻIH, Ankiety, Jedwabne), providing a transcription, from a privately owned copy of important but lost documentation.

Documentary material for Jedwabne and the closely related community of Wizna is included in the original Polish or in Polish translation in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 223–225 (AŻIH, 301/152), p. 226 (AŻIH, 301/613), pp. 227–228 (AŻIH, 301/2405), p. 339 (AŻIH, Sekretariat, January 1948, Całka Migdał to CKŻP, December 29, 1947), pp. 230–233, 236–237 (AŻIH, 301/5825), pp. 234–235 (AŻIH, 301/6064), pp. 260–262 (AŻIH, 301/1846), pp. 361–364 (AŻIH, 301/384 [Wizna]), pp. 365–366 (AŻIH, 301/4391 [Wizna]), pp. 432–712 (AAN, Sąd Najwyższy, 2/10318; IPN, III-923; SOŁ 123, excerpts), including here on pp. 434–435, 518–519 (part. and complete trans., AŻIH, 301/152), pp. 723–815 (SWB 145, excerpts), pp. 828–862 (IPN-Bi, 1/159; IPN, W-384, excerpts).

Some of the above documentation has appeared in publication, including in George Gorin et al., eds., *Grayeve yisker bukh* (New York: United Grayever Relief Committee, 1950), pp. 232–234 (AŻIH 301/1846, Polish); and in English translation, in Gross, *Neighbors*, and on the Jewish community of Radziłów Web site.

Additional archival documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Jedwabne during World War II, under the German occupation, includes BA-L (e.g., ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 233/74 [IPN, W-384]; USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], 2/245, 46/62); VHF (# 31971, testimony of Avigdor Kokhav); YVA (e.g., 03/3151–3844/420).

No entry appears in this *Encyclopedia* for Wizna because the documentation, mostly the testimonies of Awigdor Nieławicki (Avigdor Kokhav), describes Jewish survivors employed by the German Gendarmerie eventually in Wizna but does not indicate whether they were confined to a ghetto.

Laura Crago

NOTES

1. IPN, SOŁ 123, pp. 630–632 (deposition, Julia Sokołowska, January 20, 1949).

2. Ibid., pp. 496–506 (autobiography, Bardoń, April 7, 1952); SWB 145, pp. 217–218 (deposition, Mieczysław Gerwad, July 1, 1953); III-923, pp. 158–61 (denunciation, Stanisława Wiśniewska, September 24, 1949).

3. Ibid., SWB 145, pp. 92–99 (trial protocol, testimony, Józef [(Izrael)] Grądzki, December 11, 1953); and perhaps in SOŁ 123, p. 690 (deposition, Stanisława Sielawa, January 26, 1949), which holds J. Ładański and Kalinowski responsible.

4. Compare Baker and Baker et al., *Sefer Yidwabneh*, p. 104 (testimony of Rivka Fogel), AŻIH, 301/152, testimony of Szmul Wasersztejn, pp. 1–6.

5. AŻIH, 301/4391, testimony of Izrael Lewin, pp. 1–5, 301/384, testimony of Awigdor Nieławicki, pp. 1–3; Bikont, *My*, pp. 199–209 (Kokhav interview).

6. IPN, SWB 145, pp. 238–239 (deposition, Stanisław Danowski, August 7, 1953); SOŁ 123, p. 665 (interrogation, J. Ładański, January 16, 1949).

7. AŻIH, 301/1846, testimony of Menachem Finkelsztejn, pp. 1–2; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/245, pp. 1–2.

8. Compare IPN, W-384, vol. 1, pp. 35–36, 39–40 (depositions, respectively, Bolesław Olszewski and Czesław Strzelczyk, May 27, 1967), and p. 32 (deposition, Grądzki, May 27, 1967).

9. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/62, pp. 1–2.

10. Compare *ibid.* with Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 1:470.

11. IPN, W-384, respectively, vol. 2, pp. 4–5 (deposition, Feliks Kowalski, June 29, 1971), vol. 1, pp. 35–36.

12. Ibid., respectively, vol. 2, pp. 23–25 (deposition, Sokołowska, April 10, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 39–40.

13. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 35–36, vol. 2, pp. 14–16 (deposition, Jan Michał Kiełczewski, April 9, 1974).

14. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 32; IPN-Bi, 1/159, pp. 125–126 (deposition, Grądzki, November 15, 1967); AŻIH, 301/1846, pp. 1–2.

15. AŻIH, 301/5825, Aleksander and Antonina Wyrzykowski Yad Vashem documentation, pp. 1–10, 301/6064, testimony of Aleksander Wyrzykowski, pp. 1–3.

JEZIORY

Pre-1939: Jeziory (Yiddish: Azher), village, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ozery, Grodno raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Jeziory, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Azery, Hrodna raen and voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Jeziory, on Lake Białe, lies about 32 kilometers (20 miles) east-northeast of Grodno. In 1921, in interwar Poland (1918–1939), the 867 Jews in Jeziory comprised 49.4 percent of its population.

In World War II, Jeziory came under Soviet rule as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, shortly after September 20, 1939. With the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the village sustained damage from aerial bombardment. Little is known about the arrival within a few days of a German military unit. By July, the Germans had ordered the Jews in Jeziory to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Germans appointed a local civil administration, led by a mayor, and an auxiliary police force. The local administration most likely initially represented German interests, as the Jeziory mayor received directives from the Security Police in Grodno as late as September 24, 1941. Later that fall, a German civil administration was created for Jeziory, which, on October 1, was attached, with the remainder of Kreis Grodno, to Distrikt Białystok. The Jeziory Amtskommissar was Willutzki. A Gendarmerie post, under the command of Hauptwachmeister Berg, also was established there.¹

From the first day of the German invasion, Jeziory swelled with Jews fleeing German violence. The first refugees arrived after their train was bombed just outside of Jeziory. By the summer, some Jews from Porzecze, 23 kilometers (14.3

miles) to the north, fled there, most likely to escape the German mass execution of their community's men. In late September, an unknown number of refugees from Ejszyszek, about 88 kilometers (54.7 miles) to the east-northeast, also had arrived in Jeziory, having fled the mass execution of their community.

On September 24, 1941, the inspector for the outlying districts of the Gendarmerie-Kreisführer in Grodno directed civil authorities in Jeziory and in Porzecze to establish ghettos for the Jewish inhabitants of their villages.² There is no information available about the location of the Jeziory ghetto. It was fenced with barbed wire. The authorities consolidated a number of smaller communities in Jeziory, including 40 Jews from Pietkowo. Most likely sometime around May 1942, the ghetto population expanded further, as Jews either fled or were brought to the Jeziory ghetto from Nowy Dwór and Wasiliszek.³

In addition to losing their homes, the Jews in the Jeziory ghetto (and throughout Distrikt Białystok) were required to surrender to the Germans their remaining valuables, such as their fur coats and electrical appliances. Only one Jeziory Jew, Esther Rechman, officially turned in electrical appliances, handing over in July 1942 an iron and an electric heater.⁴ The Jeziory Jews worked at forestry labor, felling trees, and at agricultural labor, on local tobacco plantations. In the spring and summer of 1942, they cobbled and paved the Jeziory-to-Grodno and the Jeziory-to-Ostryna roads.⁵

The Jeziory ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. The Jews were driven to the Kielbasin transit camp, just south of Grodno. An unknown number evaded the expulsion order. Perhaps to root out the fugitives, the Germans ordered a part of the ghetto burned immediately after the Jewish community's expulsion to Kielbasin. On November 3, 1942, 2 Jews were shot just outside of Jeziory. The remainder of the community, about 1,370 people, joined Jews from 22 other places (about 22,000 to 28,000 people) in the Grodno and Sokółka regions also deported to Kielbasin from November 2 to 5, 1942.⁶ They lived there in terrible conditions before being sent to the extermination camps.

Because there are few survivors from Jeziory, the details of the deportation are unknown. Some evidence indicates that the Jeziory Jews were on the first transport from Kielbasin, which arrived at the Auschwitz extermination camp on November 9, 1942. However, Jakob Tobolski, the only person on the transport born in Jeziory, may have resided in Skidel, another community on the transport, since a Łunna survivor remembers that the Jeziory Jews were deported together with his community to Auschwitz on December 5. The Jeziory Jews also sometimes are mentioned among the communities that were sent in mid-December 1942 from Kielbasin to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁷

Immediately after the deportation of the Jeziory Jews to Kielbasin, the Amtskommissar ordered the remaining Jewish property there collected. He distributed a part of it to the Jeziory and Bondary Gendarmerie posts, to the Jeziory hospital and the forest service office, and to several German

charitable organizations in Grodno. Several Reich and ethnic Germans in Jeziory also received Jewish property to furnish their apartments and rooms. Some 24 pieces of clothing were reserved for Polish employees of the Amtskommissariat. The remainder of the property was sold off. The Amtskommissariat collected 57,051.09 Reichsmark (RM) in proceeds. After paying 6,877.68 RM for guards, labor, and cart rentals, it deposited 50,173.41 RM into a trustee account of the Landratsamt in Grodno.⁸

Members of the Jeziory Gendarmerie continued to uncover and to murder Jews who had fled the liquidation of the ghetto. On November 28, 1942, the police shot another two Jews, just outside the village. On March 17, 1943, the Jeziory Gendarmerie surrendered to the Grodno Kreiskommissar 2,247.00 RM that it had recovered from Jewish shooting victims. In April, it submitted another 1,483.55 RM, collected under similar circumstances.⁹

SOURCES Secondary accounts include the entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 364–367; and *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 15:557.

Documentation for the history of the Jewish community of Jeziory under German occupation in World War II includes GAGO (e.g., 1-1-150, pp. 12–13; 1-1-335, pp. 35, 45, 72–73; 1-1-365, pp. 18, 25–26; and 1-1-512, pp. 42, 85, 162–166); RGVA (e.g., 1323-2-244, pp. 99, 108; and 1323-2-250, pp. 117, 135); and USHMM (RG-11.001M [RGVA] and RG-53.004M [GAGO]).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-280, pp. 6–7.
2. RGVA, 1323-2-250, pp. 117, 135, in Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), pp. 530–531.
3. AZIH, 301/2254, testimony of Abraham Blumenthal, pp. 1–2.
4. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 2, 1-1-150, p. 12.
5. Ibid., reel 5, 1-1-512, e.g., pp. 42, 85, 95, 145, 162–166.
6. Ibid., RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99, and RG-53.004M, reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 38, which also is at GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4.
7. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne. Polish Jews in KL Auschwitz: Name Lists* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 99–100; Eliezer Eisenschmidt interview, information from Ruth Marcus to Laura Crago, April 7, 2009; and the details about the arrival of the Jeziory-born Roza Sara Lebin in *Sterbebücher von Auschwitz*, 3 vols. (Munich: KG Saur, 1995), vol. 2, *Namensverzeichnis, A–L*, p. 701 (12420/1943), important here because no women on the Łunna transport were held back as prisoners of Auschwitz II-Birkenau.
8. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 72–73, and 1-1-365, pp. 18, 25–26.

9. Ibid., RG-11.001M, reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 108, and RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 35, 45.

KAMIENIEC LITEWSKI

Pre-1939: Kamieniec Litewski (Yiddish: Kamenetz-Litovsk), town, Brześć nad Bugiem powiat, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Kamenets, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamenez-Litowsk, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Kamianets, raen center, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Kamieniec Litewski lies 40 kilometers (24.9 miles) north-northwest of Brześć nad Bugiem. In interwar Poland, it was located about 65 kilometers (40.4 miles) southeast of Bielsk Podlaski, via two indirect routes, one of which led north to Białowieża and from there almost due west to Bielsk. In 1921, the Kamieniec population stood at 2,348, including 1,902 Jews, 287 Russian Orthodox, and 158 Roman Catholics. Another 375 Jews lived in the Kamieniec Litewski gmina, including 305 in Zamosty (Yiddish: Zastavye) and in Łotowo, an adjoining agricultural colony, and 47 in Sarowo, another Jewish agricultural colony. By 1928, 3,780 Jews lived in Kamieniec Litewski proper.

At about 7:00 P.M., on June 22, 1941, the first day of the German invasion of the USSR, a Wehrmacht unit occupied Kamieniec Litewski. A military commandant ruled the town until about August 1, when a German civilian administration, headed by an Amtskommissar, was established. A Gendarmerie post also was created, and a local auxiliary police force recruited. A Judenrat was established in mid-July headed by Shlomo Mandelbrat, and forced labor and extortion began. In the summer of 1941, Kamieniec was incorporated into Kreis Pruzana. On October 31, 1941, German authorities abolished the Kreis and joined Kamieniec instead to Kreis Bielsk in Distrikt Bialystok.

In early July 1941, an SS unit arrested 108 Jewish men from Kamieniec Litewski and executed them near the village of Murany (or Muryny)-Wielkie. Not realizing the men had been murdered, Mandelblat appealed to the local Roman Catholic priest to procure their release but was told nothing could be done, as they had been arrested for communism. Before departing Kamieniec, the SS commander issued a number of anti-Jewish decrees, including a directive to wear yellow markings, on the back and chest, and a prohibition on leaving Kamieniec.¹

Kamieniec's location, about 37 kilometers (23 miles) south of Białowieża, the southern gateway to the Puszcza Białowieska (Belarusian: Belavezhskaia pushcha), the primordial Białowieża Forest, and its status as a historic community of the forest, which once bore its name, likely motivated German orders for the deportation, by train, of a third to a half of its Jewish residents to Pruzana, a community located some 51 kilometers (31.7 miles) to the northeast, on the eastern edge of the forest. A survivor remembers the expulsion occurring at the end of

1941; however, the Germans expelled the Jews from almost all the other Białowieża Forest communities, including Białowieża, Hajnówka, Narewka Mała, and Narew, in early to mid-August.

Some historians believe the expulsions were a first step by Reichsforstmeister Hermann Göring to transform the Białowieża Forest into a vast nature and hunting preserve for the Nazi leadership and to create the optimal conditions to foster the propagation of its rare animals, including the visent (the European bison). However, on July 4, 1941, German Police Battalion 309, responsible for incarcerating in a makeshift labor camp the male Jews of Hajnówka and other nearby communities, reported it had done so to prevent a partisan insurgency from emerging in the woodland. (Because the Jews, the police claimed, supported Red Army soldiers hiding there, they recommended the expulsion of all Jewish men from the forest communities north and northeast of Hajnówka.)²

In practice, the police recommendation led to the execution, in early and mid-August 1941, of all or part of the Jewish men of the communities of the Białowieża Forest and the expulsion to a number of ghettos of most of the surviving men and all of the women, children, and the elderly. The Hajnówka and Narew communities, for example, were among those expelled to Pruzana. Survivors of anti-Jewish violence in Białowieża and Narewka, mostly women, children, and the elderly, were sent to Kobryń and Antopol in Reichskommissariat Ukraine.

Those people expelled from Kamieniec Litewski and sent to Pruzana were permitted to bring only 15 kilograms (about 33 pounds) of luggage. Many people evaded the deportation orders, fearing that the Germans planned to execute a large part of the community. Some Christians provided the fugitives hiding places; others, including the wife of a forester, surreptitiously handed the deportees foodstuffs. Another group of Christians looted the property left behind by the Jews.

In the autumn of 1941, the Germans ordered an open ghetto established in Kamieniec Litewski for those held back from the deportation. This group included craftsmen, other “essential” workers employed by the local German administration, and their families. Initially, the ghetto was an open ghetto, composed of a few houses on Brześć Street.

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. Overcrowding was made worse as many Jews who had fled and some of those expelled to Pruzana paid bribes to German authorities, including members of the Kamieniec Litewski Gendarmerie post, to return home. As a result, as many as 10 people crowded into a single room in one of the houses on the ghetto's terrain. The Gendarmes, particularly an officer named Werbel, beat Jews found illicitly outside the ghetto, usually bartering their possessions with local Christians for food.

On January 1, 1942, the Germans surrounded the Kamieniec Litewski ghetto and drove its inmates to a new ghetto, located on Kobryń and Litewski Streets. Likely, the new ghetto was fenced, as the Bielsk Podlaski Kreiskommissar, Landrat Tubenthal, is known to have ordered in the late spring of 1942 the closing of all the ghettos in his Kreis, though some Jewish

communities were able to postpone the implementation of the decree until late August. The reason for the relocation of the Kamieniec ghetto is unknown. During the resettlement, many individuals fled, fearing they were being driven to be executed. At least five people were shot dead for evading the relocation order.³

In June 1942, the Germans executed another 140 Jews from Kamieniec Litewski.⁴ At least one family in the Prużana ghetto determined not to return home after a representative it sent to Kamieniec reported that the Jews there were confined to their residences and lived in fear of another execution.⁵

On November 12, 1942, the Kamieniec Litewski ghetto was liquidated. That day, members of the 5th Battalion of Police Regiment II (known before July 29, 1942, as the 1st Company of Reserve Police Battalion 13) marched about 2,500 Jews from Kamieniec to the ghetto in Wysokie Litewskie, about 31 kilometers (19.3 miles) to the west-southwest.⁶ Likely, Jews from Zamosty, Łotowo, Sarowo, and other smaller nearby communities were included in the expulsion. By 4:00 P.M., the Jews had been loaded into freight wagons at the Wysokie train station. They were sent, likely together with the Wysokie Litewskie Jews, to the Treblinka extermination camp. They all were gassed on arrival.

Some Kamieniec Litewski Jews fled the ghetto's liquidation. The hiding places of most, including Dr. Gelberg, his daughter, and son-in-law, were revealed to authorities. After a local postman reportedly denounced Halina Weidenberg, a physician employed by the municipal authorities, believed to be a Christian, for receiving postcards written in Yiddish, she also was executed by the Gendarmes. Dora Galperin, the only known survivor from among those who sought shelter in and around Kamieniec, was assisted by about eight different Christian families.⁷

Among the 10 Kamieniec Litewski survivors were a few Prużana ghetto prisoners. Deported from Prużana to the Auschwitz extermination camp between January 31 and February 2, 1942, on four transports, which carried the approximately 9,161 ghetto inmates, the Kamieniec Jews constituted a handful of the 1,675 people—1,183 men and 492 women—held back as prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Dwora Rudnicki was among an even smaller number of Kamieniec Jews who survived until liberation.

In 1947, Dymitriusz Kitajewski, the local commander of the auxiliary police force in Dmitrowicze, some 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) almost due north of Kamieniec Litewski, was tried in Poland and sentenced to life in prison for participating in the shootings of the civilian population, including Dr. Gelberg and the members of his family found there in hiding. Sentenced initially to life in prison, Kitajewski received the death penalty, in 1955, after Poland's Supreme Court reviewed his case. The sentence does not appear to have been carried out, as Kitajewski was tried in 1968 for other shootings of civilians, receiving a 7-year sentence, which on review was increased to 12 years.

In 1959, Grzegorz Krawczyk, another auxiliary policeman from Dmitrowicze tried in Poland, received a life sentence for

participating in the murders of Jews and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs). Some of the murders likely involved Jews from the pre-war Abramowo Jewish agricultural colony, also known as Plesiszcz, as the 97 Jews there in 1921 formed the largest part of the 124 Jewish inhabitants of the pre-war Dmitrowicze gmina. Krawczyk was released conditionally in 1973. Few other details are known about the specific experiences of the Abramowo Jewish community under the German occupation in World War II.

SOURCES The Kamieniec Litewski yizkor book, Shemu'el Aizenshtadt, ed., *Sefer yizkor li-kehilot Kamenits de-Liṭa, Zaštavyah veba-kolonyot* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kamenits de-Liṭa ve-Zaštavyah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot-ha-Berit, 1970), provides several accounts by survivors, including in a separate English section testimonies by Dora Galperin (or Halperin), "The Tragedy and Destruction of Kamenetz," and Dwora Rudnitsky-Singer, "My Life in Ghettos and Concentration Camps." As its title implies, there also is some coverage of the surrounding communities, particularly of the agricultural colonies of Zamosty, Łotowo, Sarowo, and the physically more distant Abramowo. The yizkor book is available online at the Dorot Division, New York Public Library, with its English section also available at the Kamieniec Litewski ShtetLinks page, at jewishgen.org.

Some coverage of the ghetto is provided in the discussion about commemorating it, in Il'ia Razumovskii, "Pamiat' ob uznikakh Kamenetskogo getto," press release, May 27, 2009, available at the Web site of the Agentstvo evreiskikh novostei, www.aen.ru/?page=brief&article_id=53526. The article also provides the present-day Russian names of the streets of the second ghetto as Proletariat and Chkalov Streets. Still forthcoming is a larger Russian-language study of the Kamieniec Jewish community by local historian G.S. Musevich, *Narod, kotoryi zbil sredi nas*, which includes several chapters on the World War II period. An English translation of the work is planned: see "A New Book about Jews of Kamenets," June 10, 2009, on the Web site of the Brest-Belarus group, www.brest-belarus.org/sp/the_people.i.html.

A relatively large number of works examine anti-Jewish violence and other forms of German force used against the Jewish communities of the Białowieża Forest. These works include Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Knopf, 1995), pp. 70–74; Stuart Franklin, "Białowieża Forest, Poland: Representation, Myth, and the Politics of Dispossession," *Environment and Planning A* 34:8 (2002): 1459–1485; Heinrich Rubner, *Deutsche Forstgeschichte, 1933–1945: Forstwirtschaft, Jagd und Umwelt im NS-Staat* (St. Katharinen: Scripta Mercaturae Verlag, 1985); Lutz Heck, *Animals: My Adventure*, trans. E.W. Dicks (London: Methuen, 1954); Piotr Daszkiewicz and Jean Aikhenbaum, *Aurochs, le retour d'une supercherie nazie* (Paris: Histoire, Sciences, Totalitarisme, Ethique et Société, 1999); and Frank Fox, "Jews and Buffaloes, Victims of Nazi Pseudo-science," *East European Jewish Affairs* 31:2 (2001): 82–93.

Although some of the above-cited works focus on German long-term plans for the forest, in the absence of a direct documentary link, most historians take at face value the reports of security forces, from the summer of 1941, that describe the Białowieża expulsions as motivated by a more immediate

military need to prevent the emergence of a partisan insurgency there. These historians include Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 21–22; Waldemar Monkiewicz, *Białowieża w cieniu szwastyki* (Białystok: KAW, 1984); and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, p. 263. A similar approach appears in Michael Imort, “Forestopia: The Use of the Forest Landscape in Naturalizing National Socialist Ideologies of Volk, Race, and Lebensraum, 1918–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, 2000), which, in spite of its title, devotes a chapter to discussing the use in late 1942–1943 of the Forstschutzkommando (Forest Protection Commando) to eradicate partisan groups operating in the Białowieża Forest.

Also useful are the relevant entries in *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, including, in vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie*, Shmuel Spector, ed., (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 219 (Abramowo), p. 250 (Zamosty), p. 263 (Łotowa), p. 274 (Sarowo), pp. 299–305 (Prużana), and pp. 312–315 (Kamieniec Litewski); and vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek*, ed. Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 139–140 (Białowieża), pp. 288–289 (Hajnówka), pp. 457–459 (Narew), and pp. 459–460 (Narewka Mała).

Documentation about the life and death of the Jewish community of Kamieniec Litewski during the World War II German occupation includes AŻIH (301/2604); GABO (e.g., 514-1-151, p. 4); GARF (e.g., 7021-83-16, pp. 2, 7, and 7021-148-186); IPN (e.g., SOE 83, SWB 189-90, and SWOI 41-43); USHMM (RG-22.014M [GARF, 7021-148-186], reel 18, p. 165); and YVA. The case of Grzegorz Krawczyk is cited above as IPN, SWB 189-90. The two Kitajewski cases are cited above as IPN (SOE 83 and SWOI 41-43).

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NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-83-16, p. 2; and Rudnitsky-Singer, “My Life,” pp. 106–108.
2. GARF, 7021-83-16, p. 7; and BA-MA, RH 26-221/10, War Diary, 221st Security Division, cited in Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy,” p. 263.
3. Galperin, “The Tragedy,” p. 94.
4. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 127.
5. Rudnitsky-Singer, “My Life,” p. 108.
6. USHMM, RG-22.014M, reel 18 (GARF, 7021-148-186), p. 165 (War Diary, 1st Company, Reserve Police Battalion 13, November 12, 1942).
7. Galperin, “The Tragedy,” pp. 94–101.

KAMIONKA (AKA KAMIONKA KOŁO GRODNO)

Pre-1939: Kamionka, village, Szczuczyn powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kamenka, Shchuchyn raion, Baranovichy oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamionka,

Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Kamenka, Hrodna raen and voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Kamionka lies about 60 kilometers (37.3 miles) east-southeast of Grodno and 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) west-southwest of Szczuczyn. Historically, a part of the Grodno region, Kamionka was incorporated, in May 1929, into the newly formed Szczuczyn powiat, in the Nowogródek województwo. However, it remained popularly known as Kamionka koło Grodna (Kamionka near Grodno), likely to distinguish it from at least 12 identically named places in the interwar Nowogródek and Białystok województwa. In 1921, the Kamionka population of 569 included 326 Jews. By 1929, 70 of the 135 families residing in Kamionka were Jewish.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Kamionka within days of the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941. In autumn 1941, the Germans incorporated Kamionka into Kreis Grodno. The incorporation transformed Kamionka into a frontier town on the northeasternmost boundary of Distrikt Białystok, with about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) separating it from the border of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. Likely for this reason, the Kamionka Gendarmerie post was organized and remained at least through February 1942 under the supervision of German police authorities in Szczuczyn and Lida. Locally, it was led by Hauptwachmeister Rosenboom. An Amtskommissar in Kamionka, surnamed Bestek, likely assumed his position in the fall of 1941.¹

Little is known about the history of the Kamionka Jewish community during the German occupation. In the early summer of 1942, the Germans sent a few hundred men from Kamionka to a forced labor camp in Wołkowysk. German documentation notes that on November 2, 1942, 417 Jews from Kamionka were expelled to a transit camp in Kiełbasin, a few kilometers south of Grodno.² The Kamionka laborers in Wołkowysk were driven that same day to another transit camp established at a pre-war cavalry barracks there.

German documentation from immediately after the expulsion of the Kamionka community to Kiełbasin suggests that the Germans had ordered a ghetto established in Kamionka. A police report notes that on November 3, 1942, local Gendarmes shot dead a Pole discovered looting property in the Kamionka ghetto.³ The absence of additional documentation makes it impossible to determine the location of the ghetto or whether the ghetto was open or closed.

At Kiełbasin, the Kamionka community lived in deplorable conditions with about 23,000 to 28,000 Jews from about 22 other communities in Kreis Grodno and Kreis Sokółka. The Germans began sending the Kiełbasin inmates to the Auschwitz and Treblinka extermination camps on November 9, 1942, with the last transport leaving the train station at Łosośna on December 20 or 21, 1942. Because no documentation exists in Auschwitz records for a Jewish prisoner from Kamionka, the community likely was among those sent from Kiełbasin to Treblinka. In Wołkowysk, a large number of the Kamionka laborers perished at the transit camp from diseases related to exposure and malnutrition, contracted at the labor

camp, or from typhus, a by-product of the unsanitary conditions at the transit camp. The survivors likely were expelled from the transit camp together with the Jews from the Zelwa area and sent in the second Wołkowysk transport on either November 26 or December 2, 1942, to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁴

After the Kamionka Jews were sent to Treblinka, members of the Kamionka Gendarmerie post, on February 28, 1943, shot at least one Jewish fugitive. On March 9, the post commander surrendered to the Grodno Kreiskommissar items found on the victim valued at 174.00 Reichsmark (RM), including a bar of gold, foreign currency, and jewelry.⁵

SOURCES The Kamionka laborers at the Wołkowysk transit camp are discussed in the testimony by survivor Yitzhak Reznik, which is summarized and presented as “Krzemienica” in the second Wołkowysk yizkor book, Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949). An English translation is available in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pt. 1, pp. 316–318. Coverage of visits by the descendants of the Kamionka Jewish community on the Kamienka ShtetLinks page at jewishgen.org suggests that several Jewish families resided there after the war.

Documentation pertaining to the history of the Kamionka Jewish community under the German occupation in World War II includes GAGO (e.g., 1-1-54, pp. 37–38, and 1-1-335, p. 39); GARF (7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31); RGVA (1323-2-244, p. 99); and USHMM (e.g., RG-11.001M [RGVA], reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99; RG-22.002M [GARF], reel 13, 7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58; RG-53.002M [NARB], reel 5, 845-1-8, p. 31; and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., reel 1, 1-1-54, pp. 37–38, and reel 4, 1-1-335, p. 39). Some of the above documentation also appears in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, vol. 6 (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 1, 1-1-2, pp. 136–137, and reel 3, 1-1-280, pp. 5–7.
2. Ibid., reel 1, 1-1-54, pp. 37–38, with a Russian translation at GARF, 7021-86-40, pp. 56, 58; and at NARB, 845-1-8, p. 31.
3. USHMM, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99.
4. Reznik, “Krzemienica,” pp. 317–318.
5. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, p. 39.

KLESZCZELE

Pre-1939: Kleszczele, town, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kleshcheli, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kleszczele, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Hajnówka powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Kleszczele now lies near the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus, 24.7 kilometers (15.4 miles) southeast of Bielsk

Podlaski and 75.2 kilometers (46.7 miles) south-southeast of Białystok. About 700 Jews resided there on the eve of World War II. After Kleszczele came under Soviet occupation in September 1939, during the first month of World War II, the Jewish population increased slightly to 750.¹

German forces occupied Kleszczele on June 23, 1941. The German authorities appointed a provisional Polish administration, under the leadership of a mayor, a local pre-war teacher surnamed Mediewicz. A Polish auxiliary police force also was organized. Its members included Antoni Parfinowicz.

The auxiliary police imposed a regime of forced labor on the Jews. They arrested, beat up, and then turned over at least two Jews, Icchak Złotnik and Jakow Farber, to German authorities in Bielsk Podlaski as alleged Communists. The men were executed. Parfinowicz and other auxiliary policemen joined together to extort several Jews, threatening to hand them over to German authorities if they did not provide regular payments to the auxiliary police.²

In August 1941, a German civil administration took over from the temporary military authorities in Kleszczele. The new Amtskommissar immediately introduced a series of restrictions on the Jewish population. A Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Wajman (or perhaps Wiener), was established. The German authorities ordered the Judenrat to collect a number of onerous “contributions” from the Jewish population. The Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing patches in the image of the Star of David. They were forbidden from walking on the sidewalks and could not greet Germans. Forced labor continued as the Jews worked on the railroad, at a concrete plant, and in agriculture.³

In August or early autumn 1941, the Germans established an open ghetto in Kleszczele. They prohibited Jews from living in the same houses as Christians. The order forced many Jews to find housing in the pre-war Jewish neighborhood, a small area of a few streets around the market square. The Germans required Jews to identify their houses by painting a Star of David on them.⁴

In May 1942, Johann Otto, the Kleszczele Amtskommissar, most likely acting on a decree of the Bielsk Kreiskommissar, Landrat von Büнау, ordered the establishment of a closed ghetto. It included between 30 and 48 homes located on the market square and within the area of Kościuszko, Ciasna, and Kopernik Streets. The ghetto was surrounded by a tall wooden fence, topped with barbed wire. Postwar Polish court documentation lists its population as 678. Each ghetto resident was allotted only about 2 square meters (22 square feet) of space in which to live. Tailors, cobblers, glaziers, and carpenters labored on various projects for local German officials and the local population in craft workshops established in the ghetto. Some inmates left the ghetto daily for the railroad station, in Czeremcha, to engage in tasks ranging from unloading wagons to building locomotives. Others departed the ghetto for agricultural labor, on the estate of the Kleszczele Amtskommissar.⁵ The Germans also ordered dismantled the 1881 wooden synagogue. Its building materials were used to build homes on Boćki Street.

Provisioning in the ghetto was almost nonexistent. Most inmates procured food illegally by sneaking away from work assignments outside the ghetto to trade with local Christians. Many local Christians, both Poles and Belorussians, supplied the Jews with food, either in exchange for goods or services or for no compensation. Even so, hunger and overcrowding bred unsanitary conditions, which led to an outbreak of typhus. The epidemic claimed the lives of many of the elderly and children. In September 1942, Wajman was arrested, based on a denunciation of a local Polish Gestapo informant who reported the Jewish Council chair had criticized the German administration. The Gestapo shot him in Bielsk Podlaski.⁶

At the beginning of November 1942, German forces sealed off the ghetto and refused to permit workers to leave for work. The Germans announced that the ghetto inmates would be sent to labor camps in Ukraine. Because of the tight guard around the ghetto and concern for the other members of their families, only a few Jews attempted to escape.⁷ On November 5, the Germans transferred about 1,250 Jews from the nearby communities of Milejczyce and Nurzec (Milejczyce gmina, Bielsk Podlaski powiat) to the Kleszczele ghetto. The next day, 6 Jews were shot during a final roundup of ghetto residents. The surviving Jews were taken on November 6 to a transit camp located in a former cavalry barracks on the southern outskirts of Białystok. The Kleszczele Jews were deported from the Białystok transit camp sometime between the end of November and December 15 to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁸ They were gassed on arrival.

A few Jews managed to escape at the time of the roundup. Josef Białostocki discovered many of his Christian acquaintances were unwilling to shelter him, because they feared German retaliation. He ultimately received a warm welcome from Anna and Szymon Markiewicz. The couple constructed a hiding place for him in their barn. Zelman (or Zenon) Wasserman and Symcha Bursztajn found refuge with Waleria Skarżyńska and her son Kazimierz in Saki village (Kleszczele gmina, Bielsk Podlaski powiat). Only two or three other Jews from the Kleszczele ghetto survived until the Red Army drove the German occupying forces from the town on July 20, 1944.⁹

In October 1946, Parfinowicz was charged with participating, as a member of the auxiliary police, in the 1941 arrests and beatings of several Kleszczele Jews and with forcing Jews to surrender valuables. At his trial in April 1947, in Białystok, the judge postponed the proceedings until January 1948 to enable Wasserman, the state's main witness, to come from his new home in France to testify. Even though investigators had collected a wealth of evidence against Parfinowicz, including depositions from Jewish survivors, he was found not guilty after Wasserman did not appear.¹⁰

SOURCES Information on the Kleszczele ghetto can be found in the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Je-

rusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 558–560; in its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 104–106; and Tomasz Wiśniewski, *Bóznice Białostoczczyzny. Heartland of the Jewish Life: Synagogues and Jewish Communities in the Białystok Region* (Białystok: David, 1991), pp. 160–161.

Christian aid to Kleszczele Jews is covered in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 492–493, for the 1965 nomination of Anna and Szymon Markiewicz as Righteous Among the Nations; and Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi* 2 (1997): 215–216. A list of the Kleszczele survivors appears on the sketches for a monument, with the 1993 plans available at www.bagnowka.com/?m=cm&g=zoom&img=2478&gal=38. Information about the postwar trial is in Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostoczczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 223–224.

Also useful are Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 15, 17, 38 (tab. 3); and Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 232.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Kleszczele during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (204 [e.g., YVA M-11/B77, 193], 301 [e.g., 979, 1853]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOB 43); IPN-Bi (e.g., Ko-5/90, S [19/75, 38/68]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 1 [1/136] and reel 14 [46/48]); and YVA (e.g., M-11[B77, B193], M-33, M-49-E [e.g., 6640], O-3/3262, O-59/15). A Polish-language translation of AŻIH, 301/979, is available at the Archiwum Etnograficzne at www.archiwumetnograficzne.edu.pl/readarticle.php?article_id=33.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/979, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 1.
2. IPN, SOB 43, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 223–224.
3. AŻIH, 301/979, pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., p. 1.
5. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 14, 46/48, pp. 1–2; and low structure figure in AŻIH, 301/979, pp. 1–2.
6. AŻIH, 301/979, p. 1.
7. Ibid., 301/1853, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 1 (typescript).
8. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1, 1/136, pp. 1–2.
9. Number of survivors varies at USHMM, RG-15.091M, reel 14, 46/48, p. 2; AŻIH, 301/1853, p. 2 (typescript), and 301/979, p. 2.
10. IPN, SOB 43.

KNYSZYN

Pre-1939: Knyszyn (Yiddish: Knisbin), town, Białystok powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Knysbin, Mońki raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Knischin, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Knyszyn, Mońki powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Knyszyn lies 29.1 kilometers (18.1 miles) northwest of Białystok and 13.2 kilometers (8.2 miles) southwest of Jasionówka. Its 1921 population of 3,559 included 1,235 Jews. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, the Knyszyn kehillah numbered 1,450.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Knyszyn on June 27, 1941. Soldiers rounded up five Jews, accused them of communism, and shot them. The Germans appointed a local Polish administration and an auxiliary police force. Policeman Edward Bibiński organized local antisemites to mark houses with crosses and Stars of David. However, Franciszek Bryks, pastor of the Roman Catholic Church, convinced the men to call off the pogrom and urged Roman Catholic faithfuls during Mass to assist Jews rather than to pursue them.¹ The relative peace in Knyszyn transformed it into a refuge for Jews fleeing violence in Szczuczyn (Białostocki), Grajewo, and Radziłów.

The German-appointed sołtys (village head) soon ordered the Jewish refugees to leave Knyszyn. Some Poles denounced several Knyszyn Jews as Communists. Auxiliary policeman Edward Zeler probably beat the men before surrendering them to German authorities on July 5, 1941.² The Germans took Rabbi Polak with them, who was to provide a character reference for an arrestee. Never heard from again, the men are presumed to have been shot by the Germans.³

A German civil administration was created in Knyszyn in early August 1941. A man named Labusch served as the first Knyszyn Amtskommissar. By fall 1942, the position was filled by either Bohr or Andrzejewski, the longest-serving Amtskommissar. A Gendarmerie post also was established.

The new German administrators immediately ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair, Motel Zapasner, was a merchant. They ordered the Jews to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David. At an assembly, ordered by the Amtskommissar in early September, the Jews were read a new list of anti-Jewish decrees, including orders that replaced the armbands with yellow patches, worn on the back and chest, and mandated forced labor of all adult Jews. The Germans threatened to deport unemployed men from Knyszyn. The Judenrat subsequently bribed officials to permit the men to stay. The Germans also humiliated religious Jews with beards, ordering them to box each other and to dance as a photographer took pictures.⁴

In the fall of 1941, the Amtskommissar announced the establishment of a closed ghetto in Knyszyn. However, a delegation of Poles, including Bryks, hospital director Edward Nowicki, and pharmacist Marian Rzeźnicki, cited public health concerns to appeal successfully for the order's suspension, though the Judenrat likely also was required to pay a bribe.⁵

The Germans instead established an open ghetto by circumscribing Jewish movement in Knyszyn, declaring a part of it off limits to Jews.⁶ They expelled Jews from Mońki and nearby localities to Knyszyn and imposed the death penalty on Jews found outside Knyszyn without permission. The Gendarmes also enforced prohibitions on nonregistered Jews living in Knyszyn. As many as 150 survivors of the German mass execution of the Jewish community of Tykocin (Yiddish: Tiktin), probably on August 15–16, 1941, found it impossible to regularize their residence in Knyszyn. Petrified they would be denounced and shot, the refugees mostly fled to the Białystok ghetto.⁷

Some Poles denounced to German authorities purported Jewish Communist sympathizers. Almost none of the Jews were Communists; rather, they were people against whom the Poles held personal grudges. The denunciations led the Germans to murder at least 15 Knyszyn Jews in 1941, including the restaurant owner Barach Cybelman. On Simchat Torah (October 14), the SS arrested 13 more Jews, also denounced by Poles. The Jewish Council paid several hundred dollars in bribes to procure their freedom, but the SS already had murdered them.⁸

About 300 Jewish and Polish laborers in Knyszyn worked for the German construction firm Hermann Klammt. The conscripts renovated the nearby railway line to Białystok and the roads to Białystok, Mońki, and Jasionówka. The Judenrat Labor Office arranged supplementary rations for the conscripts, providing them with bread and meat twice weekly. The Germans also ordered the Judenrat to establish a shoemaking workshop. Other work assignments included street cleaning, farm labor, and forestry labor.

The Jewish Council was required to pay the salaries of several German officials brought to Knyszyn to oversee the shoemaking workshop. The local German administration demanded the Jews surrender their fur coats, jewelry, silver, and gold. German administrators changed the council leadership several times, hoping the new appointees would extract more materially from the Jews.⁹ In exchange for services, some Germans occasionally permitted the Judenrat to buy the freedom of the imprisoned. Gendarme Leutnant Schultz freed a Jasionówka ghetto resident from the Knyszyn jail in exchange for a local Jewish tailor making him an overcoat from cloth provided by the Judenrat.¹⁰

By the fall of 1942, rumors escalated that the German authorities would soon deport the Knyszyn Jews. At the end of October, Dorota Śniegiewicz learned from a Judenrat member in the Białystok ghetto that the Germans on November 2 would liquidate most of the Jewish communities in Distrikt Białystok. Subsequent inquiries by the Knyszyn Judenrat to the local Amtskommissar about whether the Jews were slated for evacuation were met by reassurances that they likely would not be sent away, as the administration had received permission to sell them winter heating materials and potatoes from German reserves.¹¹

On November 2, 1942, at 6:00 A.M., Knyszyn was surrounded by an SS detachment of about 300 men, reinforced

by members of the local German Gendarmerie, German administrators from surrounding towns, including from Jasionówka, and the Polish auxiliary police.¹² After local officials secured payment for the winter rations, the SS commanded Judenrat members to go from house to house to order the Jews to stand outside of their homes. In relaying the German command, the Judenrat officials urged the Jews to act according to their consciences, as they did not know what the orders portended.¹³ A large number of people attempted escape. Polish staff at the hospital successfully hid 32 fugitives.¹⁴ Another 75 were killed. In addition to those fleeing from the roundup, the murdered included the infirm and elderly, deemed too frail by the SS to make the trip.

The Germans transported the remainder of the Knyszyn Jewish community, believed to have numbered about 1,300 people, to a transit camp located on the southern outskirts of Białystok, at a pre-war encampment of the Polish 10th Cavalry Division. They joined 12,000 to 15,000 Jews from nearby localities deported there that same day. The Białystok Judenrat intervened to secure the release of about 10 Knyszyn families. Beginning at the end of November, the Germans sent the transit camp inmates in several transports to the Treblinka extermination camp. They all were gassed on arrival.

Most of the approximately 80 Jewish fugitives sought shelter in the ghetto in Jasionówka. About 20 Knyszyn Jews subsequently survived the Jasionówka ghetto liquidation on January 24–25, 1943, by jumping either from the trucks deporting them to the train station or from the train taking them to the extermination camp.¹⁵ Others stayed outside of ghettos. Śniegiewicz lived in Białystok on false identity papers, purchasing arms and explosive materials for the Jewish underground for the planned ghetto uprising.

Others found shelter with local Poles. Samuel Suraski's workmate and friend, shoemaker Czesław Dworżańczyk, sheltered him. Seven members of Ber Ślodki's family found safety with Krzysztof Dąbowski's family in Długołęka village. Antoni and Jadwiga Uszczanowski hid seven more survivors. In April 1943, the Germans, acting on a denunciation, arrested the Uszczanowskis and shot Antoni dead for refusing to reveal the hiding places of the Jews they were protecting. Because of similar denunciations, the Germans torched the bunkers of several Jews and the residences of at least two Poles. The Jews only sometimes escaped alive.

After the war, many of the 50 Jewish survivors returned to Knyszyn. But in May 1945, an armed Polish gang murdered Krzysztof Dąbowski for refusing to surrender gold he was falsely rumored to have received for sheltering the Ślodki family. The survivors and some of the Polish aid-givers emigrated.

In 1953, Zeler was found innocent of several charges, including rounding up Jews during the liquidation of the Knyszyn ghetto.

SOURCES Some of the archival documentation below has been published, including in Polish translation, in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2

vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 346–355 (AŻIH, 301/1971). A part of the AŻIH, 301/3959, testimony, by Samuel Suraski, is in English and Hebrew translation on the RelatioNet project Web site, at <http://sush12knpo.blogspot.com/2007/07/memories-about-town-of-knyszyn-during.html>. Parts of the Polish-language AŻIH testimonies by Knyszyn survivors appear in English translation in the electronic monthly *Nowy Goniec Knyszyński*, published by the government of the town of Knyszyn. They are available under the history section of the journal index, located on the homepage of the Knyszyn town Web site at www.knyszyn.pl. Published testimonies from the Poles Józef Piasecki and Jadwiga Ciurzycka appear in “Knyszyn we wspomnieniach mieszkanców. Eksterminacja Żydów,” *Białostoczczyzna*, no. 3/31 (1993): 111–113, available electronically at the Podlaska Digital Library.

The above-cited *Nowy Goniec Knyszyński* includes more than 20 articles, in Polish and English translation, about the Knyszyn Jewish community in World War II. They are best read in conjunction with the Knyszyn entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 561–565. An English translation is available in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 106–109. Also valuable are Edmund Chodorowski, “Knyszyn w latach II wojny światowej,” *Białostoczczyzna*, no. 3/31 (1993): 60–70, at the Podlaska Digital Library; and the relevant entry in Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostoczczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Studia*, pp. 207–208.

A large literature exists on Christian aid to Jews in Knyszyn, including, among others, in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, p. 164, pt. 2, pp. 840–841; and Kazimierz Radzajewski, “Czesław Dworżańczyk—sprawiedliwy,” *Gazeta współczesna*, July 3, 2008, for the recognition by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations of Krzysztof and Helena Dąbowski, Antoni and Jadwiga Uszczanowski, and Czesław Dworżańczyk, respectively. The RelatioNet site recounts, in English and Hebrew, the search of Hadar Suraski for the Christian aid-giver of her grandfather Samuel.

Documentation relating to the World War II history of the Knyszyn Jewish community under German occupation can be found at AŻIH (e.g., 301/658, 301/985, 301/1276, 301/1468, 301/2185, 301/2966, 301/3958, 301/3959); FVA (e.g., HVT-3639); IPN (e.g., SOB [104, 368, 425], SWB [54, 219–20, 223–24, 230, 237]); IPN-Bi (3/99, 3/113 [W-6/66], 3/123 [W-5/66], 7/988 [III-1747 KSL-7625], S [6/73 (powiat Mońki), 11/82, 222/68]; USHMM (e.g., Acc.1995.A.1193, RG-50.120*0192); VHF (e.g., # 546, 89734); and YVA. The IPN-Bi and IPN documentation includes the postwar investigations of a number of Polish collaborators of a penal camp established in Knyszyn for Jewish and non-Jewish residents of the Amtskommissariat.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1276, testimony of Fania Brzezińska, pp. 5–6; and AŻIH, 301/3959, testimony of Szmuel Suraski, in Machcewicz and Persak *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:239.
2. IPN, SOB 425.
3. AŻIH, 301/3959, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:239.
4. AŻIH, 301/1276, pp. 6–7, and 301/2185, testimony of Dorota Śniegiewicz, pp. 1–2; and AŻIH, 301/3959, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:240.
5. AŻIH, 301/3959, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2: 238, 240; and AŻIH, 301/2185, p. 2.
6. AŻIH, 301/1276, p. 25.
7. USHMM, RG-50.120*0192, testimony of Avraham Kapitza.
8. AŻIH, 301/1276, p. 8; and AŻIH, 301/3959, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:239.
9. AŻIH, 301/2185, p. 2.
10. Ibid., 301/1276, p. 10.
11. Ibid., 301/2185, p. 3, and 301/1276, pp. 11–15.
12. IPN, SOB 425.
13. AŻIH, 301/3959, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:240.
14. Testimony of Jadwiga Ciurzycka, in “Knyszyn,” pp. 112–113.
15. VHF, # 546, testimony of Tauba Schuster (Goldsztejn); and AŻIH, 301/985, testimony of Tema Kaplan, p. 2.

KRYNKI

Pre-1939: Krynki (Yiddish: Krinik), town, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Krynki raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Białystok; post-1999: województwo podlaskie, Poland

Krynki lies on the Krynki River 47.1 kilometers (29.3 miles) east-northeast of Białystok and 25.8 kilometers (16 miles) southwest of Sokółka. Its 1921 population of 5,206 included 3,495 Jews. In September 1939, the first month of World War II, the Germans initially occupied Krynki but soon evacuated it to make way for Soviet forces. The Jewish population



The Yiddish caption reads: “Krynka [Krynki] Jews force-marched to work by the Nazis in 1942.”

USHMM WS #49113, COURTESY OF YIVO

swelled to more than 4,000 under Soviet rule, as refugees from German-occupied Poland settled there.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, German bombardment damaged Krynki and killed a number of residents including 50 Jews. A Wehrmacht unit captured Krynki on June 28. On June 30, German security forces executed 16 Jews. In July, more Jews were executed, for communism, after denunciations by Polish “informants,” likely members of the newly appointed auxiliary police force.¹ German military authorities mandated forced labor for adult Jews. In late August, a civilian administration, led by an Amtskommissar, replaced the military commandant. A Gendarmerie post was established, employing about six soldiers.

In late November 1941, local German authorities ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) created and began organizing a ghetto. Located in a Jewish neighborhood, the ghetto spanned from southwestern to northeastern Krynki. Its boundary included the southern sides of Kościelna Street, the market square, and a part of Rynkowa Street. From there, the ghetto area encompassed 3 hectares (7.4 acres), south to the Krynki River. At its most northeastern point, on Rynkowa Street, the boundary turned south along the western sides of Cerkiewna and then Indura Streets. Jews constructed the fence, from wooden planks and barbed wire, and two guard towers. The main entrance, a wooden gate, opened to the market square, near Garbarska Street.

On December 21, 1941, local authorities gave the Jews several days to move into the ghetto. German and Polish policemen searched the Jews at the gate, confiscating about half of their possessions. A number of Christians watched the move, eager to claim the items that the Jews were forced to leave behind.

A German “ghetto commander” named Mangel oversaw the Krynki ghetto. He likely was appointed by the Sokolka Kreiskommissar, Landrat Amman. Mangel issued instructions to the Jewish Council. A 25-member Jewish police force, commanded by Yankel Kazaltchik (or Kozolczyk), assisted the Judenrat to carry out the orders. Polish policemen guarded the outside of the ghetto. The ghetto population initially stood at about 4,500.²

Every morning Jews would assemble at 6:00 A.M. to be escorted to work outside the ghetto by the Polish police. Some worked in tanning factories; others repaired roads, dug peat, or cut wood. About 40 Jews worked six-day stints on nearby estates. Because inmates received a daily 100-gram (3.5-ounce) bread ration and some potatoes, work outside the ghetto provided the opportunity to barter material possessions with the local population for extra food. The police beat those caught smuggling produce into the ghetto. In January 1942, the Germans ordered 20 men arrested. Sources disagree about whether the men were notables held hostage for ransom or a group of mainly ritual slaughterers (*shochtim*) denounced for smuggling calves into the ghetto. Despite a ghetto-wide effort to ransom them from a Białystok prison, they were executed by May 1942.³

Early in the morning of April 1, 1942, one day before the start of Passover, the 3rd Company of Police Battalion 91, under the command of Wilhelm Ahrens, arrived in Krynki. At 8:00 A.M., on the market square, Ahrens ordered his men to search the ghetto for concealed weapons, food, leather, and metal goods and to kill Jews too sick or too old for work. The police searched the houses in the ghetto and ordered confiscated items brought near the large synagogue. Soon, the police started shooting Jews. By the time the company departed Krynki at midday, the policemen had murdered 39 mostly elderly men and women, including Reb Leib Segal.⁴

After Passover 1942, the Germans transferred to the Krynki ghetto about 1,200 Jews from Brzostowica Wielka. The Germans held back about 200 people from the approximately 700-member Brzostowica community to widen and pave the road from Białystok to Wołkowysk. Among the 500 additional deportees were conscripts from other ghettos brought to Brzostowica for road construction and Jews from southern Kreis Grodno and eastern Kreis Sokolka ordered in mid-February 1942 to reside in Brzostowica Wielka. Among the latter were the communities of Spudwiły and Brzostowica Mała.

Conditions worsened in the Krynki ghetto as the new inmates increased the population to 5,500 to 5,700, reducing the 1.5 square meters (16 square feet) of residential space initially accorded each inmate. Orders in 1942 to exclude Garbarska Street from the ghetto increased congestion. A pedestrian bridge, constructed over the street, enabled contact between the two ghettos, but the resulting sanitation problems from overcrowding raised the mortality rate from typhus. At least 200 inmates were sent on work assignments outside the ghetto in May 1942. The conscripts worked at construction and agricultural labor in Kreis Grodno, including working on road construction in Wielkie Ejsymonty, building barracks at a labor camp in Zielona, and working at a fishery in Repla, in Kreis Wolkowysk.⁵

Upon learning of the destruction of Jewish communities, including Słonim, in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, some Krynki Jews pleaded to join partisans they encountered during forestry labor. Interested only in robbing the Jews of their axes, the partisans dismissed the requests. By late December 1942, a number of Krynki refugees to Białystok had established a partisan organization. The 20 to 40 pre-war Communists and Bundists in the Krynki group were the first large underground organization to abandon the Białystok ghetto for the forests.⁶

On November 2, 1942, the Krynki ghetto was liquidated. An underground Bundist publication in the Warsaw ghetto subsequently claimed that the Krynki Jews resisted the expulsion with arms, resulting in the deaths of 12 Gendarmes.⁷ However, Krynki survivors do not recall such an uprising. The Germans held back approximately 350 people, mostly tanning factory workers and a few others, to clean out the ghetto. The remaining Jews were taken 60 kilometers (37.3 miles) over two days to a transit camp in Kielbasin, near Grodno. A day earlier, on November 1, German security officers, Gendarmes, and Polish auxiliary police had rounded up all the remaining Jewish

laborers in southern Kreis Grodno and eastern Kreis Sokolka, including 150 former Krynki ghetto residents and about 150 others from Indura, Lunna, and Brzostowica. Held overnight in Massalany (or Masalany), near Wielkie Ejsymonty, the captives were driven the next day to Kielbasin.

The Krynki inmates at Kielbasin were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Two survivors provide different dates, November 15 and 25, for the expulsion. Contextual evidence in one of the accounts further suggests that the community may have been sent to Treblinka about a week before the SS closed the transit camp, shortly after December 20–21.⁸ The Krynki Jews were gassed on arrival at Treblinka.

On January 23, 1943, the surviving Jews in Krynki were driven to Sokółka and sent to the Auschwitz death camp on a transport, which also carried inmates from the Sokółka and Jasionówka ghettos. Forewarned by a Polish policeman of the impending expulsion, at least 50 Krynki Jews fled the evening before the deportation.⁹ Others jumped from the train. Some of the fugitives arrived on January 25 at the Białystok ghetto. That same day, at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Germans held back from the transport 193 people—161 men and 32 women—as concentration camp prisoners. The remaining 2,107 people on the transport were gassed on arrival. Less than 10 Krynki prisoners survived until liberation.

A handful of Jews survived the war hiding near Krynki. Piotr and Stanisława Begański sheltered Eliahu and Frida Kuszniir (or Kushnir). A Russian engineer named Dmitrov hid Leah Wolf (later, Lola Resnick) and Perl Lewi. Feivel Wolf ultimately joined a partisan unit. The ranks of the Krynki group were decimated during an armed struggle, on February 10, 1943, to break a German encirclement of the forest, near Lipowy Most. Only three members of the group survived the war.

Wilhelm Ahrens was sentenced by a Soviet military tribunal in 1950 to 25 years in prison. He returned to West Germany under an amnesty in 1955. He was tried in Düsseldorf, together with two other members of Police Battalion 91, for the murders in Krynki on April 1, 1942. The three men, in 1973, were acquitted on legal grounds, as no “base motives” could be found for the killings.¹⁰

SOURCES Published sources on Krynki include Abraham Soyfer (or Soifer), ed., *Krinki in burban* (Montevideo: Di Krinker Hilfs-Faraynen fun Urugvay un Argentine, 1948); Dov Rabin, ed., *Pinkas Krinki* (Tel Aviv: ha-Irgunim shel yots’e Krinki bi-Medinat Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1970) (available in a complete English translation, by Dora Rytman and Judie Goldstein, at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Krynki/krynki.html); *Hurban Volkovisk be-Milhemet ha-’olam ha-sheniyah, 1939/1945* (Tel Aviv: Vaad irgun yots’e Volkovisk be-Erets-Yisra’el, 1946) (available in an English translation as *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger [Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000], pt. 2).

Katarzyna Fąfara, “Holocaust Kryńskich Żydów. Pamięć dla przyszłości,” an electronic source, is helpful for its map and description of the Krynki ghetto boundaries. Some information on the Krynki community is included in Stefan Klemp, *Nicht ermittelt: Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz: Ein*

Handbuch (Essen: Klartext, 2005), pp. 210–213. Also important are the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 138–139 (Brzostowica Wielka) and pp. 568–575 (Krynki); and in its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 116–124 (Krynki). For Stanisława and Piotr Begański, honored by Yad Vashem in 1965 as Righteous Among the Nations, see Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, pp. 88–89.

Documents on the annihilation of the Jewish communities in Krynki and Brzostowica Wielka under the German occupation in World War II can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, and 301/1288, 3154, and 3600); BA-L (B 162/14498); IPN (e.g., ASG [46/85]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], 46/85, and RG-15.079M [AŻIH], II/338/a [CD: # 8, 423.II/338/1], pp. 44–45); IPN-Bi (Ko-12/89, Ko-54/89, S-48/68, S-54/67 [Polish witness depositions for BA-L (B 162/14498)], S-860/71 [Brzostowica Wielka]); VHF (# 17461, 18378, 26458, 37482, and 47393); and YVA (e.g., O-3/1327 and M-11/58, B 85). The Ringelblum archive documentation cited below also has appeared in *BŻIH*, no. 76 (1970): 49–79.

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NOTES

1. YVA, O-3/1327, cited in Andrzej Żbikowski, *U genezy Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2006), p. 343; and AŻIH, 301/1288, testimony of Chaim Wajner, pp. 1–2.
2. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 14, 46/85, pp. 1–2.
3. Compare VHF, # 26458; and Rubin, *The Rise*, p. 121.
4. BA-L, B 162/14498 (Urteil LG-Dü, 8 Ks 2/71), pp. 20–28; and Rabin, *Pinkas Krinki*, pp. 317–318.
5. VHF, # 18378, testimony of Steven Guzik.
6. Rabin, *Pinkas Krinki*, pp. 312–314.
7. *Wiadomości*, no. 5, January 1–6, 1943, pp. 1–2, in USHMM, RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring II/338/a [CD: # 8, 423.II/338/1], pp. 44–45.
8. Rabin, *Pinkas Krinki*, respectively, pp. 287 and 272.
9. VHF, # 26458, testimony of Lola Resnick.
10. See Urteil LG-Dü, 8 Ks 2/71.

KRZEMIENICA KOŚCIELNA

Pre-1939: Krzemienica Kościelna, village, Wołkowysk powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kremianitsa, Zel'va raion, Grodno oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Krzemienica Koscielna, Kreis Wołkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Kramianitsa, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Krzemienica Kościelna is located 60 kilometers (47.5 miles) southeast of Grodno in interwar Poland's Wołkowysk powiat.

It was bounded in the north by the Piaski gmina, in the east by the Zelwianka River, in the south by the Zelwa and Izabelin gminas, and in the west by the Biskupice gmina, which surrounded the town of Wołkowysk.

The Jews in the Krzemienica gmina, some 126 in number in 1921, were dispersed across its territory, living mostly as the only Jewish inhabitants in about 13 small villages. In some of the villages, including Awdziejewicze, Derkacze, and Podbłocie, they had worked the land as farmers for generations. A handful of Jews settled in Krzemienica only after it came under Soviet occupation during the first month of World War II, in September 1939. Yitzhak Resnick, for example, was ordered there to establish a medical clinic. He and his brother's family increased the Jewish population of Krzemienica village to about 23 (four families).

The Germans occupied Krzemienica at the end of June 1941. In the fall of 1941, they established the Krzemienica Koscielna Amtskommissariat on the lands of the pre-war gmina. The German presence there was small. In addition to the Amtskommissar and his family, six Germans worked as Gendarmes in a police station in Krzemienica. Another German was assigned to the Amtskommissariat as a production manager. To assist them, the Germans established a local auxiliary police force, composed mostly of Poles.

German military authorities, in July, ordered a 3-person Jewish Council (Judenrat) formed for the approximately 70 Jews in the Krzemienica Koscielna Amtskommissariat. The Judenrat was headquartered in Krzemienica but represented all of the Jewish inhabitants of the Amtskommissariat. The German authorities dispossessed the Jews of their movable property, including valuables, farming implements, and machinery. Officials in Kreis Wołkowysk revoked the leases held by Jews on farmsteads, expropriated all arable land owned by Jews, and confiscated their horses and livestock.

The Krzemienica Amtskommissar transformed every Jewish house into an open ghetto by forbidding their residents from leaving the dwellings in which they lived, except to work at forced labor. The German administration conscripted the Jews for construction work. They built a Gendarmerie post, stables, a post office, and many other structures in Krzemienica village. In spring 1942, the Jews worked on local road construction projects.

The Krzemienica Jews devised ways to soften the anti-Jewish decrees, which effectively kept them prisoner in their homes. Small gifts to the Amtskommissar and his wife, including a pair of boots and a fur coat, enabled the Judenrat to mitigate some anti-Jewish decrees. Equally important, the Germans all sought the medical services of Resnick, although it was illegal under Nazi racial laws for them to do so. The doctor exploited his illicit professional relationships with local German officials to secure for the Jews various permits that enabled them to enter the forest to gather wood for winter heating fuel, to travel occasionally between villages within the Amtskommissariat, and to gather together in Krzemienica in 1942 for Passover and High Holiday services.

VOLUME II: PART A

The Germans expelled the Jews from the Krzemienica Amtskommissariat on November 2, 1942. Beginning at 4:00 A.M., a Gendarme, accompanied by two members of the auxiliary police, went from house to house, giving the Jews 10 minutes to dress and to pack food for three days, long underwear, and work clothes. The auxiliary police drove from their houses those Jews who took more than the allotted time. At 7:00 A.M., when all of the Jews of the Amtskommissariat had been gathered in the courtyard of the Gendarmerie post, the Gendarmes and the auxiliary police drove them to Zelwa. At the Zelwa train station, the Krzemienica Jews were transferred to the control of a large SS contingent waiting there for about 2,400 Jews to arrive from communities, including Zelwa, from the most eastern parts of Kreis Wołkowysk. The SS randomly beat up the Jews assembled at the train station and dispossessed them of the few possessions they had been allowed to bring before driving them at 2:00 P.M. onto cattle wagons, on a train destined for a transit camp, located just outside Wołkowysk on the grounds of a pre-war Polish cavalry garrison.

At the transit camp, where the SS had consolidated the approximately 20,000 Jewish inhabitants of Kreis Wołkowysk to facilitate their deportation to extermination camps, the Jewish communities from the Zelwa deportation lived together in deplorable conditions for about a month in two subterranean barracks. Several hundred deportees from a labor camp in Brzostowica Wielka also resided in the Zelwa bunkers. (Because the labor camp was located in Kreis Grodno, the deportees came mostly from there, including from the ghetto in Łunna.) The Zelwa bunkers likely also were the temporary residence of about 150 young men from the ghetto of Kamionka, brought to a labor camp in Wołkowysk in the early summer of 1942.¹ The men's numbers suggest they came from the so-called Kamionka near Grodno (Kamionka koło Grodna), which during World War II was a settlement in Kreis Grodno located about 24 kilometers (almost 15 miles), by road, west of the town of Szczuczyn.

The Krzemienica Jews were expelled from the transit camp and sent, either on November 26 or December 2, 1942, in the second Wołkowysk transport to the Treblinka extermination camp. The transport, also named the Zelwa deportation for the larger community expelled with the Krzemienica Jews, likely also included the former Brzostowica labor camp inmates and the Jewish laborers from Kamionka, though many of the latter already had perished from exposure, likely contracted at the labor camp or from diseases related to malnutrition and starvation. Whether the communities of Jałówka, Mścibów, Piaski, and Mosty were on the same transport or were sent to Treblinka on subsequent transports remains an open question. Almost all the approximately 18,300 Jews in the Wołkowysk transports to Treblinka were gassed on arrival, as the Germans are known to have held back only 60 to 70 men from the Jałówka and Mścibów transport as prisoners of the Treblinka I labor camp, with only 1 known survivor from among the prisoners.

Of the Krzemienica Jews, only Resnick and his family are known to have escaped the deportation to Treblinka. (Physicians were held back to help contain a typhus epidemic at the camp.) Resnick's brother, sister, and niece were among the last group of 1,700 to 2,000 Wołkowysk inmates sent on January 26, 1943, to the Auschwitz extermination camp. They all perished there. However, Resnick fled the transit camp, together with the Mosty physician Noah Kaplinsky, on the day of the Auschwitz deportation. The two made their way to Krzemienica, where they were sheltered by a local Christian family. Also counted among survivors are Nachum and Shimon Reznitsky, two brothers from Krzemienica, who had fled to Independent Lithuania during the Soviet occupation and immigrated from there to Palestine.

SOURCES This entry is based on the two published testimonies about the Jewish communities of Krzemienica Kościelna. The first, by Yitzhak Reznik, is summarized in "Krzemienica," in Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949); and the second, by Nakhum Reznitsky, "Krzemienica," appears in the third Wołkowysk yizkor book, compiled by Katri'el Lashovits, ed., *Volkovisk: Sipurah shel kehilah Yehudit-Tsiyonit bushmedab ba-Sho'ah* (Tel Aviv: K. Lashovits, 1988). Both testimonies are available in English translation in the Wołkowysk yizkor book trilogy *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pt. 1, pp. 316–318, and pt. 3, pp. 106–107, respectively. The fate of Reznik's brother and his family at Auschwitz is covered in Izaak Goldberg, *The Miracles versus Tyranny: The Fight for Life and Death between the Jewish People and the Nazis* (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1979).

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NOTE

1. Noah Kaplinsky, "Volkovysk in Its Death Throes," from *Hurban Volkovisk be-Milhemet ha-'olam ha-sbeniyah, 1939/1945* (Tel Aviv: Vaad irgun yots'e Volkovisk be-Erets-Yisrael, 1946), in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk*, pt. 2, p. 44.

KUŹNICA BIAŁOSTOCKA

Pre-1939: Kuźnica Białostocka, village, Sokółka powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kuznitsa, Sokulka raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kuznitsa, Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Kuźnica, village, Sokółka powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Kuźnica is located 15.5 and 56.2 kilometers (about 9.6 and 35 miles) north-northeast, respectively, of Sokółka and Białystok. Today, it lies on the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus. In 1931, the population of Kuźnica Białostocka stood at 1,428, including 556 Jews.

In World War II, Kuźnica was occupied first by the Germans, for about two weeks. They evacuated the village in the middle of September 1939 to make way for the Red Army. During the Soviet occupation, the Jewish population may

have swelled to 1,000, as refugees from German-occupied Poland settled there.

A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Kuźnica Białostocka about a week after Germany, on June 22, 1941, invaded the Soviet Union. The military commander immediately established a stringent curfew, ordering all Jews confined to their homes. When permitted outside, the Jews were forbidden to maintain contact with Christians. They were required to wear a yellow patch on their clothing. The men were ordered to shave their beards and side locks. The Germans made forced labor obligatory for almost every Jew, from young children to the elderly.¹ The Germans also ordered a Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) established. Its primary responsibility was to turn over valuables, to pay fines imposed on the Jewish community, and to meet German demands for forced labor. To help enforce the anti-Jewish decrees, the Germans established a Polish auxiliary police force.

In August 1941, the Germans, most likely an SS unit that had arrived in Kuźnica, burned the Jewish neighborhood. In November, the Germans deported most of the survivors to the Grodno ghetto. Among the deportees was Stanisław Bałc (also, *Sądokierski* or *Sandomierski*), a Soviet-era refugee from Warsaw. Rather than be deported to Grodno, some Kuźnica Jews fled to the Sokółka ghetto.² The Germans ordered a part of the community to remain in Kuźnica. What factors determined which Jews were deported or retained is not known.

The fire likely led the Germans to gather the Jews ordered to remain in Kuźnica Białostocka into a ghetto. However, sparse documentation makes it difficult to determine specifically how Jewish residential patterns were reordered after the fire. Scholars, in fact, disagree about whether a ghetto was established in Kuźnica. There are nonetheless some suggestions in the post-war depositions of Christians, collected after the war by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), that the Germans instituted at least an open ghetto in Kuźnica Białostocka. In addition to tightly controlling when Jews could be outside of their homes, the Gendarmes enforced prohibitions on Jews leaving the settlement without permission. In 1942, a Gendarme found a 60-year-old Jewish man, named Abel, heading towards Podlipki village (Kuźnica gmina, Sokółka powiat). He beat and kicked Abel so severely that the man died the next day from his injuries.³

Living conditions were difficult for the Jews in Kuźnica Białostocka. Overcrowding was a persistent problem. Food was next to impossible to obtain in the burned-out town. Some Christians, for payment, did provide the Jews with provisions. Others smuggled bread and potatoes to their Jewish friends for no compensation. The Germans executed the Jews they caught conducting such transactions.⁴ Police terror and humiliation was a part of Jewish existence. In the fall of 1941, the Germans ordered a group of young women to clean some public latrines. When they protested, the women were arrested for insubordination and are presumed to have been executed. Another time, the Germans demanded the *Judenrat* order Rabbi Eckstein to join a forced labor brigade working

to retrieve boulders in the river. The policeman charged with guarding Eckstein beat him.⁵ A local Christian, Adolf Wołyniec, likely a member of the auxiliary police, was tried after the war for beating Jews in Kuźnica.⁶

On November 2, 1942, the Germans surrounded Kuźnica, in preparation for the expulsion of the Jewish community. Jews too sick or too old to travel were shot outside of their houses. The rest were loaded onto wagons or marched on foot the approximately 16 kilometers (9.9 miles) northeast to a transit camp, located in Kielbasin, a former estate just south of Grodno.⁷ Perhaps because an inmate from Kuźnica was appointed one of the two Jewish assistants of Karl Rinzler, the notoriously brutal commandant of the transit camp, the community was among the last to be expelled from Kielbasin. Sometime after December 14, 1942, they were driven on foot to the train station at Łosośna.⁸ Some sources claim they were sent from there to the Auschwitz extermination camp. However, the timing of the expulsion suggests the Kuźnica Jews more likely were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp and gassed on arrival. (German reversals at the Battle of Stalingrad [July 17, 1942–February 2, 1943] and simultaneous pressure created by German troops elsewhere returning home for the Christmas holidays created a shortage of railway stock for the expulsion of the Jews of *Distrikt Białystok* to the extermination camps. As a result, the Germans began, from mid-December, to send the Kielbasin inmates to Treblinka, which was much closer than Auschwitz.)

A number of Jews evaded deportation to Treblinka. Most likely on the day of the expulsion from Kuźnica Białostocka, 15 young families made their way to the Krynki ghetto, one of a handful of provincial ghettos that remained in *Distrikt Białystok* after November 2, 1942. Denied admittance there, they were forced to seek shelter elsewhere.⁹ Some Christian families also extended shelter to Kuźnica Jews. Anna Wojtkiewicz Rudź, the Christian mother-in-law of Stanisław Bałc, and her cousin, Józef Januszkiewicz, arranged the escape of Bałc from the Grodno ghetto. They hid him first in Radziewiczze village (Kuźnica gmina, Sokółka powiat) and then, with assistance from the local *sołtys*, in Nowodziel village.¹⁰ In Nowodziel, Jan Kocisz also extended shelter to a Kuźnica rabbi and his daughter.¹¹ Paulina Rapiej (later Borowik), a resident of Czuprynowo village, hid two daughters of a Kuźnica physician in a basement she dug for them in her home.¹²

The subsequent fates of the Jews are not known, but most are believed to have been among the 19 Jews known to have been executed after November 2, 1942, by members of the Kuźnica Gendarmerie post; 6 victims, discovered together in 1942, were executed by Gendarmes Paul Neuman, Franz Iwanski, Arthur Langner, and Fritz Teubert.¹³ A Jewish woman, her 14-year-old daughter, and three men in their 20s, executed in 1943, likely also were from Kuźnica.¹⁴ Another 6 victims had jumped from a train, probably the March 1943 transport that brought the surviving Jews of the Grodno I ghetto to the Białystok ghetto.¹⁵ The pre-war residences of 2 Jewish men shot in December 1943 by Gendarme Paul Neuman are unknown.¹⁶

SOURCES The sparse secondary accounts about the Kuźnica Białostocka Jewish community during World War II are divided about the existence of a ghetto. For works maintaining the documentation is insufficient to determine whether a ghetto existed in Kuźnica, see “Gmina żydowska przed 1939—Kuźnica,” on the educational section of ŻIH’s Web site, at www.jewishinstitute.org.pl/pl/gminy/miasto/64.html; and “Kuźnica,” on Polin, the Web site of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland, at <http://polin.org.pl>. The latter site notes the fire likely made the establishment of a ghetto impossible. For the works of historians asserting that a ghetto existed in Kuźnica, see the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 543–544; and Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: New York University Press, 2001), 2:695, with the second mistakenly locating Kuźnica today in the Republic of Belarus. Also useful, particularly for population and deportation figures, is Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 47 (tab. 7); and for Christian aid to Kuźnica Jews, Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi* 2 (1997): 173, 208. The brief references to the Kuźnica Białostocka community in the testimony of Feivel (or Fajwel) Wolf, “In Rinzler’s Hell,” in Dov Rabin, ed., *Pinkas Krinki* (Tel Aviv: ha-Irgunim shel yots’e Krinki bi-Medinat Yi’sra’el uva-tefutsot, 1970), remain the most significant means, at present, to date the expulsion of the Kuźnica Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Archival documentation for the Kuźnica Białostocka Jewish community under German occupation during World War II includes IPN (SOB 389); IPN-Bi (Ankiety, ASG, Ds-86/67, Ko-109/87, and S-610/71); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 1, 2 [200–202, and 204]); and YVA (M-1-B/1530, M-1-E/1486, M-49-E (e.g., 5387), and O-22/50).

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NOTES

1. “Kuźnica,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:543.

2. IPN-Bi, Ko-109/87 (formerly 1/1030), p. 45 (deposition, Zygmunt Rudź), for Grodno; and Datner, “Eksterminacja,” p. 47 (tab. 7), for Sokółka.

3. IPN-Bi, S-610/71 or Ds 86/67 (1/387), p. 6 (deposition, Stanisław Czepiel).

4. “Kuźnica,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:543.

5. *Ibid.*, with sources noting the last rabbi of Kuźnica was not Eckstein but Ajzyk Lejb Stolar.

6. IPN, SOB 389, case of Adolf Wołyniec.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 4 (deposition, Józef Czepiel).

8. Wolf, “In Rinzler’s Hell,” pp. 285–291.

9. “Kuźnica,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:544.

10. IPN-Bi, Ko-109/87, p. 45.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 60 (administrative note, Commander of Citizen’s Militia in Kuźnica).

12. *Ibid.*, p. 39 (deposition, Edward Rapiej).

13. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 1, 2/200, pp. 1–2.

14. IPN-Bi, Ds 86/67 or S-610 (1/389), p. 19 (deposition, Edward Kurczewski); and S-610/71 or S-620 (1/387), p. 6.

15. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1, 2/202, pp. 1–2, with the December 1943 date listed here likely incorrect, as no Jews were concentrated anywhere in the region by then.

16. *Ibid.*, reel 1, 2/203, pp. 1–2.

ŁAPY

Pre-1939: Łapy, town, Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Łapy, raion center, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Łapy, Białystok powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Łapy lies on the Narew River, about 28 kilometers (17.4 miles) southwest of Białystok. From 1870, it was home to a large shop established to repair the locomotives and wagons used on the Warsaw-to-St. Petersburg railway. Its 1921 population of 3,495 included 624 Jews.

In World War II, Łapy initially sustained German aerial bombardment, with several Jews perishing in the attacks.¹ After briefly occupying the town, the Germans withdrew at the end of September, 1939, to make way for the Red Army.

The Germans reoccupied Łapy around June 24, 1941. They immediately searched Jewish homes for valuables and to find evidence of Communist sedition. As a result of the searches, 13 Jews were arrested and shot in the early summer of 1941.²

The Germans ordered a Judenrat created; however, evidence of its activities remains scarce.

In July 1941, the Germans established an open ghetto in Łapy, likely by forbidding Jews from leaving the boundaries of the town without permission. Szymon Datner, the first scholar to recognize the existence of an open ghetto in Łapy, does not indicate whether the Germans took additional steps to limit Jewish residence there. The Germans conscripted the Łapy Jews for forced labor. Women worked at agricultural labor on nearby estates. Men labored on local road construction projects and unloaded materials and repaired track beds at the railway station and at the train repair facility, controlled in this period by the SS.³

The Germans consolidated some smaller nearby Jewish communities in the Łapy ghetto, including, in September 1941, the 17 Jewish residents of Kowalewszczyzna village. However, Jews in other nearby communities were sent to ghettos much further away. In August 1942, for instance, Gendarmes at the Łapy Gendarmerie ordered the Jewish inhabitants of Pietkowo deported. When 33 of the 40 Jews fled to Łapy, the Gendarmes refused the 25,000 Reichsmark (RM) bribe the fugitives offered to live in the Łapy ghetto. Instead, they ordered the Łapy Judenrat to turn over the Pietkowo Jews. They were sent in a closed train wagon to the ghetto in Jeziory, in Kreis Grodno.⁴

At the end of October, some local Poles had informed the Jews that they had been ordered to bring 150 wagons on

November 2, 1942, to Łapy to assist with the deportation of the Jewish community. Many Jews are believed to have sought hiding places outside of Łapy. Another approximately 300 Jews from Łapy and Sokoły decided to flee, at 4:00 A.M., while they were waiting for the start of labor at the railway station and saw an SS unit approaching Łapy.

The SS took the rest of the Łapy Jewish community to a transit camp located on the southern outskirts of Białystok on a former training ground of the Polish 10th Cavalry Brigade. Some of the Łapy fugitives likely accepted “safe transit” offers to the Białystok transit camp extended by local Gendarmerie commanders in order to secure the return of hundreds of Łapy and Sokoły Jews known to have fled from the deportation.⁵ The only known Łapy survivor of the transit camp was Jadwiga Chinson Kretowicz, rescued from there by her husband Józef, a Christian. The rest of the Łapy Jews, perhaps as many as 450 people, were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp sometime between the end of November and December 15, 1942. They were all gassed on arrival.

Some Jewish fugitives in Łapy are known to have been sheltered by local Poles. Julian Charin, a prominent local physician and a member of the Polish Home Army (AK), received assistance from many Poles, arranged mostly by Henryk Bagiński and Feliks Zalewski, the respective heads of Roman Catholic churches in Łapy and Topczewo village. However, after another Pole betrayed Charin’s hiding place, he was shot on March 18, 1943, outside of Topczewo, by members of the Topczewo Gendarmerie post. The AK likely revenged his murder by executing the informant. Charin’s sister, Mina (later Omer), survived the war, sheltered first by Charin’s fiancée, Maria Kuzin, then by Zalewski, and finally by another priest in Hodyszewo village, most likely Józef Perkowski. In Łapy, Bagiński was determined to protect Kretowicz, whose conversion to Christianity he had sponsored. He used his Sunday homilies to urge his parishioners not to reveal the hiding places of Jews to authorities. She survived the war, as did the sisters Lea and Rivka Srebolov, sheltered by the owner of a Łapy cycle shop.⁶ Icchak Żółty reportedly perished at the hands of his Polish aid-giver when he could no longer afford to pay him.⁷

Only about 12 Łapy Jews, including 2 who had been in the Soviet interior, survived the war.

SOURCES Several published memoirs touch on life in Łapy during the war, including Sol Rubenstein and Toby Rubenstein, “Our Family: Łapy, Poland,” on the virtual Museum of Family History at www.museumoffamilyhistory.org/sfoah-lapy-rubinstein.htm; and the relevant sections on Łapy by the chronicler of the Sokoły Jewish community in Avidgor Ben-Dov, ed., *Deliverance. The Diary of Michael Maik. A True Story*, trans. Laia Ben-Dov (Kedumim, Israel: Keterpress, 2004).

Secondary works include Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 14, 35 (tab. 2); Leopold Lazarowitz and Simon Malowist, “Martyred Physicians,” in Louis Falstein, ed., *The Martyrdom of Jewish Physicians in Poland* (New York: Exposition Press, 1963), pp. 326–327, for Charin; and the relevant entry in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia*

of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 245–246.

As the entry indicates, a small literature examines the efforts of a group of about seven local priests, including in Łapy, to shelter Jews. Stanisław Falkowski, the most well known, is best remembered for assisting Józef Fajwiszys, the 15-year-old son of the noted religious composer and conductor Izrael Fajwiszys, as detailed in “Juzio,” in Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewinówna, eds., *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej: Polacy z pomocą Żydom, 1939–1945*, 3rd ed. (Warsaw: Świat Książki, 2007). However, at least one Polish scholar believes the priests, likely led by Roch Modzielewski, in Piekuty Nowe, and Józef Perkowski, from Hodyszewo village, assisted 40 to 60 fugitives of the liquidation of ghettos in Białystok, Brańsk, Czyżewo, Łapy, and Sokoły. Here see Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi 2* (1997): 163 ff. Most of the Jews were highly assimilated into Polish culture; others were Christian converts.

Documentation about the history of the Jews of Łapy under German occupation includes IPN-Bi (e.g., Ds [7/69, 298/68, 315/69, 317/68, 323/68, 325/68], Ko [27/87, 35/87, 50/80, 58/87, 107/88], Kpp [4/85], S [19/69, 101/69, 266/689, 311/68, 326/68, 315/69]); and YVA (e.g., O-16/3950, O-3/1336). Accounts describing forced labor at the train station and railway car repair facility are at AŻIH (e.g., 301/3602, 301/3950).

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NOTES

1. Rubenstein and Rubenstein, “Our Family.”
2. Maik, *Deliverance*, pp. 40–41.
3. Ibid., pp. 61–66, 75–82.
4. AŻIH, 301/2254, testimony of Abraham Blumental, p. 1; Zalman Sukman, “In the Village of Pietkowo,” in Shemu’el Kalisher, ed and trans., *Sokoli—ba-ma’avak le-bayim* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Sokoli be-Yisrael, 1975), pp. 221–223, available in English trans. at jewishgen.org.
5. Maik, *Deliverance*, p. 94.
6. Ibid.; Rubenstein and Rubenstein, “Our Family.”
7. Rubenstein and Rubenstein, “Our Family.” Icchak Żółty belonged to the same Żółty family discussed in the Sokoły entry.

ŁOMŻA

Pre-1939: Łomża, town and powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Łomża, raion center, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Lomscha, Kreis center, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Łomża, powiat center, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Łomża lies on the Narew River, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) west-northwest of Białystok. Its 1921 population of 22,014 included 9,131 Jews, the third-largest Jewish population of any locality in the pre-war Białystok województwo.

From September 1 to September 9, 1939, nearly 1,000 Łomża inhabitants perished during almost daily German aerial bombardments. On September 10–11, the Germans occupied

Łomża. German soldiers deported about 500 male Jews to a forced labor camp located near Königsberg. They almost all perished there.¹ Before evacuating Łomża to Soviet forces, Wehrmacht units in German-occupied Poland drove thousands of Jews, including those from Ostrów Mazowiecka and Ostrołęka, across the future German-Soviet border near Łomża. Thousands more arrived in Łomża voluntarily. However, in May 1940, Soviet authorities ordered the refugees to move further from the border. According to German estimates, the Łomża Jewish population stood at 7,500 to 9,000 by late June 1941. Jewish survivors place it at 12,000.

The Germans reoccupied Łomża on June 24–25, 1941. In early July, the SS established offices there. In October 1941, or in early 1942, Wolfgang Erdbrügger became the Gestapo chief for Kreis Lomscha. In late 1942, Ennulat replaced him. A regional civil administration, under Lomscha Kreiskommissar Dr. Karl (or Klaus) Heinrich Hermann von Groeben, was established in July or early August 1941. A German was appointed mayor. The Germans organized a Polish auxiliary police force. Little is known about its formation.

On July 4, Hermann Göring visited Łomża. That day, the Łomża military commander ordered Jews to wear yellow patches on the chest and back and for the kehilla to send 50 to 150 men to assist the SS to move into its new headquarters and houses. The SS took the Jews to a Soviet-era munitions testing range in the Czerwony Bór Forest, known as Giełczyn, and executed them.² A few days later, when the Łomża military commander ordered the kehilla to send 50 to 100 men for another Gestapo work assignment, at least two communal leaders, Rabbis Yaakov Tablicki and Yankl Gelciński (or Galczyński), were shot for refusing the order.³ From July 6 to July 20, the SS unleashed random anti-Jewish violence, rounding up and murdering about 1,000 to 2,000 mostly male Jews and executing them at Giełczyn.⁴



Destitute Jewish men sleep in the doorway of a building in the Łomża ghetto, ca. 1941.

USHMM WS #33456, COURTESY OF GFH

Around July 20, 1941, the SS suspended the violence, and military authorities ordered the formation of a 24-person Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Mendel Moszyński, a Łomża native, expelled from Germany in 1938. He probably was succeeded by Kaliński, a soap factory owner. The Germans ordered a 25-member Jewish police force created. Its commander, Solomon Herbert, also was a German refugee. The Germans made forced labor compulsory for all adult Jews.

At the end of July, the Germans ordered a ghetto established in an area of approximately 30,000 square meters (7.4 acres) in the old Jewish neighborhood, in Old Town, near the Narew River.⁵ Initially, it was unfenced, but once Jews moved there, they were forbidden from leaving the area without permission.

Although the Jews knew a ghetto was to be created, they may not have been given a specific date to move there. One day in early August, the Gendarmerie gave all Jews 15 minutes to relocate to the ghetto. The Jews could take only 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of belongings. German Gendarmes and Polish auxiliary police surrounded the established entry point to inspect the Jews' possessions and to forcibly confiscate valuables.⁶ That evening, German security forces shattered windows of houses in the ghetto, stole Jewish belongings there, and unsuccessfully attempted to provoke Poles who had not yet moved from the ghetto to attack Jews.⁷

On August 16, 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews assembled on Plac Zielony for a population survey. Upon its completion, the community was ordered to pay a population tax of 25 kilograms (55 pounds) in gold. The Germans threatened to open fire on the new Jewish quarter if the sum was not raised. The Germans also arrested 200 people from a list. The arrestees were executed at Giełczyn.⁸

In early September, the Germans expelled to the Łomża ghetto the Piątница and Łomżyca Jewish communities (about 250 to 300 people). The deportees joined a flood of refugees, including a small number of survivors of anti-Jewish violence in Wizna, Stawiski, Jedwabne, and Rutki-Kossaki. Many Soviet expellees also returned to Łomża to enter the ghetto. In early September, the Judenrat paid half a million Reichsmark (RM) in a bribe for a ghetto expansion. It pushed the ghetto borders to the Narew River and added several apartment buildings near the Great Synagogue.⁹

The SS relied on another large-scale execution to further reduce the ghetto population. On September 1 or 17, 1941, or perhaps on Yom Kippur, with varying dates provided in different sources, the Arbeitsamt ordered all unemployed Jews, regardless of age, to assemble on Plac Zielony to be assigned jobs. An SS unit from Ostrołęka arrested 1,000 to 2,200 of the assembled Jews. Former residents of Piątница and Łomżyca may have been overrepresented in the group because they had yet to secure jobs. Outside of town, the SS released some skilled craftsmen. The remaining captives, 500 to 2,000 people, were executed at Giełczyn.¹⁰

After the execution, the Germans ordered a fence constructed around the ghetto by October 1, 1941. Its main gate was on the corner of Senatorska Street and the Old Square. In November, the Germans deported Jews from nearby localities

to the ghetto, including the inmates of the short-lived Jedwabne ghetto. Postwar officials in Łomża maintained the Jedwabne refugees increased the Łomża ghetto population by 1,000, but more recent research indicates the figure is too high. Likely, 7,000 to 8,000 people resided in the Łomża ghetto. However, this figure, most often cited by survivors, is difficult to reconcile with some estimates that as many as 5,000 Łomża Jews had perished in SS executions by the middle of October, unless the high 1941 Jewish population estimate of 12,000 is taken into account.¹¹

Some ghetto inmates labored at workshops eventually established in the ghetto for producing ammunition, soap, leather goods, boots, clothing, and grease. Most worked outside the ghetto at the sugar refinery, cotton gauze factory, and sawmill. Skilled and unskilled workers, from locksmiths and barbers to cleaning women, were assigned to the Gendarmerie, the Schutzpolizei, and the SS, in both Łomża and Ostrołęka. Still others labored for the Łomża municipal administration at tasks from street cleaning to construction and forestry projects. In the spring of 1942, approximately 600 conscripts worked on the Ostrołęka-to-Łomża and Rutki-to-Zambrów road construction projects.

Material conditions in the ghetto were poor. The bread rations were inadequate. Fuel, such as wood for winter heating, was impossible to obtain. Most Jews had difficulties finding Poles willing to barter food and fuel for material possessions.¹² The Polish auxiliary police brutally enforced prohibitions against Jews bringing food into the ghetto. At a checkpoint on the outskirts of town, several policemen discovered three Jews smuggling food on their way home from an Ostrołęka work detail and beat them to death.¹³ The Germans ordered the bodies of some Jews caught illicitly outside the ghetto strung to the ghetto gates. Under these conditions, gold became the only currency accepted for ordinary necessities such as firewood.¹⁴

At times the police used labor conscription as a guise for executions. The Gendarmes entered the ghetto to round up 30 to 40 Jews for a “work assignment.” The Jews never returned. Laborers sent on official Gestapo work assignments also disappeared. The Judenrat decided to fill all future Gestapo labor requests with the chronically ill and the physically and mentally handicapped.¹⁵

With about 8,000 people living in apartments previously occupied by 4,000, overcrowding also created problems with sanitation. The Jewish hospital continued to function, but the absence of medicine led in October 1942 to a typhus epidemic, which claimed many lives.

In late October 1942, many Jews received hints of the ghetto’s impending liquidation. On October 31, Manko, the German security officer responsible for the ghetto, ordered the Jewish Police to collect the best bedding from the ghetto and personally appropriated furniture from Jewish residents. He forcibly removed the Judenrat’s treasury. Most inmates believed their lives at risk. A few hundred fled. At 10:00 p.m., the SS augmented the ghetto’s Polish guard, illuminated its fence, and ordered a shoot-to-kill search for Jewish fugitives.

The ghetto was surrounded by SS reinforcements and Ukrainian auxiliaries.¹⁶

At 6:00 a.m., on November 2, 1942, an SS commander informed the Judenrat that because of the typhus epidemic the Łomża Jews were being transferred to a supposedly cleaner, disease-free camp in Zambrów, about 27 kilometers (17 miles) south of Łomża. Most of the escapees rounded up during sweeps of the forest a few days later also were brought to the Zambrów camp, a pre-war garrison at which the Germans had imprisoned 17,500 to 20,000 Jews from nearby localities to facilitate their expulsion to the extermination camps.

The Łomża Jews were among some of the first and last transit camp inmates to be deported from the Zambrów transit camp. They arrived at the Auschwitz extermination camp on January 13, 17, and 19, 1943, in three transports each carrying about 2,000 people. The Germans chose from the first transport 148 men and 50 women as concentration camp prisoners. They held back 225 men and no women from the second transport, which included the Czyżewo and Śniadowo communities. In the last transport, which also carried a part of the Zambrów community, the Germans held back another 164 men and 134 women as prisoners. The remaining 5,279 Jews were gassed on arrival. No known arrival record exists for a fourth transport of Łomża Jews that arrived in Auschwitz on January 17 or 18.¹⁷ Documentation also is sparse for a small Zambrów transport to a subcamp of the Stutthof concentration camp in Schippenbeil.¹⁸

No more than 16 of Łomża’s concentration camp prisoners lived to see the war’s end. About an equal number of fugitives survived hidden in and around Łomża.¹⁹

SOURCES A number of the archival sources cited below have been published in Polish in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1; *Studia*, p. 470 (AŻIH, Jedwabne ghetto inquiry); vol. 2; *Dokumenty*, p. 148 (AAN, 202/III-8/64), p. 152 (AAN, 202/I-45/944-52), pp. 230–233, 236–237 (AŻIH, 301/5825); and Mariusz Nowik, *Zagłada Żydów na ziemi łomżyńskiej* (Warsaw: Bellona, 2006), pp. 108–109, 118 (AŻIH, 301/2205).

The 1939 German occupation of Łomża forms a part of the subject of Chaim Shapiro, *Go My Son: A Young Jewish Refugee’s Story of Survival* (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1989). The yizkor book also contains testimonies by Jewish survivors. It is available in Hebrew, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Lomzah*, ed. Yom-Ṭov Leyński (Tel Aviv: Hotsa’at Irgun’ole Lomzah be-Yiśra’el Sefer Zikaron Lekehallas Lomza, 1952), and in Yiddish, *Lomzshe, ir oyfkum un untergang*, ed. H. Sobotka, trans. Ya’akov Kopl Brukhanski (New York, 1957). It is best read together with Chaim Shapiro, “How Not to Write a ‘Yizkor Book,’” *Jewish Observer* 14:8 (1980): 18–25. Polish eyewitness testimonies describing the executions of Jews at Giełczyn are in Zdzisław Sędziak, “Las giełczyński oskarża,” *Ziemia Łomżyńska*, no. 3 (1987): 228–231.

Secondary accounts include the Łomża entry in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 249–262, with English translations available

at Haskendim, a Jewish genealogy Web site, at www.hashkedim.com/lomza.html; and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 125–131.

Archival documentation on the World War II history of the Łomża Jewish community under German occupation includes AAN (e.g., 202 [I-45/4/944-52, III-8/2/64]); APŁmż (e.g., 106/48); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety [Jedwabne, Łomża], 301 [735, 1990, 2255, 2736, 3810, 4866, 4940, 4958, 5825, 6064]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/5863 [205 AR-Z 13/62, 205 AR 2689/65]); BA-MA (e.g., RH 26-211/84); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Bi (e.g., Ko-57/86, Ko-116/66, S-127/68); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 1, 2/174, 2/189, reel 14, 46/68); VHF (e.g., # 3473, 8378, 10975, 12830, 15371, 16564, 22626, 31971, 40131, 43021, 47523); and YVA (e.g., O-3/2930, M-49E [AŻIH] [e.g., 544]).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/735, testimony of Izaak Wiernik, pp. 1–3 (Polish trans.).

2. High and low range, respectively, in *ibid.*; also, 301/2267, testimony of Liza Bursztyn, p. 1.

3. Shapiro, “How,” pp. 18–25; BA-MA, RH 26-211/84, Sicherungsdienst 221, July 9–11, 1941, in Anlagen zum Kriegstagebuch, in Polish trans. in Machewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:161, respectively, for two and three executed.

4. AŻIH, 301/735, pp. 5–6; IPN-Bi, S-122/68, vol. 1, pp. 14–15 (deposition, Aleksander Konopko).

5. AŻIH, 301/735, p. 7.

6. *Ibid.*, 301/1990, testimony of Pinches (Pinchas) Gruszniewski, p. 1, 301/4866, testimony of Josef Chojnower (Chojnowski), p. 4, for differing interpretations about the relocation process.

7. *Ibid.*, 301/2267, p. 1.

8. VHF, # 3473, testimony of Benek Bolender; AŻIH, 301/2267, p. 2, 301/4866, p. 4, for differing interpretations about victims targeted.

9. AŻIH, 301/4958, testimony of Chaim Stawicki (or Sawicki), p. 1; VHF, # 12830, 43021, testimonies, respectively, of Hyman Rozenblum and Sydney Bloom.

10. Low range at AŻIH, 301/4866, pp. 4–5; high range, in 301/2267, p. 2, repeated at 301/4940, testimony of Samuel Lewent, p. 1; AAN, 202-III-8, vol. 1, p. 64, and I-45, vol. 4, pp. 944–952, for the Delegatura estimate of 1,800 Jews executed on September 1, 1941.

11. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/174, pp. 1–2, notes 7,000 Jews and 5,000 Poles executed at Giełczyn.

12. AŻIH, 301/2267, pp. 1–2.

13. *Ibid.*, 301/4866, p. 6.

14. IPN-Bi, S-122/68, pp. 6–7 (deposition, Franciszek Żero); AŻIH, 301/2267, p. 1.

15. AŻIH, 301/735, p. 9.

16. *Ibid.*, 301/2267, p. 2, 301/1990, p. 1, 301/4866, p. 6.

17. See *ibid.*, 301/4940, p. 1, for Lewent’s prisoner number, 89221, among a chronological group of 456 numbers from the period of the Zambrów transit camp deportation, unreported in Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 146–152.

18. AŻIH, 301/4958, p. 1.

19. *Ibid.*, 301/735, pp. 10–12, 301/3810, testimony of Szewa and Owsiej Lewita, pp. 1–7.

ŁUNNA (AKA WOLA OR ŁUNNA-WOLA)

Pre-1939: Łunna, village, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Łunna, Skidel’ raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Łunna, Mastya raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Łunna lies on the Niemen River about 35 kilometers (21.8 miles) southeast of Grodno. Its popular name, Łunna-Wola, dated to World War I, when German occupation authorities annexed to Łunna the neighboring southeastern village of Wola. Jewish residents also referred to their religious community as Łunna-Wola to recognize a union dating either from the war or its aftermath. In 1938, Łunna counted 1,964 residents, including 1,279 Jews, 536 Roman Catholics, and 149 Russian Orthodox believers. The Wola population numbered 548, including 392 Jews, 84 Roman Catholics, and 72 Russian Orthodox people.

Initially occupied in World War II by the USSR, Łunna, on June 22, 1941, came under Luftwaffe attack, targeted at a bridge and at an airbase constructed by Soviet authorities across the Niemen in Czerlona. Dozens of Jews perished, including the wife and two daughters of Tuvia Rotberg, the rabbi of Łunna.

The Wehrmacht occupied Łunna and Wola by June 28, 1941. A German military commander appointed a civilian administration, including a mayor, Stefan Nawracki, and a town council secretary, Franz Kaluzny. Both men likely were ethnic Germans. An auxiliary police force, composed of 12 to 15 mostly ethnic Poles, was led by Michał Urbanowicz. By the fall of 1941, a German civilian administration was established in Łunna. It was led by an Amtskommissar, a position filled by Teschner and, then from March 1943, by Fritz Kräkel. A Gendarmerie post, commanded by Meister Richter, employed at least four Reich Germans on each shift.¹

Upon occupying Łunna, the local military commander ordered the murder of at least three Jews, including Motel and Mula (or Shmuel) Murstein, falsely denounced as Communists by a local Polish shoemaker. A denunciation by the same shoemaker a few weeks later brought the execution of about six Jewish and Belorussian Communists.² Soldiers conscripted the Jews daily to clear away bombed-out buildings and to clean their wagons and horses. Some soldiers plundered Jewish homes. The military commander demanded the Jews surrender a large part of their valuables. He also issued a number of anti-Jewish decrees, including mandates to wear armbands, subsequently changed to a yellow Star of David on the chest and back; prohibitions on leaving the town without permission; and orders making forced labor obligatory for all adults.

By the end of July, the Germans had ordered a Jewish Council (Judenrat) and a Jewish police force established. The

Judenrat chair, Jakob Welbel, was a pre-war kehillah officer. Other council members included Abraham Jedwab, the liaison with the Germans; Zalman Gradowski, the sanitation officer; Yudel Nowik, responsible for food distribution; and Berl Kaplan, the labor coordinator. The Jewish Police commander, Israel Schneor, from a family of blacksmiths, oversaw a six- to eight-member force, which included Eliyahu Kaplan, the son of teacher Mendel Kaplan.

In the summer or early fall of 1941, an SS unit arrived in Łunna and compelled the Jews to remove and to burn the Torah scrolls and other holy books from the synagogues and Houses of Prayer. At least one Torah, saved from destruction by Chaykel Friedman, enabled the community to maintain an important part of its religious life.

In September 1941, on the eve of the Sukkot holiday, the Germans ordered a ghetto to be established in Wola. The Jewish residents of Wola remained in their houses, which were expected to accommodate the Łunna Jews. In one account, the move to the ghetto was orderly, with the Łunna Jews allowed to bring to Wola items for their personal use, including beds and construction materials. However, another survivor remembered the Jews receiving no advanced notice of the move and the Germans and the auxiliary police forcibly removing from the Jews the few possessions they had time to pack before being driven out of their homes to Wola.³

The Germans ordered the ghetto surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. Because they insisted traffic continue unobstructed on Wołpiańska Street, the main road through Wola, the fence divided the ghetto, with the houses on either side of the road forming the boundaries of two separate ghettos. A wooden bridge, constructed over the road, provided for pedestrian traffic between the ghettos. The auxiliary police guarded the ghettos from the outside. The Jewish Police maintained order inside the ghettos.

Some ghetto inmates worked at the former Soviet air base, disassembling Russian planes and sorting and packing their parts for shipment to the Reich. Others labored at the Łunna sawmill. Local Christians also contracted Jewish labor for agricultural work, home repairs, and construction projects. The Amtskommissar ordered ghetto inmates to perform a number of short-term tasks. When a water-supply pipe broke at the Łunna sawmill, Teschner commanded women and children from the ghetto to work around the clock for several days in freezing temperatures to carry water from the river to power the generator. The most dangerous and humiliating labor came when Teschner hosted hunting parties and organized a brigade of ghetto laborers to swim out to retrieve fowl shot by his guests.⁴

Because five to seven families were assigned to each of the houses in the ghetto and even more families lived together in the Bet Midrash and the synagogue, the inmates eased overcrowding by adding a second floor to the synagogue. In summer vacation residences, they constructed basements, for makeshift furnaces, to make the houses habitable in the winter. Some families dug subterranean bunkers in which to live. Because the fence had left half of the ghetto waterless, the

Judenrat organized families to dig wells. After the Germans ordered all Jewish livestock confiscated, the Judenrat arranged for the return of 10 cows, with which it supplemented the skim milk rations of children. Some residents planted vegetable gardens. Others illicitly took orders for clothes and shoes from Christians across the fence or peddled homemade items, such as lighters (made from airplane tubing), for which food was accepted as payment. Some craftsmen snuck out of the ghetto to work in villages, for example, to sew clothes for Christians in exchange for bread, butter, and flour.

The local auxiliary police checked the ghetto fence daily, fining the Judenrat 10 Reichsmark (RM) for every suspected breach. Illegal departures from the ghetto sometimes resulted in death. Meister Richter executed Joseph Burstein, on July 3, 1942, for escaping from the ghetto during the night and allegedly resisting arrest. He shot Josel Niemenski, on the night of July 10, for a similar offense.⁵ Two butchers, including one surnamed Levine, caught outside the ghetto also were executed.

In the spring of 1942, the Germans ordered hundreds of male Jews conscripted for labor outside Łunna. One group, sent to the Grodno I ghetto, joined a railway labor brigade. Another 120 to 150 men were sent to a labor camp near Brzostowica Wielka, to widen and pave the Białystok-to-Wołkowysk road. Most Łunna inmates at the camp returned to the ghetto in the early fall of 1942.

By then many Łunna ghetto residents no longer had the material possessions to barter for food or to meet German material demands. In the fall of 1942, the Polish police regularly entered the ghetto to harass its residents. Teschner also threatened the Judenrat members with death for not coming up with a list of demanded items. A local physician may have supplied the Judenrat the items covertly.⁶ Overcrowding and the poor diet had bred disease. Many were sick with typhus by late October 1942.⁷

On November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Łunna ghetto, expelling its approximately 1,550 residents to the Kielbasin transit camp. They lived there in deplorable conditions for over a month together with 22,000 to 28,000 other Jews from about 22 nearby communities. Among the Łunna Jews subjected to the arbitrary violence of Karl Rinzler, the camp commander, was Rivka Pacowski, a hair stylist assigned to give him a daily shave. One day Rinzler shot her dead.⁸ The Łunna Jews smuggled to Kielbasin the surviving Torah and commemorated the second day of Hanukkah on December 5, 1942, before being expelled to the railway station for deportation to the Auschwitz extermination camp.⁹

Upon arriving at Auschwitz II-Birkenau on December 8, 1942, almost all the Jews in the transport, likely between 2,169 and 2,769 people, were murdered, as the Germans held back just 231 men, including about 150 from Łunna, as concentration camp prisoners. By the fall of 1944, the approximately 30 surviving Łunna prisoners mostly were assigned to the Sonderkommando unit. There, Zalman Gradowski, the Judenrat member, and Józef Dereszyński joined 5 others in planning the Sonderkommando uprising on October 7, the

only armed uprising at Auschwitz. They perished during the suppression of the rebellion, along with at least 3 other former Łunna ghetto residents.

The Łunna Jewish community was not reestablished after the war. The less than 15 survivors emigrated, settling mostly in the United States, Canada, Argentina, and Israel.

SOURCES As well as archival documentation, this entry is also based on the extensive research of Ruth Marcus, a daughter of a Łunna native, Yitzchak “Yitzl” Eliashberg. Her work is available in English on the Lunna ShtetLinks site at jewishgen.org, www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/lunna, with the material cited in the entry drawn from the several sections available under the link titled “During World War II and the Holocaust.” Marcus also published a part of her research in Hebrew as *Once There Was a Small Shtetl Named Lunna* (Ruth Marcus, 2005). An Eisenschmidt testimony appears, too, in Gideon Greif, *We Wept without Tears: Testimonies of the Jewish Sonderkommando from Auschwitz* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 215–256.

Though from a former Łunna resident of the Białystok ghetto, also valuable is Etel Berachowicz-Kossowska, “The Destruction of Lune-Volie,” *Grodner Opklangen. Ecos de Grodno* (Buenos Aires), no. 2 (1949), in an English translation, by Yeshaya Metal, at the Lunna ShtetLinks site under the Yevnin Family Album link.

A testimony by Nathan[-Nisel] Lewin about the experiences of the Łunna community at Kiełbasin is in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992), 1:188–189.

Questions exist about the official figures for the Łunna transport to the Auschwitz extermination camp. See Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: Wykazy imienne. Polish Jews in KL Auschwitz: Name Lists* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004); USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), 1-1-54, pp. 37–38; GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4; *Amidst a Nightmare of Crime. Manuscripts of Members of Sonderkommando* (Oświęcim: State Museum at Oświęcim, 1973), pp. 75–207; Ber Mark, *The Scrolls of Auschwitz*, trans. Sharon Neemani (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1985), pp. 173–205; Tikva Fatal-Knaani, *Zo lo otah Grodnah, Kehilat Grodnah u-sevivatah ba-milhamah uva-sho’ab 1939–1943* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001), pp. 184–185.

The first 20 pages of the Gradowski diary, which cover the period of the Łunna ghetto, still await publication. The diary is not a part of the historical collections of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum because the Red Army investigators who discovered the manuscript in March 1945 buried in metal canisters in the ashes near crematorium II at Birkenau donated it to the Museum of Military Medicine, now in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Helpful, too, is the Łunna entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities, Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 380–383.

Documents concerning the history of the Łunna Jewish community under German occupation in World War II include GAGO (e.g., 1-1-2, p. 251, 1-1-54, pp. 2, 37–38, 1-1-141, p. 2, and 1-1-335, pp. 83–84); GARF (7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58); IPN (e.g., SOOI 26); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31); RGVA (e.g.,

1323-2-244, p. 98); USHMM (e.g., RG-11.001M.15 [RGVA] and RG-53.004M [GAGO]); VHF (# 2004, 2144, and 42375); YIVO (46); and YVA (e.g., O-3/5227).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-280, pp. 5, 7–8, 1-1-295, pp. 54, 61–72, and 1-1-312, pp. 75–78.
2. Eliezier Eisenschmidt interview, information from Ruth Marcus to Laura Crago, March 17, 2009.
3. Compare Eisenschmidt testimony, in Marcus, “During World War II and the Holocaust”; and VHF, # 2144.
4. VHF, # 2144.
5. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 1, 1-1-2, p. 251, and reel 2, 1-1-141, p. 2.
6. Berachowicz-Kossowska, “The Destruction”; and VHF, # 2004, testimony of Leon Lewin.
7. Eisenschmidt, in Greif, *We Wept*, pp. 217–218; and VHF, # 2144.
8. Klarsfeld, *Documents*, 1:188–189.
9. Eisenschmidt interview, March 17, 2009, Marcus to Crago.

MARCINKAŃCE

Pre-1939: Marcinkańce (Yiddish: Marcinkonis), village, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Martsynkantsy, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1940–1941: Marcinkonys, Alytus uezd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Marcinkance, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Marcinkony, Varena rajoras, Alytus apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Marcinkańce lies in a forest about 50 kilometers (31 miles) north-northeast of Grodno. By 1929, about 40 percent of its 860 residents were Jews.

On June 24, 1941, a Wehrmacht unit passed through Marcinkańce. A small German military force remained in the village to secure the Marcinkańce train station. A group of Lithuanian “partisans” or white armbands, led by J.J. Žuraula, assumed control of the local civilian administration.

The Lithuanian officials conscripted the Jews for forced labor at the train station and compelled them to engage in meaningless, humiliating tasks. The Lithuanian police arrested several Jews for communism, including Moishe Sosnovich and David Podbenesky, the first Jews executed in Marcinkańce under German occupation. Lithuanian and German authorities periodically arrived to loot Jewish property.¹ The Lithuanian heads of the Alytus County civilian and military administrations issued a series of county-wide anti-Jewish decrees, including a directive on July 12, 1941, that required Jews to wear a yellow Star of David on their backs and chest, forbade them from leaving their towns without a special permit, and made forced labor obligatory for all adult Jews.²

Most likely in July, the authorities ordered the Jews to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Aaron Kobrowski (or Ko-

brovsky), a merchant, was its chair. The council collected the “contributions” demanded of the Jews. To raise them, it taxed community members. The taxes subsequently went to bribe German civil administrators and officials.

By early fall of 1941, the Marcinkańce Jews believed they would be enveloped by the mass murder of the Lithuanian Jews, even though the commander of the train station promised his protection and a new Lithuanian civil administrator, who arrived in early September, complained about German officials thrice rejecting his appeals to include them in the ongoing executions. Fearing an impending German recognition of the 1940 southern territorial extension of Lithuania might lead to their deaths, the Jews, on September 19, 1941, fled en masse to the ghetto of Druskieniki in a Lithuanian border town, with a famous spa, over which the Germans early had exercised authority. On October 1, 1941, the Germans incorporated Marcinkańce into Kreis Grodno, which, in turn, was subordinated to the German police and civilian authorities in Białystok. When the German police drove out the Lithuanian administrators of Marcinkańce, the Jews returned home.

Most likely at the beginning of November 1941, Czapons, the German Amtskommissar in Marcinkańce, ordered the Jews to move to a ghetto. Initially, it was located in just 3 houses 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from Marcinkańce. The Jewish Council bribed Czapons to enlarge the ghetto. The next day, he announced an expanded ghetto area, of 14 small houses, located on 1.5 hectares (3.7 acres) of land, near the railway station. The Jews were required to surround the ghetto with a wooden fence. A small, six- to seven-person Jewish police force, commanded by Berke Aizenshtat, guarded the ghetto from the inside. The Jewish Police understood its duty broadly. It believed its mission was to protect the Jewish community from threats posed by all Christians.³

In Marcinkańce the Germans concentrated Jews from other nearby localities, including from Rudnia, Kolaniki (Lithuanian: Kabeliai), and Olkieniki (Lithuanian: Valkininkai). A handful of Jews from Varėna (part of which prior to the war had been Polish Orany) and Butrimonys also had fled to Marcinkańce. The Jews from these communities probably numbered less than 50 people, as almost all sources place the ghetto population at 300 to 400 people.

Material conditions in the ghetto were better than in most places. Admittedly, ghetto inmates were conscripted for labor at four main workplaces: the railway station, on the roads, in forestry labor, and in the mushroom-processing (canning) factory. But some of the Jews managed to resume their pre-war trade with the inhabitants of neighboring villages. As a result, according to survivors, “Compared to the other ghettos, the Jews of the Marcinkańce ghetto lived very well.”⁴

However, in the summer of 1942, tensions reemerged after 70 Jewish refugees arrived in Marcinkańce with horrific accounts of the massacre of entire Jewish communities in the east. As a result, the Jewish Police intensified their watch for any unusual activity by the Germans. By the fall of 1942, a group of young people made plans to join the partisans. The

Jewish Council arranged for them to smuggle 12 guns into the ghetto. The resistance movement did not have a chance to act because the German Aktion to liquidate the ghetto started before its preparations were complete.

At about 5:00 A.M., on November 2, 1942, a small force of about 16 Germans, under the command of Gendarmerie Hauptwachmeister Albert Wietzke, from the nearby Sobakince (Polish: Sobakińce) post, surrounded the ghetto. Among the Germans were local forestry, agricultural, railway, and customs officials mobilized to assist the Gendarmes. At 6:00 A.M., Amtskommissar Czapons informed the Judenrat that the Jews had been ordered sent to another location for work and gave them three hours to pack their belongings. The timing of events indicates that the Jews were to be deported, first to the Kiełbasin transit camp, near Grodno, and from there to either the Auschwitz or Treblinka extermination camps.

However, the Marcinkańce Jews resisted the deportation order. Forewarned by the Jewish Police of the arrival of the Germans, most of the Jews had refused to assemble. At 8:00 A.M., a frustrated Wietzke demanded that the Jewish Council members bring the Jews from their houses. Once about 150 Jews had appeared, Kobrowski, the Judenrat chair, cried out: “Jews, whoever wants to live, let him run where he can!”⁵ As the Jews fled, Wietzke and another Gendarme inside the ghetto opened fire.⁶ The perimeter guards shot Jews escaping over the ghetto’s fence. About 105 to 190 Jews were shot dead or perished subsequently in grenade attacks when they followed the example of the Judenrat chair and refused to abandon their bunkers.⁷

The Gendarmes, assisted by the local police and peasants from several nearby villages, searched for the 150 to 200 surviving Jews. Only a few peasants, such as the Lithuanian Jonas Balevičius from Mustejka (Lithuanian: Musteika), did all they could to help the Jews. As a result, 90 to 100 of the Jews were murdered over the next few weeks.⁸

Before the 1943 New Year, some of the survivors managed to obtain arms. Eight Jews, led by Moishe Kobrowski, raided a Marcinkańce bakery, shooting the German baker dead and stealing enough bread for two months. Fearing denunciations by local peasants, the Jews in the Kobrowski group decided to move deeper into the forest. There, they formed a family company, led by Icchak Kobrowski, a brother who had fled from the Grodno I ghetto. A few survivors from Druskieniki and Porzecze joined the group, which in 1943 was recognized as a separate family unit of the Soviet partisan Davidov brigade.

About 46 Marcinkańce Jews, mostly those from the Kobrowski family group, survived the war. After the Red Army liberated Marcinkańce in June 1944, some of the survivors joined the new village police force and assisted a Soviet People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) unit searching for German collaborators. Of those arrested, 14 were executed for various crimes, including for denouncing the hiding places of Jews.⁹

SOURCES Some of the archival documentation cited below, including an English translation of YVA, O-33/2112, at the

New York Public Library, Dorot Jewish Division, titled “Part II: Liquidation and Heroic Epic of the Jews of Marcinkonis,” by its compiler, Lejb Koniuchowsky (or Konikhovsky), is available on the Kobrowski family history Web site, at www.kobrowski.com. The translation served as the basis for Koniuchowsky, “The Liquidation of the Jews of Marcinkonis: A Collective Report,” *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* 8 (1953): 205–223. It also is available, along with several alternate translations of the YVA documentation, at the Kobrowski family history Web site.

An official World War II German investigation into the November 2, 1942, massacre of Marcinkańce’s Jewish community during the ghetto’s liquidation was brought to light by Christopher R. Browning, “The Holocaust in Marcinkance in the Light of Two Unusual Documents,” in Shmuel Almog, ed., *The Holocaust—the Unique and the Universal: Essays Presented in Honor of Yehuda Bauer* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem and the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University, 2001), pp. 66–83. It is placed in a larger context by the same author in Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 143–169. The documentation on which Browning built his studies is included in the archival references listed below. Also valuable are the relevant sections of a memoir from a nephew of the Kobrowski family brigade commander, by Alexandre Blumstein, *A Little House on Mount Carmel* (Portland, OR: Valentine Mitchell, 2002); and the work by Arūnas Bubnys, “Holocaust in Lithuanian Province in 1941,” on the Web site of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania (Tarpautinė komisija nacių ir sovietinio okupacinių režimų nusikaltimams Lietuvoje įvertinti), at www.komisija.lt/en/.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Marcinkańce during the Holocaust includes AŽIH (301/5387); GAGO (1-1-59, pp. 1–22); GARF (7021-94-3, p. 26); RGVA (1323-2-244, pp. 99–108); USHMM (e.g., RG-11.001M [RGVA] and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., reel 2, 1-1-150, p. 18, and reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 25, 68–72); VHF (# 24735, 30395, 49631, and 48001); and YVA (e.g., O-33/2112).

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NOTES

1. YVA, O-33/2112, Collective Eyewitness Report by Shloyme Peretz, Khane Garfing, Lyb Kobrowski, Khaeyem Kobowsky, written down by Leyb Konikhovsky, Ulm, August 1948 (hereafter cited as Konikhovsky report). Quotations and pagination from the translation by Jonathan Boyarin, on the Kobrowski family history Web site cited from there, pp. 1–5.

2. Bubnys, “Holocaust in Lithuanian Province in 1941,” p. 5.

3. Konikhovsky report, pp. 8–9, noting the ghetto was established the day after Passover 1942; and Bubnys, “Holocaust in Lithuanian Province,” p. 10, for the cited date, which better coincides with the timing of the establishment of ghettos in Kreis Grodno.

4. Konikhovsky report, pp. 9–10.

5. Ibid., pp. 10–14; and AŽIH, 301/5387, testimony of Josef Niankowski, p. 2, noting the Judenrat chair warned: “Run away! They are leading us to our deaths!”

6. Whether Wietzke opened fire once the Jews had started to flee or fired while the Jews were standing within the confines of the ghetto formed the basis of a German investigation, prompted by forestry officer Hans Lehmann, who, though standing 300 to 350 meters (about 1,000 feet) away from Wietzke, reported that no Jews had left the fenced area when the attack began; see USHMM, 53.004M (GAGO), reel 1, 1-1-59, pp. 1–22.

7. Ibid., pp. 2–11, 14–16, with 132 victims listed here, on pp. 2–5; and *ibid.*, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99, noting 150 victims. Jewish survivors mention 105 and 190 victims, respectively, in Konikhovsky report, pp. 10–14; and AŽIH, 301/5387, p. 1.

8. Respectively, AŽIH, 301/5387, p. 2; and Konikhovsky report, pp. 14–31; with USHMM, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, pp. 99–108, noting about half as many victims shot in Kreis Grodno in November.

9. Konikhovsky report, pp. 10–78; GARF, 7021-94-3, pp. 26–28, noting the murder of 289 Jews, including 85 women and 132 children; and Bubnys, “Holocaust in Lithuanian Province,” p. 10.

MICHAŁOWO (AKA MICHAŁOWO-NIEZBUDKA)

Pre-1939: Michałowo, village, Białystok powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mikhalovo, Zabłudov raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Michalowo, Kreis Bialystok, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Michałowo, Białystok powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Michałowo lies on the Supraśl River, almost 35 kilometers (21.7 miles) east-southeast of Białystok and 9.3 kilometers (5.8 miles) south-southeast of Gródek Białostocki. Its transformation after 1832 into a regional center for the manufacture of wool flannel and cording depended on skilled German-speaking craftsmen from Prussia. Jews came to outnumber its approximately 1,000 German residents only after World War I. Its 1921 population of 2,176 included 887 Jews, 534 Russian Orthodox followers (Belorussians), 458 Roman Catholics (Poles), 291 Protestants (Germans), and 6 people of other religious faiths. In 1937, on the eve of World War II, 732 Jews lived in Michałowo.

Michałowo marked one of the easternmost points of the German military advance in September 1939. However, in mid-September, German forces ceded Michałowo to Soviet occupation under the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. In 1940, Soviet authorities transferred to the Reich the 196 ethnic German residents of Michałowo. On June 21, 1941, local authorities in Michałowo arrested 20 Jews, mostly large factory owners and their families, and deported them to Kargosok, Tomsk, Siberia.

On June 23, 1941, the second day of the German invasion of the USSR, a Red Army unit accidentally set its barracks on fire as it was evacuating Michałowo. The blaze, which engulfed all of Fabryczna Street, destroyed many residential buildings and

an even greater number of businesses. Four days later, on June 27, a Wehrmacht unit captured Michałowo.

Orsche (Arsche), the German military commander, immediately ordered the Michałowo Jews confined to a ghetto. He ordered it established in the center of the fire damage, on Sienkiewicz, Gródek, Leśna, and Fabryczna Streets. It was fenced with barbed wire. It was policed 24 hours a day, on the orders of the local military administration.¹

The ghetto population stood at 1,500.² Its population included as many as several hundred Jews expelled from Zabłudów. The origins of the additional 575 to 600 inmates are unknown.

The inmates of the Michałowo ghetto resided in 12 peasant farmhouses and in the charred ruins of factory buildings. The rubble on which the ghetto stood combined with the overcrowding to spark hunger and the onset of disease. Orsche imposed tough penalties on local villagers for extending assistance to the ghetto inmates. After Gendarmes caught Teofila Wieremiejczyk providing milk to several ghetto residents, they beat her husband and ordered him to pay a 50 Reichsmark (RM) fine.³

With the arrival, probably at the beginning of September 1941, of German civil officials in Gródek Białostocki, Paul Melzer, the new Amtskommissar, ordered the Jews released from the Michałowo ghetto and permitted them to return to their pre-war homes. Many Jews discovered they no longer had places to live, because Poles and Belorussians, whose homes had been burned to the ground, had taken over all of the Jewish houses that had survived the fire.

Melzer demanded the Michałowo Jews turn over whatever material possessions they had managed to save from the fire. He ordered the Jews conscripted for street cleaning and road construction projects.⁴ Because little else is known about the subsequent wartime history of the Michałowo Jewish community, it is impossible to determine whether Melzer later ordered an open ghetto established there.

On November 2, 1942, an SS unit arrived to transfer the Michałowo Jews to a transit camp located on the southern outskirts of Białystok, at the pre-war training grounds of the Polish 10th Cavalry Regiment. The Michałowo expulsion was part of a larger SS Aktion in which Lothar Heimbach, the head of the Białystok Gestapo, and Fritz Friedel, the Judenreferent at Białystok, organized the liquidation of almost all the provincial ghettos of Distrikt Białystok on one day. Friedel ordered SS officials to each Kreis, designating them as special plenipotentiaries. In Kreis Białystok the plenipotentiaries were Berg Tripps and Richard Dibus. The Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Białystok coordinated the liquidation Aktion with the civil administration (Kreiskommissaren) and received support from the Gendarmerie.⁵

The Michałowo Jews lived at the Białystok transit camp for 3 to 10 weeks before the Germans sent them to the Treblinka extermination camp. In Michałowo, Gendarmes searched for Jewish fugitives. A few months after the deportations, they shot dead the teenage sons of Mielnicki, the former mill owner, in

the meadow near the Jewish cemetery.⁶ According to Christian witnesses, in the spring of 1943, German functionaries shot 100 to 300 Jews, including women and children, in the nearby Kosaczewo Forest.⁷ Whether the Jews were from Michałowo or from other local ghettos is unknown.

Some Michałowo Jews managed to find temporary refuge in the Białystok ghetto. Among them was survivor Mery (Marie) Kaplan (later Mendelson). In August 1943, during the final liquidation of the ghetto, first Otto Beneschek and later Artur Schade, Nazi Party members charged with managing textile plants in Białystok, sheltered Kaplan. Schade, a member of the Białystok-based German anti-Fascist resistance cell headed by Otto Busse, assisted Kaplan and several other Białystok Jews in joining the “Kadima” partisan group.⁸

After the war, Melzer was tried in Poland and found guilty of the executions in 1942 of seven Polish citizens suspected of belonging to the underground. He was sentenced to death.⁹

SOURCES Important published works include the yizkor book by Zipora Lyvne, *Ayarati Mikhalovab: Pirke bavai be-baye ayarab Yebudit* (Tel Aviv: ‘Am ha-sefer, 1975); the relevant entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 417–420; Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966):16, 24–25; Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 5, pt. 1, *Europe and Other Countries* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007), pp. 1–2, 143; Leszek Nos, *Monografia Gminy Michałowo* (Białystok, 1996), available electronically at www.michalowo.ug.gov.pl/; and the effort by young Michałowo Poles to understand their multiethnic past of their village, *Zobaczyć to, czego nie ma. Księga pamięci Michałowa* (Białystok: Fundacja Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku Uniwersitas Białostocensis, 2007), available electronically at www.supelek.uwb.edu.pl/Ksiega.pdf.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Michałowo under German occupation includes AŻIH (i.e., Ankiety); BA-L (B 162/14223); IPN (SOB 398); IPN-Bi (1/507, 1/771, S-147/68); VHF (e.g., # 45421); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. IPN-Bi, 1/507 (deposition, C. Rzaczkowski).
2. AŻIH, Ankiety, as cited in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945. Informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 317.
3. IPN-Bi, 1/507 (deposition, H. Krzętowska).
4. Ibid. (deposition, Rzaczkowski).
5. See BA-L, B 162/14223 (II 205 AR-Z 226/60, Verdict, LG-Biel, April 14, 1967, case of Dr. Wilhelm Altenloh and others), pp. 57–77.
6. IPN-Bi, 1/507 (deposition, Rzaczkowski).
7. Ibid. (depositions, J. Jarocki and M. Syta).
8. VHF, # 45421; Yad Vashem recognized Schade, in 1995, and Beneschek, in 1996, as Righteous Among the Nations.
9. IPN, SOB 398.

MILEJCZYCE

Pre-1939: Milejczyce, village, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mileichytsy, Kleshcheli raion, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Milejczyce, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Siemiatycze powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Milejczyce lies 75 and 40 kilometers (47 and 25 miles), by road, south of Białystok and Bielsk Podlaski, respectively. In the 1920s, it was transformed into a leading Jewish retreat for those suffering from tuberculosis. Between 2,000 and 4,000 Jews annually sought cures at the sanatoria established amid the pine forests surrounding Milejczyce. In 1935, the full-time Jewish population of 894 made up 45 percent of its 2,000 inhabitants.

In September 1939, the German army briefly occupied Milejczyce. There were no casualties among the civilian population before the Germans withdrew to make way for the Red Army, under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. During the Soviet occupation, the Jewish population expanded to 1,275.

On June 23, 1941, German forces again captured Milejczyce after a brief battle. As the German troops advanced through Milejczyce, a member of the Soviet Home Guard (factory protection service) shot a German officer at the cable factory. In reprisal, the Germans arrested 183 local inhabitants, locked them in a cellar on the market square, and shot 10 of the prisoners. Among the murdered were three Jews, Chaim (or Rubin), Szmul (or Srulko), and Icko Widzowski, three Poles, and four Belorussians.¹ After a senior German officer intervened, the remaining prisoners were released.

Once the town was no longer in the area of the front line, a German civil administration was established under the control of the Amtskommissar in Kleszczele. A German was named head, or mayor, of Milejczyce. In the summer of 1941, a German Gendarmerie (rural police) post was established in the former Jewish communal building. Its commander initially was Gendarmerie Meister Hugo Günther. In 1942, Hauptwachtmeister Franz Schülke replaced him; Josef Schleicher later succeeded Schülke. Among the 21 Gendarmes based in Milejczyce were Franz Krotki and Hans Brochmann. They were assisted by roughly the same number of non-German local policemen.²

In the spring of 1942, most likely acting on orders issued by the Bielsk Kreiskommissar authorities in Milejczyce, Jews were confined to a ghetto located on Rogacka and Kuźmicki Streets. Likely in August, the Jews were made to erect a wooden fence, topped with barbed wire, around the ghetto. The ghetto population of 1,000 included refugees from the nearby localities of Nurzec (Milejczyce gmina, Bielsk Podlaski powiat), Siemiatycze, and Drohiczyn.³

The Gendarmerie had orders to prevent the Jews from leaving the ghetto, although the guard was not particularly strict. The Jews were made to perform forced labor, including

road construction work, and to complete other tasks for the Germans. The conditions of life inside the ghetto were poor, as there was insufficient food and overcrowding. A Jewish Council was appointed. A Jewish police force maintained order inside the ghetto.⁴

On the first days of November 1942, most likely on November 3–4, members of the local Gendarmerie, assisted by forces of Reserve Police Battalion 13, liquidated the ghetto. The Germans shot 3 Jews they deemed unfit to travel. An armed escort transported the rest of the Milejczyce Jewish community to the Kleszczele ghetto. The Germans permitted the Jews to take with them only a small amount of hand luggage, consisting of food and personal items. Because they comprised too great a burden during the forced march to Kleszczele, most Jews discarded these items.⁵ On November 4 or 5, the Germans deported the roughly 1,000 Jews from Milejczyce, along with the Jewish communities of Kleszczele and Nurzec, to a transit camp located in a pre-war cavalry garrison on the southern outskirts of Białystok. From there, the Jews were sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp between November 10 and December 15, 1942.

After the liquidation Aktion, the Germans collected all the property of the deported Milejczyce Jews. The Gendarmes also arrested a number of locals they caught in the former ghetto area, presumably for plundering. After three days, the Gendarmes took the arrestees, about 12 people in total, to the ghetto square and shot them there.⁶

Information is sparse about Jewish survivors from Milejczyce. Jechezkel Rozencajg (Rosenzwaig) survived the war in a forest bunker near Morze village (now in Grodzisk gmina, Siemiatycze powiat) with 17 others, mostly fugitives from the liquidation of the ghetto in Siemiatycze. After the Soviet liberation of Milejczyce, he joined the Polish 1st Army. He perished in combat in the Battle of Berlin.

SOURCES Secondary sources include Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 422–423; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 133–134. On Rozencajg, the only known survivor, see Szymon Datner, “Ratownictwo na Białostocczyźnie,” in Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewinówna, eds., *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej: Polacy z pomocą Żydom, 1939–1945*, 2nd ed. (Kraków: Znak, 1969), p. 739; and Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi* 2 (1997): 206.

The main source for this entry is the postwar German investigation into crimes committed in Milejczyce during the German occupation, which can be found in BA-L (B 162/9446). Additional archival documentation for the Milejczyce ghetto includes AŻIH (301/979); GARF (7021-148-186); IPN (e.g., ASG); IPN-Bi (e.g., S [6/69, 24/72, 32/68, 286/68]); and USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 1, 1/142, reel 14, 46/51).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 1/142, pp. 1–2.
2. BA-L, B 162/9446, pp. 152–154 (statement, Hugo Günther, December 6, 1961).
3. Ibid., pp. 150–151 (statement, Hugo Günther, July 5, 1955), in which the former Milejczyce Gendarmerie post commander recalled the ghetto being established in the spring of 1942. Polish postwar documentation notes it was created in August 1942; see USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/51, pp. 1–2, with the later date perhaps the month the ghetto was closed.
4. BA-L, B 162/9446, pp. 68–74, 86–91 (respectively, statements of Andrzej Michnowski, August 5, 1971, and Antoni Prokopowicz, August 5, 1971).
5. Ibid., pp. 68–74, 86–91, 81–85 (statement, Konstanty Pachwieciewicz, August 5, 1971); GARF, 7021-148-186, War Diary of Reserve Police Battalion 13, November 1–5, 1942.
6. BA-L, B 162/9446, pp. 68–74, 81–85.

NAREW

Pre-1939: Narew (Yiddish: Narev), village, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Narev, Gainovka raion, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Narew, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Hajnówka powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Narew lies 29.2 kilometers (about 18.1 miles) northeast of Bielsk Podlaski. Although its name derives from its location on the Narew River, its history also is tied to the Puszcza Białowieża, or the Białowieża Forest, an ancient woodland that once encircled it. On the eve of World War II, about 300 Jews resided there.

The Germans occupied Narew for four days in September 1939 before ceding the village to Soviet occupation.

A Wehrmacht unit reoccupied Narew by the end of June 1941. From June 30, about 300 Jews from Zabłudów, including the rabbi, fled to Narew after the Germans set fire to their town and expelled them.

The Germans, as they did in Distrikt Białystok as a whole, most likely ordered the Jews confined to the borders of Narew in early July 1941 and required them to establish a Judenrat. On July 21, 1941, an SS contingent, from Białowieża village, gave the Narew Jews one week to raise a payment of 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) in gold, 19 kilograms (42 pounds) of silver, and 100,000 rubles in cash. The Jews sold everything they owned to collect the payment but failed to come up with the precious metals. When the SS came to collect the tribute, they beat the Jewish representatives for not meeting their demands.¹ The Germans also shot dead 16 Jews on three separate occasions. In the largest of these murders, probably during one of two Akions to deport the Jews, 12 people perished in the forest.²

From early July 1941, the Jewish communities of the Białowieża Forest, including the Narew Jews, became victims of a German drive to depopulate the woodland. German Security Police initially claimed the expulsions were to prevent

Soviet troops, cut off from their units, from establishing partisan operations in the forest. Because the expulsions also encompassed non-Jewish communities, beginning with 183 families deported on July 25, 1941, from Buda Paszucka, Pogorzelce, and Teremiski to Prużana, and continuing through October, some historians believe the depopulation drive was motivated more by conservation initiatives, sponsored by Hermann Göring, to expand and to transform the woodland into a vast nature and hunting preserve for the Nazi leadership. By the fall of 1941, Göring had appointed Ulrich Scherping to head the forest, which in practice became an extraterritorial unit within Distrikt Białystok, probably administered by the Reichsforstamt (Reich Forestry Office).

On August 9–10, 1941, the 3rd Company of Police Battalion 322 began clearing Jews from the forest. That day, its members rounded up the 500 Jewish residents of Białowieża village, home to the forest hunting lodge. They confined male craftsmen, women, children, and the elderly to the village and executed the rest of the men, about 77 people. The survivors were deported to Kobryń and Antopol. In Narewka Mała, a village sometimes confused with Narew, men from the same police battalion, on August 14, shot 282 male Jews (those aged between 16 and 65), outside of Zabłotyczna village.³ The survivors—259 women and 162 children—were sent by truck to Kobryń.⁴ On the forests' buffer peripheries, the Germans tended to expel Jewish communities wholesale, as had occurred in July in Szereszów, where 800 Jews were forcibly marched to Antopol and Dereczyn. Similar brutality marked the expulsion of the Jewish community in Hajnówka, in early August, during which the men were ordered to crawl on their hands and knees to Prużana. In other places, such as Kamieniec Litewski, on the southern forest periphery, the Germans held back a small number of craftsmen and expelled the rest of the Jews in late 1941 to Prużana.

In Narew, more in the forest's western buffer periphery, an SS unit surrounded the village on the Sukkot holiday in October 1941. The unit commander divided the Jews into the able-bodied and less fit. The elderly, women, and children from Narew and the Zabłudów refugees were deported to the Prużana ghetto. Those who resisted by fleeing into the forest were rounded up, beaten, and shot dead.⁵

The Germans established a closed ghetto for the Jews held back from the expulsion. Its precise area, listed on postwar Polish documentation as 185 by 100 meters (about 4.6 acres), suggests the Jews were confined to a small part of the village. Because the official completing the documentation erred by one year in noting the ghetto's liquidation, it seems likely he made a similar mistake in noting that the ghetto was established in September 1942, rather than in September 1941.⁶ However, it is difficult to say because no other readily available documentation mentions the date on which the ghetto was established.

The inmates of the Narew ghetto likely were overwhelmingly male. Whether the families of the men attempted to return to Narew and were permitted to remain there, as had occurred in Kamieniec Litewski, is unknown. The Narew

ghetto inmates labored at craft workshops, undoubtedly under Christian supervision, most likely for the Gendarmerie and the Forstschutzkommando (Forest Protection Commando) stationed there. They also cobbled the streets, sidewalks, and market square in Narew. For the second project, the conscripts used *mazevot* (gravestones) from the cemetery, located south of Narew, in the so-called Gnolica Forest, near Makówka village.

On November 4, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Narew ghetto by conveying its inmates to the ghetto in Bielsk Podlaski. On November 13, during the final liquidation of the Bielsk ghetto, they sent them to the Białystok ghetto.⁷ The deportees are believed to have been expelled during the first mass deportation Aktion, from February 5 to February 12, 1943, and deported from Białystok to the Auschwitz or Treblinka extermination camps, where they perished.⁸

The Jews of the Narew community in the Prużana ghetto shared the fates of the almost 10,000 Jews there. That ghetto was liquidated over the course of four days, from January 29 to February 1, 1943, with about 2,500 Jews deported each day from there to Auschwitz. Most of the Jews in the transports were gassed on arrival at Auschwitz. The Germans selected 1,775 Prużana deportees for work. Less than a handful of the Narew deportees to Prużana are believed to have survived as prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

No more than 10 Narew Jews survived the war. Lejb Wacht (or Vacht), the author of the only account of life in the Narew ghetto, fled as the Germans expelled the Jews to Bielsk Podlaski. The family of Andrzej Iwaniuk, in Gradoczno village, sheltered him. Others, such as Yehuda Leytler, had been deported to the Russian interior in the Soviet period.⁹ Also counted among Narew survivors are the immediate family members of the lawyer Aron Wirzubski. Deported from Wysokie Litewskie to Hajnówka in the Soviet period, Wirzubski was shot dead during the expulsion of the Hajnówka Jewish community. After the liquidation of the Prużana ghetto, Wirzubski's wife and daughters were extended protection by two Roman Catholic priests in Narew.¹⁰

A postwar investigation, conducted in both Poland and Germany, centers on the shooting in Narew of several individual Jews, including a chemist, after the liquidation of the ghetto. It is based on the witness testimonies of local Poles. It did not result in any indictments.¹¹ Two local residents of the Narewka Mała area also were tried on a number of charges related to assisting the 3rd Company of Police Battalion 322 to extricate Jews and non-Jewish Communists from hiding places in Narewka Mała during the August 1941 executions, with one of them also charged with the subsequent plunder of Jewish property.¹²

SOURCES The bibliography for the Kamieniec Litewski entry surveys the historiographical debates surrounding the Białowieża Forest expulsions. The timing of the expulsions presented in this entry follows the chronology established by Andrzej Angrick et al., “‘Da hätte man schon ein Tagebuch führen müssen.’ Das Polizeibataillon 322 und die Judenmorde im Bereich der Heeresgruppe Mitte während des Sommers

und Herbstes 1941,” in Helge Grabitz et al., *Die Normalität des Verbrechens: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung zu den nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen: Festschrift für Wolfgang Scheffler zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1994), pp. 336–339, a work based mainly on the war diary of Police Battalion 322. Other sources, including Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 21, provide the dates on which survivors remember the expulsions as having occurred, and still others note, in particular, that all or all but 77 Jewish men from Białowieża village were executed.

Also useful are the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 139–140 (Białowieża), pp. 288–289 (Hajnówka), pp. 457–459 (Narew), pp. 459–460 (Narewka Mała); Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), p. 39 (Białowieża), pp. 136–138 (Narew), pp. 138–139 (Narewka Mała); Tomasz Wiśniewski, *Jewish Białystok and Surroundings in Eastern Poland: A Guide for Yesterday and Today* (Ipswich, MA: Ipswich Press, 1998), p. 93; for survivors, Szymon Datner, *Las Sprawiedliwych* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1961), p. 56; and Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” in *Białostoccy Żydzi* (Białystok: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego Filii w Białymstoku, 1997), 2:180–181.

Archival documentation pertaining to the fates of the Jewish communities of Narew, Białowieża, Narewka Mała, and Hajnówka under German occupation during World War II includes AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 301 [1270, 1970]); BA-L (B 162/15965); IPN (e.g., SAB [25, 36], SWB 185); IPN-Bi (Ds-99/69, S [16/80, 105/67, 74/03/Zn, 296/68/1-2, 356/71]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG (IPN)], e.g., reel 14, 46/52], RG-48.004M [VHAP], reel 2); VHF (e.g., # 21890, 28351, 45233); and YVA (M1-Q/294, M49E/1270, M11B/11).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/1270, testimony of [Lejb] Wacht, p. 1.
2. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/52, p. 1.
3. Ibid., RG-48.004M, reel 2, War Diary of 3. Co., Pol. Bn. 322, August 14, 1941, entry; AŻIH, 301/1846, testimony of Szymon Kamiński, pp. 1–2; IPN-Bi, S-74/03/Zn.
4. AŻIH, 301/1846, pp. 1–2; 301/2212, testimony of Benjamin Wolf, pp. 1–30.
5. Ibid., 301/1270, p. 1.
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/52, p. 1.
7. AŻIH, 301/1270, p. 1.
8. Ibid.
9. VHF, # 21890, testimony of Yehuda Leytler.
10. Ibid., # 28351 and 45233, testimonies, respectively, of Sara (Wirzubska) Szymańska and Adela (Wirzubska) Boddy.
11. BA-L, B 162/15965 (V 205 AR-Z 76/75 [Narew]), pp. 80–82; IPN-Bi, 356/71.
12. IPN, SAB 25, 36.

NURZEC

Pre-1939: Nurzec, village, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Nuzhets, Bel'sk raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Nurzec, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Siemiatycze powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Nurzec, lies 96 kilometers (60 miles) south of Białystok. Before World War II, it was part of a landed estate owned by the Narbut family.

During World War II, the Germans briefly occupied Nurzec in September 1939 before ceding it to Soviet occupation. A Wehrmacht unit recaptured the estate by the end of June 1941.

The Germans established a ghetto in Nurzec in August 1942. Its terrain consisted of six homes. It likely was fenced, as the Kreiskommissar of Bielsk ordered the establishment of closed ghettos throughout the Kreis in the spring of 1942.

Because no Jews were pre-war inhabitants of Nurzec, the 250 ghetto inmates likely had been relocated there from nearby localities in the pre-war Milejczyce gmina. They probably came from places such as the residential area surrounding the nearby railway station known as Nurzec-Stacja and from Rogacze, Zabłocie, and Chanie, where 38 and 23, 14, and 7 Jews, respectively, had resided in 1921. The ghetto inmates also may have been brought from localities near Nurzec in the pre-war Siemiatycze gmina, such as Moszczona Pańska, home to 6 Jews in 1921. (In the pre-war Bielsk Podlaski powiat, in particular, a large number of extended Jewish families had lived scattered across scores of similar small villages.) As many as 200 Jews may have resided in the villages surrounding Nurzec. Unfortunately, there is no information about the specific fates of these Jewish communities during World War II. Given the absence of a historic Jewish community in Nurzec, it also is possible that the ghetto was more like a labor camp, with the Jews consolidated there specifically for labor on the estate. Until additional documentation emerges, it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions.

Conditions in the Nurzec ghetto were poor. The largest house in the ghetto was occupied by 100 people. Its inmates worked mostly in their pre-war occupations as tailors, shoemakers, and glass workers in workshops established in the ghetto. Some ghetto inmates were conscripted for railway repair work and forestry labor.

The Nurzec ghetto was liquidated in early November 1942. The Germans marched its inmates first to the ghetto in Milejczyce and then on November 5, together with the Milejczyce community, took them to the ghetto in Kleszczele. The next day all of the Jews consolidated in the Kleszczele ghetto were deported to a transit camp, located in Białystok, on the former training ground of the pre-war Polish Army's 10th Cavalry Brigade. The former inmates of the Nurzec ghetto were expelled from the Białystok transit camp and sent, between November 10 and December 15, to the Treblinka extermination camp. They were all gassed on arrival.

No Jews from the Nurzec ghetto are believed to have survived the Holocaust. Little remains to commemorate the former ghetto site. Destroyed during World War II, the Nurzec estate complex was not rebuilt. Instead, after the war the area was converted into a public recreational and sports center.

SOURCES Archival documentation for the Jewish community of Nurzec during World War II remains scarce. It includes IPN-Bi and USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN] 48/50). This entry was based entirely on the latter source.

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ORLA

Pre-1939: Orla, village, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Orlia, Bel'sk raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Orla, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Bielsk powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Orla lies 62.8 kilometers (39 miles), by road, south-southeast of Białystok and 12.3 kilometers (7.6 miles) southeast of Bielsk Podlaski. In 1921, 1,167 Jews resided there.

In September 1939, the Germans occupied Orla but shortly after evacuated it to make way for the Red Army. The Jewish population expanded during the Soviet occupation, as 1,450 to 2,000 Jews resided in Orla by early June 1941.¹

On June 25, 1941, German forces reoccupied Orla. Supposedly in reprisal for sporadic shootings by some Soviet soldiers, the Germans burned 10 Jewish houses on Kleszczele Street. The German military commander, a captain, demanded from Rabbi Halperin (Halpern) a list of all Jews aged over 10 years and ordered them to report for an assembly the next day on the market square. There, the commander issued orders requiring adult Jews to perform forced labor and to wear distinctive yellow symbols on their clothes. The Germans beat those who showed up late.

Some days later, at another mandatory assembly in the synagogue, the military commander threatened to shoot the rabbi's son and others for refusing to agree with the assertion that Jews preyed on Christian blood. Wiatkowski (or Wiotkowski), a local Belorussian teacher employed as a translator for the Germans, interceded on behalf of the Jews.² The commander instead ordered the Jews to surrender their horses and valuables on pain of death. The order was enforced by searches of Jewish houses. The Germans ordered the Torah in the synagogue desecrated. In addition, they required 150 Jews to report daily for forced labor.

In late August or early in the fall of 1941, the Germans established a civil administration for Orla, under the control of an Amtskommissar. The first Amtskommissar was soon transferred to Białowieża. His replacement likely was Zandecky. The German authorities established a local administration, appointing Shorf (or Scharf) the mayor. They ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established, composed of perhaps 12 members. Authorities ordered the Jews to mark

their houses with yellow signs and to pay a large “contribution” of 0.5 kilogram (1.1 pounds) of gold, 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of silver, and 40,000 rubles.

In early March 1942, the Amtskommissar expelled to Orla the non-Jewish inhabitants of several nearby villages. The expulsions marked the first step in establishing the Orla ghetto. In Orla, German authorities ordered the residents of entire streets to evacuate their houses for the new arrivals. All of the houses on Nowa Szosa Street, for example, were assigned to people from Antonowo-Kolonia. Their former Christian residents were ordered to reside in houses in the north of the village; their former Jewish residents were assigned to houses in the southwest, in the part of Orla ultimately demarcated for the ghetto.³ Likely, at this time Jews from other nearby villages were expelled to Orla. The Amtskommissar seized Jewish houses, shops, and stalls at the market square and sold them off cheaply to non-Jews, mainly for building materials.

On March 20, 1942, the Germans ordered all Jews still living outside the area designated for the ghetto to relocate there. The ghetto was composed of an area based around Koszelowska, postwar 1 Maja, and Kleszczelowska Streets. As the Jews moved in, a gauntlet of Gendarmes robbed them. In April, the ghetto was surrounded by a wooden fence. Its construction likely led to the establishment of two separate ghettos, a large ghetto and a small one.⁴ After a fire in April 1942 destroyed several houses inside the ghetto, the Jewish Council asked local officials to expand the ghetto. They responded by shooting a man for allegedly setting the fire and threatened to evacuate 300 Jews to the ghetto in Prużana. The authorities ultimately permitted the Jews to dismantle two unused houses from outside the ghetto and to rebuild them inside.⁵

With about 2 square meters (22 square feet) available per person in the ghetto, overcrowded conditions led to the spread of disease and a high death rate, especially among small children and the elderly. The Jewish Police assembled 400 inmates daily for forced labor. They also met German demands for possessions, including jewelry and furniture, and were subjected to searches and seizures. Compared with some ghettos, material conditions were not horrendous. Lax guarding enabled the Jews to barter material possessions for food with local Slavs at the ghetto fence. Some Jewish craftsmen snuck out of the ghetto to work for the local population. In the spring of 1942, Gendarmes executed 3 Orla Jews, Matie Szumacher, a carpenter, and his two sons, for working illicitly on a construction project in a nearby village.⁶

At 5:00 A.M. on November 2, 1942, German police forces encircled the ghetto and informed the Jews that they were being sent to work near the Black Sea or in the Caucasus and could take almost none of their belongings. Some Jews had fled the ghetto, but they returned to accept the fate of the community after the SS threatened to execute their families. A few Jewish women who had lived the entire time outside the ghetto reported for the evacuation. The next day, on November 3, the German forces marched the Orla Jews on foot to Bielsk Podlaski. A group of 5 Jews managed to flee, but the

Gendarmerie subsequently caught them and shot them in the Szernie and Dubicze Tofiłowce villages.⁷

About 200 Orla craftsmen, their families, and a few other community members, including Rabbi Halperin, were incarcerated briefly in the ghetto in Bielsk Podlaski before being sent on to the Białystok ghetto. One source suggests the Białystok expulsion occurred on November 3; another notes the Germans transferred 49 craftsmen and their families on November 6; a third reports the later date, adding that 200 people, from 48 families, were transferred from the Bielsk to the Białystok ghetto.⁸

Because one account mentions only the arrival in the Bielsk ghetto of the Orla craftsmen, it may suggest that the rest of the Orla Jews were sent directly from the train station in Bielsk Podlaski to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁹ In most other accounts, the Orla Jews were first consolidated in the Bielsk ghetto, which had been transformed into a makeshift transit camp, before being transferred to Treblinka. On November 16–17, local security forces in Bielsk and members of the 1st Company of Police Reserve Battalion 13 marched a large group of Jews from the Bielsk ghetto to the train station, but it is unknown if the remaining Orla Jews were among those deported or if they were sent on another transport to Treblinka.¹⁰ Those sent to Treblinka were all gassed on arrival.

The 200 surviving craftsmen and their families spent about a month, first in the Białystok ghetto and then at a labor camp in Pietrasze, on the northern outskirts of Białystok, making winter boots for the Wehrmacht. By early December 1942, the workers had been returned to the empty Bielsk Podlaski ghetto to work at a similar factory. Most likely in January 1943, they were sent again to the Pietrasze labor camp, which by then had been transformed into a makeshift transit camp. About two weeks later, the women and children were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were gassed on arrival. The male craftsmen likely were deported to other concentration camps for labor, but no accounts by survivors have been located.

According to survivor Symcha Bursztajn, there were no survivors of the Orla ghetto.¹¹

SOURCES A Polish translation of AŻIH, 301/1963, cited below, is available on the virtual Archiwum Etnograficzne, at www.archiwumetnograficzne.edu.pl/readarticle.php?article_id=24. A testimony by a Christian eyewitness, in Michał Mincewicz, “Żydzi w Orli—wspomnienie Zenaida Niedzielska,” *Tygodnik Podlaski*, March 28, 2007, is most accessible at Polin, the Web site of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland (www.fodz.pl). Helpful for its discussion of the fates of the craftsmen deported from Orla to the Bielsk Podlaski and the Białystok ghettos is Meir Pekar, “In the Bielsk Ghetto and the Camps,” in Haim Rabin, ed., *Bilsk Podlaski sefer yizkor le-zikbram ba-kadosh shel Yebude Bilsk she-nispu ba-Sbo’ah ba-natsit ba-shanim 1939–1944* ([Tel Aviv]: Irgun ole Bilsk be-Yisrael, 1975). An English translation is available at jewishgen.org.

Additional information on the Orla ghetto can be found in Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 15, 25, 39; Grzegorz Sosna and Doroteusz Fionik, *Orla nad Podlasie: Dzieje Cerkwi, miasta i*

okolic (Białystok: Białoruskie Towarzystwo Historyczne, 1997), pp. 72–73; and the relevant entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 104–106; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 142–145.

Testimonies on the Orla ghetto and the German occupation of the town can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 204 [old 2/123], 301/1963); BA-L (B 162, ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 112/77); IPN-Bi (S-212/68); and YVA (M-11 [50, 53]).

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NOTES

1. YVA, M-11/50, Rabbi Halpern, “My recollections,” for low figure; and AŻIH, 301/1963, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 1, for high figure.

2. See AŻIH, 301/1963, p. 1, in which Wiotkowski is described as among “the warmest” supporters of the Germans.

3. Mincewicz, “Żydzi w Orli.”

4. Ibid.

5. YVA, M-11/50.

6. Ibid.; BA-L, B 162, ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 112/77, pp. 58–61 (statement, Josef Nazarewicz, February 6, 1976); AŻIH, 301/1963, p. 2.

7. AŻIH, 301/1977, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn, p. 3; BA-L, B 162, ZStL, V 205 AR-Z 112/77, p. 129.

8. Compare Peker, “In the Bielsk Ghetto,” p. 33; AŻIH, 301/1977, p. 3, 301/3944, p. 1.

9. Peker, “In the Bielsk Ghetto,” p. 33.

10. On the transfer, see Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 602.

11. AŻIH, 301/1963, p. 2.

OSTRYNA

Pre-1939: Ostryna (Yiddish: Ostrin), village, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ostrino, Vasilishki raion, Baranovichi oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Ostryna, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Astryna, Shchuchyn raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Ostryna lies 55 kilometers (34.2 miles) east-northeast of Grodno. Its 1921 population of 1,572 included 1,067 Jews. During World War II, it came under Soviet occupation on September 19, 1939. By 1940, refugees from German-occupied Poland had increased the Jewish population to 2,000, out of a total population of 2,744.

On June 24, 1941, the Germans reoccupied Ostryna. The local German military commander immediately organized a collaborationist local administration. A Pole filled the position of civil administrator (wójt). German authorities recruited local Belorussians and Poles for an auxiliary police force. The military commander issued a series of anti-Jewish

decrees that forbade contact with Christians, prohibited movement beyond Ostryna, required the wearing of yellow markings on the chest and back, and made forced labor obligatory for all adults. He also ordered that a six-person Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established. Its chair, Josel (Josef) Wigdorowicz, was a founder of the Tarbut school. Abram Słocznik, a baker, was named the Jewish Police commander.

In early July, at least eight Jews, including Icchak Rewicz, a tailor, and Dawid Sadecki, and a number of Christians were arrested on the basis of denunciations by local Poles. They were executed by the members of a Wehrmacht Feldgendarmerie detachment that had assumed responsibility for policing in and around Ostryna.¹

In late August, soldiers from the 12th Company of the 707th Infantry Division assumed responsibility for Ostryna. Under the command of Oberleutnant Josef Kiefer, the soldiers perpetrated anti-Jewish violence across a region including Ostryna and Jeziory in Distrikt Białystok and Szczuczyn and Lida in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. Leutnant Oskar Ritterbusch, the commander of the 1st Platoon, served as the Ostryna Ortskommandant through at least October 15, 1941. In late autumn, his unit was relieved by the 2nd Platoon, commanded by Leutnant Ernst Schaffitz. The 2nd Platoon likely remained in Ostryna until the end of January 1942, by which time a German civil administration had been established.²

In the late summer or early fall of 1941, the soldiers from the 12th Company and the local police helped an SS unit force the Ostryna Jews to collect the ritual objects from the synagogue and Bet Midrash. Shortly afterwards, the Jews were ordered assembled on the market square at 2:00 P.M., on pain of death. As they waited there, the officials and the local police searched their houses for valuables. At least seven Jews found during the search were shot dead. Near dusk, the Germans permitted the assembled Jews to return to their plundered homes.

In October 1941, the Ortskommandant ordered an open ghetto established in Ostryna. It was located near the market square between Grodno, Nowy Dwór, Wilno, and Cerkiew Streets. To exclude the square from its terrain, the ghetto was divided into two parts: the area from Wilno Street to the synagogue, including housing formerly used by railway signalmen, comprised ghetto no. 1; the area beyond the synagogue, including Cerkiew and Wasiliszk Streets, made up ghetto no. 2. Local authorities imposed a curfew, from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M., and forbade the inmates to be outside on Sundays and holidays. A Jew found a few steps outside his house during the curfew could be shot, as some were. Perhaps as late as March, authorities expelled to the ghetto about 500 Jews from Nowy Dwór.

Sometime shortly after October 12, 1941, on a Sunday following the Sukkot holiday, soldiers, likely from the 1st Platoon, assisted by local police, rounded up about 80 Jews from the ghetto and executed them at the Jewish cemetery. To protect the community, Wigdorowicz, in November 1942, refused German orders to submit a list of 100 men for work outside Ostryna. Authorities sent him to a labor camp in Starosielce.

His successor, Berl Parecki, surrendered the youth. Sent to the same camp, they almost all perished. In late December, soldiers, likely from the 2nd Platoon, ordered the Jews to assemble on the market square and then executed in front of them 10 physically handicapped community members. About a month prior, a small SS contingent had murdered the rabbi of Ostryna, Shimon Gershonowitz. Just after the 1942 New Year, soldiers from the 2nd Platoon executed the remaining religious leaders, teachers, and their families.³

The arrival of German civilian administrators, by early February 1942, brought changes to the ghetto. At the end of Passover, in April 1942, police from the Ostryna Gendarmerie, commanded initially by Meister Petzek, ordered the Jews living in ghetto no. 2 to move to ghetto no. 1. The Germans then ordered the reduced ghetto area fenced. The closed ghetto included Wasiliszki and Wilno Streets, the synagogue, and its courtyard. The authorities permitted the Jews to transfer belongings to the closed ghetto but declared the move-in period completed before they had finished. A policeman, Jan Lach (or Lachowski), a Pole from Nowy Dwór, shot dead 12-year-old Nachmann Kaplan when the boy refused to stop moving items into the ghetto.⁴

About 25 to 30 people were crowded into a single house in the closed ghetto. To provide living space, the synagogue was subdivided into cells. Food was scarce, as the Germans provided daily individual rations only for skim milk and 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread. No public kitchen or other assistance was organized for the hungry. Every prisoner had to obtain food on his or her own.⁵

The Roman Catholic priest in Ostryna counseled his faithful at Mass not to participate in the German persecution of the Jews and smuggled food into the ghetto for some Jews. Perhaps, as a result, some local Slavs bartered food at the ghetto fence. Such transactions were dangerous for Jews. At least two were shot for talking to a non-Jew across the fence.

On German orders, the Judenrat organized carpentry and tailoring workshops, just outside the ghetto, for craftsmen to complete work for German officials for no remuneration. The most fortunate were considered conscripts employed by Christians, on contracts negotiated with German officials, because they were better treated and had access to food. By the spring of 1942, many ghetto inmates worked weeklong labor stints, either at a plywood factory on Lithuanian territory or at a camp, organized for improvements on the road to Szczuczyn and the road to Jeziory.⁶ The conscripts returned home on Sundays. On June 6, 1942, at an assembly, the Ostryna Amtskommissar chose 100 men for immediate deportation to the Starosielce labor camp. Not including the men sent permanently to Starosielce, the regular ghetto population stood at about 1,200 to 1,300, with another 700 prisoners conscripted for work during the week outside Ostryna.

At the end of October 1942, the Germans convened a Judenrat meeting to order all ghetto inmates assembled with their movable property at the marketplace on November 2. A group of 12 youths ran away to the nearby forests. They were rounded up and executed. On November 2, the Ger-

mans liquidated the Ostryna ghetto. They transported the 1,969 Jews over the course of two days to a transit camp, in Kielbasin, located south of Grodno.⁷ Many Ostryna Jews perished just outside the camp when SS guards ordered them to run the last 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) and shot dead those who fell behind.

Imprisoned at Kielbasin for about a month with about 22,000 to 28,000 Jews from nearby communities, the Ostryna Jews were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp at the end of November 1942 in a transport, officially of 1,000 people. On December 2, at Birkenau, the SS held back from the transport 238 people—178 men and 60 women—as concentration camp prisoners. The remaining Jews on the transport—at least 762 people—were gassed on arrival.⁸ The Starosielce inmates were sent on November 19 to the Treblinka extermination camp. A few Ostryna Jews in the Treblinka deportation jumped from the transport train. Michal-Meer Jezierski, among the survivors, subsequently joined a partisan unit.

Two Jewish survivors resided in Ostryna after the war. The 8 to 13 others immigrated mostly to the United States and Israel.

Extradited to Poland, Schaffitz was tried in Warsaw in 1948 and sentenced to death for the mass executions of Jews in Szczuczyn, Lida, and Baranowicze. In 1949, the sentence was commuted to life in prison. (He died there in 1956.)⁹ In the late 1960s, West German investigators studied the wartime activities of Kiefer and Ritterbusch but concluded they lacked the evidence to proceed legally against them.¹⁰ In Poland, three former auxiliary policemen, including Jan Lach, also were investigated for murdering Jews in Ostryna between 1942 and 1943 but ultimately were tried for murdering partisans.¹¹

SOURCES Some archival materials cited below, including YVA, O-3/7431, and a large part of BA-L, B 162/26286 (202 AR 2403/65), have appeared in English translations, respectively, by Shoshana Stifel and Irene Newhouse, on the Lida ShtetLinks pages at jewishgen.org, respectively, at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/lida-District/yv-glembocki.htm and www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/lida-District/kiefer.htm. Copies of some of the GAGO materials also appear in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, vol. 6 (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1992).

The entry also is based on the three published testimonies by Ostryna survivors, including a collective testimony by Shlomo Bojarski, Michal-Meir Jezierski (or Mikhail-Meer Ezierskii), Abraham Kazimierz, Yitzhak Reznik, and Moshe Shulaner, in the regional yizkor book edited by Yosef Kohen-Tsedek et al., *Sefer zikaron li-kehilt Ostrin, Shts'uts'in, Vasilishki, Novidvor, Roz'ankab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Ostrin be-Yisrael, 1966). An English translation of the book is available at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/szczuczyn-belarus/szczuczyn.html, though at this writing only the chapters about the pre-World War II history of the Ostryna Jewish community have appeared.

Useful secondary accounts include the Ostryna entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8,

Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 100–102; and *Pamiats’ Historyka-dakumental’naia kbro-nika Shchuchynskaha raiona* (Minsk: Belarускаia Entsyklapedyia, 2001), with the second providing useful demographic information and a list of those from the raion who perished during the war.

Archival documentation on the Jewish community under German occupation during World War II includes AŻIH (301/748); BA-L (B 162/26286 [202 AR 2403/65]); GAGO (1-1-54, pp. 37–38, 1-1-335, p. 85); GARF (e.g., 7021-86-36, 7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58); IPN (SOW 64, SWB 264-267); IPN-Bi (1/1194 [Ko-250/88], 3/129 [W-52/68], 7/575/1-2 [II-1335/KSL14808]); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31); USHMM (RG-22.002M [GARF], RG-53.004M [GAGO]); VHF (# 13477); and YVA (e.g., O-3/300, O-3/7431, M-49E [e.g., 78]).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 13477, testimony of Vladimir Glemobotzkiy (*sic*).
2. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 1, 1-1-2, pp. 19, 130–131.
3. BA-L, B 162/26286 (202 AR 2403/65). Although West German investigators attributed Schaffitz and his men with the October 1941 murders, their timing suggests they more likely were the work of Ritterbusch and his platoon.
4. VHF, # 13477, identifying two policemen, Jan Lach and Jan Lachowski, but attributing the murder to Lach, and postwar Polish investigators deciding “Lach” was an alias used by Lachowski.
5. YVA, O-3/7431, testimony of Vladimir Glembocki.
6. VHF, # 13477.
7. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 1, 1-1-54, pp. 37–38.
8. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 122–125.
9. IPN, SOW 64.
10. BA-L, B 162/26286 (202 AR 2403/65).
11. IPN-Bi, 3/129 (W-52/68), 7/575/1-2 (II-1335, KSL-14808); IPN, SWB 264–267.

PIASKI

Pre-1939: Piaski (Yiddish: Piesk), village, Wołkowysk powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Peski, Mosty raion, Grodno oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Piaski, Kreis Wołkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Peski, Masty raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Piaski lies on the Zelwianka River. In interwar Poland, it was located 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) north-northeast of Wołkowysk. In 1921, 1,249 Jews lived there. In World War II, after Piaski first came under Soviet occupation, refugees from German-occupied Poland increased the Jewish population to around 1,500.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Piaski by the end of June 1941. Its military commander likely appointed a local civilian administration, headed by Vicentii Semashko. The auxiliary police force, according to Jewish survivors, was composed mostly of

Belorussians, though Poles also were members.¹ Among the auxiliary policemen were Anton Franz, Michał and Czesław Zabołotski, and men surnamed Putilovskii and Tishevskii. A German civil administration was established in the fall of 1941 when the Piaski Amtskommissariat was incorporated into Kreis Wolkowysk in Distrikt Białystok.

In the summer and early fall of 1941, regional German military administrators introduced a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including orders requiring the wearing of yellow markings on the chest and back, registration, prohibitions on movement beyond the place of registration, compulsory forced labor of all adult Jews, and the formation of Jewish Councils (Judenräte). The Piaski Judenrat was led by Rachmiel Halperin (or Galperin).

In the meantime, Piaski was flooded with Jewish refugees from war-devastated Wołkowysk.² Because the Piaski Amtskommissar was considered less willing than his counterparts in Kreis Wolkowysk to tolerate anti-Jewish violence and raids on Jewish property, some Jews subsequently fled there in the spring of 1942 from other ghettos, including from Różana.³ The refugees may have increased the Jewish population to 2,000.

The Różana refugees were surprised to discover that the Piaski Jews lived under the German occupation largely as they had before the war, working in agriculture. By early summer 1942, they remained healthy because of their ready access to food.⁴ However, Piaski Jews remember the Germans conscripting them for forced labor on road construction projects, including between Piaski and Mosty, then a village about 8 kilometers (5 miles) north-northeast by road, and at a factory, also in Mosty, to produce wooden crates for German aircraft parts. Jewish factory conscripts received flour in remuneration for their labor. The Judenrat assigned another 30 young men and women to work three-month stints at a Wołkowysk labor camp to work on railway lines.⁵

In July 1942, a ghetto was established for the Jews of Piaski, across from the residence of the Amtskommissar, in the old Jewish neighborhood, near the Jewish cemetery. One of its boundaries ended just before the Zelwianka River. The ghetto was fenced with barbed wire. The Amtskommissar forbade Jews forced to move to the ghetto from bringing anything with them from their former houses.⁶

The role played by the auxiliary police in enforcing the German decree confining the Piaski Jews to the ghetto is debated. According to a survivor, the police, longtime friends or acquaintances of almost all the Jews, humiliated and pelted ghetto inmates with stones for appealing to be released to barter with local Christians for food.⁷ Because there was just one well in the ghetto, the police also released the Jews from the ghetto daily at sundown to bring two pails of water from the river and exercised their authority by whipping the last water bearers to arrive back at the ghetto’s gate.⁸ However, another survivor has attributed lax policing with saving the lives of some Jews, particularly after local German authorities charged the police with sealing the ghetto in the last week of October 1942, and some policemen abetted the escape of

several Jews and in one instance even sheltered Jews, in anticipation of the ghetto's liquidation.⁹

The Piaski ghetto was sealed earlier than other ghettos in Distrikt Białystok because the Germans consolidated other smaller Jewish communities there. On November 2, 1942, Gendarmes and auxiliary policeman, for example, drove 360 Jews from Mosty to the Piaski ghetto. Other Jews likely were brought there from the north and northwest of Kreis Wolkowysk, as a Mosty survivor remembers 2,500 Jews from the region spending the night together in the Piaski ghetto.¹⁰

On November 3, 1942, an SS unit ordered the Jews in the Piaski ghetto on an eight-hour march to a transit camp located outside of Wołkowysk in a pre-war Polish cavalry garrison. The SS commander promised transport to those too old or too sick to move from their beds and to several women in advanced stages of pregnancy. After the other Jews had departed at noon, he ordered those awaiting transport to be consolidated together, either in a house near the Jewish cemetery or in a former school building. In one account, the SS set fire to the building as auxiliary policemen threw the elderly into the flames alive. About 20 Piaski Jews and another 3 Jews from Mosty perished in the blaze, which also destroyed a large part of the ghetto. Another account notes the Germans shot the Jews dead.¹¹

At the transit camp, the Piaski deportees joined the approximately 17,500 other Jews from Kreis Wolkowysk also driven there to facilitate their deportation to extermination camps. The Piaski and Mosty Jews were crowded together in two of six subterranean barracks constructed underneath two large dilapidated horse stables, which together formed an internally fenced-off block within the camp. The Jews from the Zelwa and Świsłocz expulsions, with the latter also encompassing the Jałówka and Mścibów communities, were assigned to the remaining barracks in the block. They lived there for about a month with little food and limited sanitation facilities. Many perished in a typhus epidemic that claimed hundreds, if not thousands, of lives.

Some sources note the Piaski (and Mosty) Jews were expelled from the transit camp, together with the Zelwa, Jałówka, and Mścibów communities, and sent on December 2, 1942, in the second Wołkowysk transport, to the Treblinka extermination camp. Other eyewitnesses remember the second transport including only the Zelwa community. They describe the Piaski (and Mosty) Jews as being on one of the subsequent transports, which left Wołkowysk for Treblinka every three to seven days, until the middle of December, when only 1,700 to 2,000 inmates, from Wołkowysk and Świsłocz, remained at the transit camp.¹² Almost all of the approximately 18,300 Jews in the Wołkowysk transports to Treblinka were gassed on arrival, as the Germans are known to have held back only 60 to 70 men from the Jałówka and Mścibów transport as prisoners of the Treblinka labor camp. There is only one known survivor from among the prisoners.¹³

A number of Piaski Jews evaded the Treblinka deportations. Ordered to help contain the typhus epidemic, Piaski physician

Eliezer Epstein was in the final group of 1,700 to 2,000 inmates sent from Wołkowysk on January 26, 1943, to the Auschwitz extermination camp and among a handful of survivors from the 350 people held back from the transport as prisoners of the concentration camp. At least 15 Piaski Jews, including Szymon Warszawski and Meir Rakhkin, escaped from the ghetto or subsequently from the transit camp and joined the Soviet Pobedka (Victory) partisan unit, a part of the A.S. Sabarov Brigade. Attacks on troop trains and supply convoys and the kidnapping and murder of scores of German officials and soldiers won the partisans in the unit Soviet military distinctions after the war. However, one former partisan, a survivor of the Piaski ghetto, has questioned the single-minded commitment to military operations of unit commander Yitzhak Atlas, a Łódź physician and Soviet-era refugee, because the activities, combined with German reprisal actions, claimed the lives of at least 80 percent of the unit's approximately 360 Jews.¹⁴

SOURCES The yizkor book *Pyesk u-Most: Sefer yizkor* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Pyesk u-Most be-Yisrael yeha-tefutsot, 1975) includes several testimonies by Piaski survivors, though at this writing none of them have appeared in the English translation of the yizkor book, available at jewishgen.org. The expulsion from the Piaski ghetto to the Wołkowysk transit camp forms a part of the contribution by Mosty physician Noah Kaplinsky, in "Wolkowysk in Its Death Throes," originally published in *Hurban Wolkowysk be-Milhemet ha-'olam ha-sheniyah, 1939/1945* (Tel Aviv: Vaad Irgun yots'e Wolkowysk be-Yisrael, 1946), and in English as *Sefer zikaron Wolkowysk. The Wolkowysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pt. 2, pp. 35–42. Other accounts by Piaski survivors include Raḥel Shtilerman, *'Ayarab 'al hol* (Tel Aviv: Yesod, 1968); and Maxime Rafailovitch (or Michael Jourdan–Lichtenstein), "The End of the Piaski Community," available online at the Lida ShtetLinks homepage www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Lida-District/piaski.htm.

Other sources in English for the study of the Pobedka partisans, to which almost all Piaski survivors belonged, include the study of its commander, by Samuel Bornstein, "Dr. Yehezkel Atlas, Partisan Commander," in Jacob Glatstein et al., eds., *Anthology of Holocaust Literature* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1969), pp. 299–306; and the account by Moshe Slutsky, "The Partisanas," in Yerachmiel Moorstein, ed., *Sefer zikaron Zel'ah* ([Israel]: Irgun yots'e Zel'ah be-Yisrael, 1984), in an English translation by Jacob Solomon Berger, as Yerachmiel Moorstein, ed., *Zel'ah Memorial Book* (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 1992), pp. 71–76.

Also useful is the relevant entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 525–529; and the perspective of local Belarusians provided in Natal'ia Slizh, "Zhizn evreiskoi obshchiny glazami belorusov v 1930–1940-e gg. (na primere derevni Peski Grodnenskoï oblasti)," *Diaspory* (Moscow) 4 (2003): 268–278.

Archival documentation for the Jewish community of Piaski under the German occupation in World War II includes FVA (HVT-4185); GARF (7021-86-43, pp. 5–15); USHMM (RG-22.002M [GARF], reel 13, 7021-86-43, pp. 5–15); VHF (#

13415, 15651, 19344, and 35581); and YVA (e.g., M-33 [GARF]/711, pp. 5–15). A portion of the ChGK report for Piaski also appears in Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), p. 191, in English translation as “Peski (Piaski),” in *Holocaust in Belarus*, at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/belarus/bel178.htmlyizkor book.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 35581, testimony of Michael Jourdan-Lichtenstein with Maxime Rafailovitch.
2. AŽIH, 301/37, testimony of Ida Mazur, p. 1.
3. VHF, # 35581.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., # 13415, testimony of Dora (Zhukovskaia-)Levina.
6. Ibid.
7. Rafailovitch, “The End.”
8. VHF, # 13415.
9. Ibid., # 19344, testimony of Itsko Zhukovskii.
10. GARF, 7021-86-43, pp. 10, 12.
11. Compare *ibid.*, pp. 5–15; and Rafailovitch, “The End.”
12. Compare, e.g., Moses Einhorn, “Destruction of Wolkovisk,” in Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-bukh* (New York, 1949), p. 921; and Kaplinsky, “Volkowysk,” in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk*, pt. 2, p. 41.
13. BLH, testimony of Leib Aronzon, in an English trans. on the Jałówka homepage of the Avotaynu Web site (www.avotaynu.com), with the author remembering the expulsion of the second Wolkowysk transport occurring on December 2, 1942.
14. In English, compare Bornstein, “Dr. Yehezkel Atlas,” pp. 299–306; and VHF, # 35581.

PIĄTNICA

Pre-1939: Piątnica (Yiddish: Piontnitza), village, Łomża powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Piatnitsa, Lomzha raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Piatnitsa, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Piątnica, Łomża powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Piātnica lies across the Narew River from Łomża, about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) northeast of the city. About 250 Jews resided there on the eve of World War II.¹

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Piātnica on June 28, 1941. The military commander invested local Poles with day-to-day authority over the village. Jan Wojewoda served as the village administrator (sołtys), and Czesław Darkowski, as the vice village administrator (podsołtys).

Christian-Jewish relations were tense. After the Germans had departed, Wojewoda and Darkowski organized a roundup of the Jews, drove them to the synagogue, and threatened to burn them alive. Gendarmes in Łomża, guarding the bridge over the Narew, heard the screams of the Jews as they were being herded into the synagogue. They rushed to Piātnica to

issue orders forbidding the Poles to murder the Jews and to drive them away from the assembled Jews.²

At the beginning of July 1941, Wojewoda and Darkowski established a ghetto for the Piātnica Jews. Leon Malek (or Malko), appointed by the Germans as the civil administrator (wójt) of the larger Drozdowo gmina, to which Piātnica then belonged, also participated in the decision to concentrate the Piātnica Jews into a small residential neighborhood. The men allowed the Jews to bring to the ghetto only what they could carry in a small bundle and ordered them to leave the remainder of their property at their former residences. The role played by the Germans in the establishment of the ghetto is unknown, but they did not intercede to forestall its emergence. Whether prohibitions were placed on Jewish movement beyond the ghetto also is unknown. Poles living in the ghetto area were not made to move. Rather, they were expected to house the Jews from the other parts of Piātnica.

Wojewoda, Darkowski, and Malek likely established the Piātnica ghetto to claim the property they had forced the Jews to abandon. The sołtys and podsołtys took ownership over the homes, workshops, and tools of the Jews. Malek received their cows and horses. The men probably enforced the ghettoization orders by turning over protestors to the German authorities. Darkowski, also an auxiliary policeman for three months at the beginning of the occupation, handed at least four Jews, including Gołda Matys, over to German authorities. The Jews were not seen again. In the middle of August 1941, the Germans liquidated the Piātnica ghetto. They ordered the Jews deported to the Łomża ghetto. Wojewoda helped the Gendarmes, presumably sent from Łomża, to round up the Piātnica Jews.

Wojewoda and Darkowski decided to hold back 12 Jews from the expulsion. They held the Jews prisoner and compelled them for three months in the fall of 1941 to remodel their houses. The prisoners included Eliaż Czerwonka, Nachman Markiewicz, and Fajba Żołędź. Then one day, after the establishment of a Gendarmerie post in Piātnica, likely in the early fall of 1941, the Poles marched their Jewish captives to the gmina administrative offices and handed them over to the German authorities. The Germans shot the men in the Giełczyń Forest.³

After the war, Wojewoda, Darkowski, and Malek were tried for a number of crimes, including on charges related to anti-Jewish compulsion and violence in Piātnica. Malek was charged with stealing Jewish-owned livestock.⁴ Wojewoda and Darkowski were charged with organizing a ghetto for the Piātnica Jews and serving as accessories in the deaths of 24 Jews, including the 12 men they had held captive in their homes. Although witnesses presented much evidence during the investigation to suggest the men were guilty of establishing a ghetto in Piātnica, Wojewoda and Darkowski, in February 1951, were found not guilty.

SOURCES The deposition of Cwi Baranowicz, recorded in 1967 in New York at the request of West German prosecutors investigating Nazi crimes in the Białystok and Łomża regions,

is widely available in a number of sources, including Piotr Jendroszczyk and Maciej Rybiński, “Czy Żydów w Jedwabnem zabiło Gestapo?” *Rzeczpospolita*, March 21, 2001; Wojciech Kamiński, “Tajemnice archiwów,” *Życie*, March 23, 2001; and “Niemieckie dokumenty o Jedwabnem,” *Głos*, no. 12 (2001). As the titles suggest, poor and partial translations of the deposition initially led some Polish journalists to conclude that Baranowicz was describing events in Jedwabne. A more careful translation revealed that he was discussing Piątnica.

Useful secondary works on the history of Piątnica's Jewish community under German occupation include the relevant entries in Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 227–228; and Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its District* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 249–262 (Łomża), pp. 348–349 (Piątnica).

Documentation covering the history of the Jewish community in Piątnica during World War II includes AŻIH (301/4958); IPN (e.g., SAB 24, 212); and IPN-Bi (3/115, 07/1092).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4958, testimony of Chaim Stawicki, p. 1.
2. Deposition of Cwi Baranowicz, cited by Kamiński, “Tajemnice archiwów.”
3. IPN, SAB 212.
4. Ibid., SAB 24.

POROZÓW

Pre-1939: Porozów (Yiddish: Porosavo), village, Wołkowysk powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Porozovo, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Porozow, Kreis Wolkowysk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Porazava, Suislach raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Porozów lies 90 kilometers (56 miles) south-southeast of Grodno. By World War II, after Porozów came under Soviet occupation on September 26, 1939, the Jewish population stood at about 600 people.

On June 25, 1941, the fourth day of the German invasion of the USSR, a Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied Porozów. Its commander immediately demanded that the village's inhabitants assemble on the market square. As he counted the population, he ordered every tenth male Jew arrested. The 20 detainees were executed, likely at the Jewish cemetery. The remaining men, both Jews and Christians, were incarcerated overnight in the Roman Catholic Church, providing the German soldiers an opportunity to rob Jewish homes. After the men were released, about 24 Jewish refugees found shelter with the Porozów Roman Catholic priest, Grabowski. He also arranged travel permits for the refugees, enabling them to return on July 1 to Białystok.¹ In the meantime, on June 25, a

small group of Red Army soldiers had reoccupied Porozów. A larger German force drove them from the village the next day.

The new military commander, a young lieutenant, appointed a provisional civilian administration under the leadership of Radzwiński (or Radivinsky), a local Pole. The commander also announced a series of anti-Jewish decrees. The first required the Jews to wear white armbands, with a Star of David, and most likely forbade them from leaving the village without official permission. Another order required the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). It was led by a baker named Lew.

About a week after they had arrived, the German soldiers departed Porozów, leaving the village for several months in the hands of the newly appointed Polish administrators. One survivor notes that the Poles left the Jews in peace. Another account claims Radzwiński collaborated with the German administration, presumably in Wołkowysk, to extract material contributions from the Jews.² In October 1941, a Gendarmerie post, manned by four to six Germans, was established in Porozów. In November, an Amtskommissar arrived, as Porozów became an administrative center of Kreis Wolkowysk, in Distrikt Białystok.

Because the Gendarmes and the Amtskommissar appeared interested above all in their material enrichment, the Porozów Judenrat used gifts and monetary contributions to evade the imposition of most of the anti-Jewish decrees, such as the order in September 1941 that formally made forced labor obligatory for all adult Jews. When some Jews fleeing anti-Jewish violence arrived in Porozów from Słonim, the Judenrat bribed the German officials to regularize their residency.

The relative calm came to an end in the summer of 1942 after the Porozów Amtskommissar was transferred, most likely in July. Two weeks after his replacement arrived, he ordered the Jews to the market square so that the German Gendarmes and members of the auxiliary police could search and strip their homes of valuables. Two Jews, including a refugee from Słonim, were shot that evening. A week later, the Amtskommissar ordered the arrest of all the able-bodied male Jews in the village. After many of them were beaten severely, the Judenrat paid a bribe to secure their release a week later. In exchange, the Judenrat also likely conceded to German demands for 25 young people to be sent to a labor camp to widen and pave the road from Wołkowysk to Zelwa and for Jewish craftsmen in Porozów to be conscripted daily for forced labor.

The new Amtskommissar also decided to use the discretionary authority supposedly extended to the heads of local German administrations throughout Kreis Wolkowysk to establish a ghetto in Porozów in August 1942.³ The ghetto was located on two small streets between Kościelna (Church) and Nowy Dwór Streets. It was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.

Because the Porozów Amtskommissariat lacked Christian medical personnel, several Jewish health professionals were exempted from the ghettoization orders and were permitted to continue serving non-Jewish patients. They included the physicians Aleksander Rozenbaum and Motel (or Marek) Ka-

plan, a dentist (Kaplan's wife), a pharmacist, and their extended families. Kaplan had been ordered from Wołkowysk to Porozów in the Soviet period to establish a medical clinic; Rozenbaum, originally from Kalisz, had fled the German occupation of Warsaw in September 1939.⁴ It seems unlikely that the Germans consolidated other Jewish communities in the Porozów ghetto, as the 50 Jews of Nowy Dwór, the closest large Jewish community, had been driven from their houses by a Wehrmacht unit in July 1941 and marched to Prużana.

Material conditions in the Porozów ghetto were poor. Because almost all the able-bodied men and women had been sent to work on the road construction project, those who remained in the ghetto found it difficult to supplement their meager rations, as only a few of them were physically able to sneak out of the ghetto to barter with local Christians for food. Overcrowding, a problem from the outset, became more severe in October when the Jewish road laborers throughout the eastern parts of Distrikt Białystok were returned to their home ghettos. Poor sanitation and the limited food supply led to the outbreak of several small-scale epidemics within a month of the establishment of the ghetto.

On November 2, 1942, the Porozów ghetto was liquidated. At 3:00 A.M., the Amtskommissar read an order to the head of the Judenrat and to Kaplan, the representative of the medical personnel, that stated that the Jews were to be transferred to a labor camp. The order gave three hours for packing a limited number of belongings, such as work clothes, two pairs of underwear, and two blankets, before assembling at the market square. The Amtskommissar permitted about 50 people, deemed too sick or old to make the trip, to remain behind. After a three-hour delay, the remaining Jews, about 550 people, were expelled from Porozów. With the exception of mothers with young children, loaded onto a limited number of previously requisitioned peasant carts, the Porozów Jews were marched on foot to the Wołkowysk transit camp, located in the former garrison of the pre-war Polish 3rd Regiment of Mounted Rifles. They arrived there at 10:00 P.M. A few days later, about 30 to 40 of the elderly and sick were brought from Porozów to the camp. The remaining 10 to 20 Jews, mostly the advanced elderly, were executed in the Nowy Dwór Forest, just outside Porozów.⁵

At the transit camp, the Porozów Jews joined about 19,400 other Jews from nearby communities concentrated there between November 2 and 3, 1942. Crowded into underground bunkers and dilapidated wooden stables, the prisoners lived in deplorable conditions: exposed to subfreezing temperatures; malnourished from the daily ration of a small bowl of potato broth and 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread; and denied regular access to water. Within two weeks, these conditions had contributed to an outbreak of a particularly virulent strain of typhus, which claimed hundreds of lives. Others perished from brutal beatings or were shot for small infractions of camp regulations by the SS members who oversaw the camp, including its commandant Zirka.

At the end of November, the SS began liquidating the camp, sending most of its inmates, in several transports, to

the Treblinka extermination camp. Almost all the Porozów Jews were among a group of 3,000 to 5,000 people sent, likely on December 2, on the second transport to Treblinka. Only 60 to 70 men from this transport were held back as prisoners of the Treblinka I labor camp. The remaining Jews were gassed on arrival.⁶ Because of the typhus epidemic at the transit camp, the Porozów physicians and their wives were held back from the deportation. Zaydl Trop and Fishl Khananovich, from Porozów, also managed to evade the deportation. The 6 were among the 1,700 to 2,000 Wołkowysk inmates sent on January 26, 1943, to the Auschwitz extermination camp and among the 350 people (270 men and 80 women) held back from the transport as prisoners of the concentration camp.⁷ Only Kaplan and his sister survived.

A handful of Porozów Jews may have survived by fleeing to the forests and joining Soviet partisans there. They likely did so in units operating in the forests north of Wołkowysk, as the Soviet commander in the forests to the south, around Porozów (and Różana), reportedly was an antisemite who murdered all the Jews he discovered hiding there.⁸

SOURCES Copies of almost all the archival documents, accompanied by English translations or summaries, can be found on the Web site "Porozow—A Tribute to Its Former Jewish Community," at www.porozow.net. Its author and compiler, Scott D. Seligman, has established a repository of almost every known source about the Porozów Jewish community. The documentation there includes the account by Wołkowysk physician and Porozów survivor Marek Kaplan, originally published in the second Wołkowysk yizkor book, Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949), and available in an English translation as "The Incidents in Porozow," in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pp. 312–315; and the summary work, "Porozów," from the fourth Wołkowysk yizkor book, Katri'el Lashovits, ed., *Volkovisk: Sipurah shel kebilah Yehudit-Tsiyonit bushmedab ba-Sho'ah* (Tel Aviv: K. Lashovits, 1988), p. 104.

In addition to these sources, a brief discussion of the Porozów ghetto appears in the May 2008 contribution by Pole and former Porozów native Wiktor Szałkiewicz, "Porozów, którego już nie ma . . .," available at www.kresy24.pl. The memoir by physician and Wołkowysk survivor Izaak Goldberg, *The Miracles versus Tyranny: The Fight for Life and Death between the Jewish People and the Nazis* (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1979), offers a thorough treatment of life at the Wołkowysk transit camp and provides some coverage of the experiences and fates at Auschwitz of the two Porozów physicians.

Useful, too, is the Porozów entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 523–525.

Archival documentation for the history of the Porozów Jewish community includes GARF (7021-86-44, e.g., pp. 1, 35); NARB (845-1-8, p. 47); and USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M [GARF], reel 13); and VHF (# 48539).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/3766, testimony of Kalman Barakin, excerpted in Polish trans., in Michał Grynberg and Maria Kotowska, eds., *Życie i zagłada Żydów polskich 1939–1945: Relacje świadków* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003), p. 386.

2. Compare Kaplan, “The Incidents,” pp. 312–315; and “Porozow,” in Lashovits, *Volkovisk*, p. 104.

3. Kaplan, “The Incidents,” p. 314.

4. VHF, #48539, testimony of Naomi (Kaplan-Rozenblum) Warren.

5. GARF, 7021-86-44, p. 35, listing 10 Jewish victims.

6. BLH, testimony of Leib Aronzon, in an English trans. on the Jałówka homepage of the Avotaynu Web site (www.avotaynu.com).

7. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 162–163.

8. See AŻIH, 301/2002 and 2114, respectively, testimony of Jasza Klin, p. 1, and testimony of Hanka Szpiler-Wołk (or Volk), p. 2.

PORZECZE

Pre-1939: Porzecze, village, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Porech’e, raion center, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Poretschje, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Parechcha, Hrodna raen and voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Porzecze lies on Lake Mołotniewo (Russian: Molochnoe), about 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) northeast of Grodno. On the eve of World War II, about 80 Jewish families, numbering about 400 people, were living there.

Initially occupied in World War II by Soviet forces, Porzecze did not come under German occupation until shortly after June 22, 1941. The German military commander in Porzecze appointed a provisional civil administration and a local auxiliary police force from among the village’s Poles and Belorussians. The local administration most likely represented German interests after the departure of the military from there, as the Porzecze mayor received directives from the Security Police in Grodno as late as September 24, 1941. A German civil administration and a Gendarmerie post were established there around October 1, the day Kreis Grodno was incorporated into Distrikt Białystok. The Amtskommissariat was headed by a man surnamed Kirm. The Gendarmerie was under the command of Hauptwachtmeister Papenbrock.¹

An unknown German unit embarked immediately on anti-Jewish violence in Porzecze, murdering almost all the village’s Jewish men within the first two weeks of the military occupation. The first victims were 30 Jews identified as Communists by some local Christians. The next day, the Germans took another 40 Jewish men to work outside the village. When they did not return, they were presumed to have been murdered. Some of the remaining men are believed to have sought shelter in Jeziory. After the murders, only about 25

male Jews remained in Porzecze. They included brothers Lejb (or Leon) and Moses Borovnick (or Borownicki), teenagers who had attempted to flee to Soviet-occupied territory. About two weeks into their journey, some German soldiers ordered them to return home. When they arrived there a week later, they discovered almost no men in the Porzecze Jewish community.²

In the meantime, the Germans had imposed a number of restrictions on the surviving Jewish population, issuing decrees that required the Jews to wear a patch with the Star of David on their clothes, forbade contact with local Christians, restricted the Jews to the borders of the village, and mandated forced labor. The Germans also ordered that a six-person Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established. Its chair, Meir Szalkowicz, was the son of the rabbi. They ordered the formation of a three-person Jewish police force. Different groups of Germans also demanded from the Jews several large payments, or ransoms, so named because each time the Germans called for the contributions, they held a number of Jews hostage, pending their receipt.

On September 24, 1941, the inspector for the outlying districts of the Gendarmerie-Kreisführer in Grodno directed civil authorities in Porzecze (and Jeziory) to create ghettos for the Jewish inhabitants of their villages.³ The Porzecze ghetto was established just outside the village in about 20 small houses. The houses most likely had comprised a small settlement built by the railway in the 1850s for its agricultural and forestry workers. At the time the Jews were moved there, the houses had been inhabited mostly by Polish peasants. The ghetto initially was unfenced. According to one survivor, it remained an open ghetto until its liquidation in November 1942. However, another account notes that the ghetto was fenced in the winter of 1941–1942, after the Germans resettled some Polish farmers in the Jews’ former homes.⁴

The Germans and likely their local collaborators compelled the Jews to remain within the ghetto by frightening and terrorizing them, mostly by entering the ghetto and shooting their guns into the air. Ghetto inmates worked for the Germans in forestry labor. Material conditions were not as terrible as in some ghettos, as the Jews found they could leave the ghetto rather easily to exchange their remaining possessions with local peasants for food.

On November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Porzecze ghetto. That day, they ordered the Jews to assemble in front of the Judenrat’s headquarters for deportation to a labor camp. During the Aktion, at least 15 Jews fled to the forest; 2, a woman and a man, were killed immediately.⁵ The rest of the Jews, about 234 people, were brought on peasant wagons to the Kiełbasin transit camp, about 5 kilometers (3.1 kilometers) southwest of Grodno.⁶ Immediately after the deportation of the Jews to Kiełbasin, the Amtskommissar ordered the remaining Jewish property there collected and sold. The proceeds, 10,624.51 Reichsmark (RM), were deposited into a trustee account of the Landratsamt in Grodno.⁷

At Kielbasin, the Jews from Porzecze joined Jews from about 22 other communities and labor camps (about 22,000 to 28,000 people) consolidated there between November 2 and 5, 1942. The Porzecze Jews lived at Kielbasin for more than a month, in terrible conditions, with little food, subjected to the elements in underground bunkers. Many perished from illnesses related to the poor diet and unsanitary conditions. Most of the Porzecze Jews likely were deported on December 5, 1942, the second day of Hanukkah, together with the Jews of Lunna, to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Almost all of them were gassed on arriving at Auschwitz, on December 8. Records available at this writing document only 2 Porzecze Jews, Chaim Kamiński and Icek Rud, held back as prisoners of the concentration camp. Both men perished there.⁸ Some Porzecze Jews also were on the last transport from Kielbasin, most likely sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Others, including the Borovick brothers, were among the 2,000 to 3,500 Jews still at the transit camp when the Germans closed it shortly after December 21 and sent its remaining inmates to the Grodno I ghetto. In Grodno, the remaining Porzecze Jews either perished there from illnesses they had contracted at the transit camp or were deported to Auschwitz a month later, during the January 18–22, 1943, Grodno ghetto liquidation Aktion. The Borovick brothers, for instance, arrived at Auschwitz on January 24, 1943. The extant arrival records are too scarce to determine whether other Porzecze Jews were on the transport.⁹

Most of the Porzecze Jews who had fled to the forests also perished in the months following the ghetto's liquidation. On November 22, 1942, for example, police from the Porzecze Gendarmerie post uncovered a forest bunker and shot dead the 6 Jews they found hiding there. Three days later, they murdered 10 more Jews.¹⁰ A few Porzecze Jews are believed to have reached the forest encampment of the Kobrowski family, a group of Jews who had fled the liquidation of the ghetto of Marcinkańce.¹¹ The group subsequently joined the Soviet partisans of the Davidov brigade.

SOURCES Although no yizkor book with memoirs from Porzecze survivors has appeared, survivor Leon Borovick did publish a volume, titled *Zibn zunen: Lider* (New York: Matones, 1980), in which he recounts lyrically his experiences in Porzecze during World War II and later at Auschwitz. He recites and sings some of the works from the volume in his VHF testimony.

Useful also is the Porzecze entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds. *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 518–519.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Porzecze during the Holocaust includes GAGO (1-1-54, p. 38, and 1-1-335, pp. 64–67); GARF (7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31); RGVA (1323-2-244); USHMM (RG-22.002M [GARF], reel 13; and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., reels 1, 1-1-54, p. 38, reel 2, 1-1-150, pp. 24–25, and reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 64–67); VHF (# 25938); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-280, pp. 6–7.
2. VHF, # 25938, testimony of Leon Borovick
3. RGVA, 1323-2-250, pp. 117, 135, cited in Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), pp. 530–531.
4. Compare VHF, # 25938; with “Porzecze,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:518–519.
5. USHMM, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99.
6. Ibid., RG-53.004M, reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 38; and GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4.
7. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 64–67.
8. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 131–132.
9. Alexandre Blumstein, *A Little House on Mount Carmel* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2002), pp. 174–176; and Mączka, *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz*, pp. 160–161.
10. USHMM, RG-11.001M (RGVA), reel 81, 1323-2-244, p. 99, with some of the murdered Jews among those who fled from the ghetto of Marcinkańce.
11. Blumstein, *A Little House*, p. 335.

PRUŻANA

Pre-1939: Prużana, town and powiat center, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Pruzhany, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Pruschana, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Pruzhany, raen center, Bera's'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Prużana is located about 85 kilometers (53 miles) northeast of Brześć nad Bugiem. The number of Jews in Prużana was 4,152 (65.6 percent of the total population) in 1921. Between mid-September 1939 and June 1941, Prużana was under Soviet rule. Jewish communal bodies were disbanded, most private businesses were nationalized, and Jewish craftsmen were reorganized into cooperatives.

German tanks of Army Group Center entered Prużana on the night of June 23–24, 1941. Jewish survivors recall that local non-Jews welcomed the German invaders, whereas the Jews tried to avoid contact with them. Columns of German troops passed through the town for three weeks. During this period, German soldiers confiscated food supplies left behind by the Soviet authorities, although some were distributed to the local population.¹

A short time after the arrival of German forces, Sonderkommando 7b, a detachment of Einsatzgruppe B, passed through the area, conducting large-scale search and killing operations in Prużana, Różana, Kobryń, and Bielsk Podlaski.² In Prużana, a local Polish police force was formed that arrested a number of Poles, Belorussians, and Jews, allegedly for cooperating with the Soviet regime. German security forces then shot these people, including 18 Jews, even though some had not had



A remembrance meeting of Prużana (Pruzhany) survivors in the Feldafing displaced-persons camp, 1946. Abraham Shevelevitch (in hat, front row) sits in the front row.

USHMM WS #18412, COURTESY OF MJH/CHS

anything to do with the Soviet authorities. During the initial weeks of occupation, a German military administration governed the town. Among the first anti-Jewish regulations it issued were the introduction of a yellow badge for Jews and an order prohibiting them from using the sidewalks.³

The German occupation forces soon ordered the Prużana Jewish community to select a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Initially, the council consisted of 5 persons, but later it was increased to 24. The head of the Jewish Council was Yitzchak Janowicz. His deputy was the attorney Ze'ev Schreiberman. Eliezer Schein was responsible for the internal affairs of the ghetto. Zavel Segal served as the intermediary between the council and the German authorities. The distribution of food was the responsibility of Shlomo Yudewicz. Physician Olga Goldfajn, the pre-war head of the Prużana hospital, headed the sanitation department.⁴ A Jewish police force also was established. Its tasks included collecting taxes and other "contributions" from the Jews. It also prevented smuggling and other infringements of German regulations. Most survivors report that Jewish Council members tried to do the best for the community and did not betray the trust placed in them.⁵

The Jewish population of Prużana was placed under a great deal of financial pressure. For example, soon after the start of the occupation the Germans ordered the Jews to deliver over half a million rubles, 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of gold, 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of silver, all furs, and 100 pairs of boots, within 24 hours. More demands followed for blankets, pillows, and other household goods.⁶

The German authorities immediately limited Jewish residence in Prużana by forbidding Jews from living on certain streets, including Dr. Pacewicz Street and May 3rd Street. Those living there were forced to move.

On September 22 or 25, 1941, the Jews were ordered to resettle into the designated ghetto area, which included Dąbrowski and Kobryń Streets as far as the bridge, Brześć Street up to Szereszów Street, and all the intervening streets. The ghetto was partly surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and

partly by a solid wall, which the Jews were forced to erect. The ghetto had two entrances, which were guarded from the outside by the auxiliary police. Its main gate lay between the Judkowski (or Yudkowski) house and a line of stores.⁷ Subsequently, the area of the ghetto was reduced in size.

From mid-August to mid-September 1941, approximately 2,000 Jews were removed to Prużana from the Białowieża Forest communities of Hajnówka, Kamieniec Litewski, Linowo, Narew, and other places.⁸ Because German security forces had executed all or a part of the men of these communities and local German authorities in some cases also demanded that male craftsmen be held back from the deportations, the refugee population was composed mainly of the elderly, women, and children. A number of women and children from Szereszów also evaded deportation to Kobryń, shortly after August 15, by seeking refuge in Prużana. A handful of men from Szereszów also fled there to avoid forced marches to Antopol and Drohiczyn, which claimed the lives of many of these prisoners.

German authorities also used the Prużana ghetto to relieve population pressure on the Białystok ghetto, by ordering 5,000 to 8,000 Białystok Jews expelled there, in groups of about 500 people, between September 17 and October 19, 1941. Officially, the Białystok prisoners came from the unskilled, unemployed, and homeless populations. This group included many widows and families of the victims of the Black Saturday (or Black Sabbath) executions, on July 12, with the former known as *di shabbesdike* (Sabbath widows), and those whose homes were burned to the ground on the first day of the German occupation of Białystok. However, many skilled workers also volunteered for expulsion to Prużana, because they believed conditions would be better there. Some volunteers also came from the small group of Jews who had fled to Białystok to evade arrest for Soviet-era collusion with Communist authorities. They thought that volunteering for Prużana might enable them to escape German searches for them in the Białystok ghetto.⁹

Additional Jewish refugees arrived in Prużana during 1941 and 1942, having escaped the anti-Jewish violence and the liquidation of entire Jewish communities in Reichskommissariat Ukraine, including from Bereza Kartuska and Kobryń, Linowo, Małecz, and Sielec, where the Germans had murdered almost all Jews by December 1942. Among the Kobryń refugees were a substantial number of women and children from the Białowieża Forest communities of Białowieża and Narewka, deported there between August 13 and 15, 1941.¹⁰ Eyewitnesses note that Jews from more than 22 different communities were inmates of the Prużana ghetto.

The refugees likely brought the Prużana ghetto population to 10,000, though some survivors note its population crested at between 15,000 and 18,000.¹¹ However, about 1,500 of the Białystok deportees are believed to have made their way back home. Up to another 6,000 Prużana ghetto inmates likely perished from disease, exposure, or as a result of anti-Jewish violence. Another eyewitness reports that an official SS population count, conducted on December 10, 1942, in the midst of a typhus epidemic, placed the ghetto population at 12,000 people.¹²

The daily ration made available by German authorities to the ghetto was sparse: 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread and a few potatoes per person. Meat was almost never supplied. However, the Jewish Council received a onetime 100,000 ruble payment and an additional monthly sum of 50,000 rubles (about 5,000 Reichsmark [RM]) from the Białystok Jewish Council to aid its refugees. It used the sum to provide the ghetto's inhabitants with potatoes and bread at low prices. Because the small amount of money the Germans paid it to compensate forced laborers did not cover expenses, it also imposed taxes on the ghetto inhabitants. The council established a bakery in the ghetto to produce bread, and it was involved in smuggling food into the ghetto.

Accommodation was a problem in the ghetto. Owing to the resettlement of native Jews and the arrival of thousands of refugees, the Prużana Jewish Council assigned each family a single room in the houses in the ghetto. Overcrowding was severe, particularly after the ghetto area was reduced, at which point each resident was assigned 2 square meters (21.5 square feet) of living space.¹³ Fuel for heating was in short supply. To meet this need, the Judenrat secured permission from German authorities to send workers to dig out the roots of felled trees to use as firewood in the ghetto.¹⁴

The Jewish Council fulfilled German demands for forced labor by assigning the ghetto inhabitants to specific work details. About 200 people were sent to pave a highway; many more worked outside the ghetto for six-week stints at forest camps, to fell trees; others worked at a German military base, established at a pre-war cavalry training ground.¹⁵ In the ghetto, several workshops were established to produce mostly clothes and furniture. Some Jewish craftsmen engaged in carpentry, tailoring, and shoemaking. Others knitted or worked in the households of German families.¹⁶

Demands for contributions and other material items continued throughout the ghetto's existence. The Germans ordered ghetto residents to part with their beds and bedding. They also insisted that the Judenrat provide 100 pieces of tin sheeting to repair roofs on houses designated for German resettlement.

The Jewish Council organized a certain level of medical aid for the poor. It established a hospital in a former Polish secondary school building, under the direction of Professor Shtrieher. The hospital received some deliveries of medicine. The ghetto's doctors attempted to conceal an outbreak of typhus, as they feared the German authorities might use it as a pretext to liquidate the ghetto. Under the supervision of Wela Laref Janowicz, the Jewish Council organized a school for small children. Cultural and religious activities continued in the ghetto, with Jews praying in private houses, because the synagogues were full of refugees.¹⁷

Plans to establish a fighting organization, to dig bunkers, or to escape to the forests were widely discussed. A large number of mostly young Jews did not trust the Jewish Council, and some escaped to join the partisans. Several underground groups were organized. A secret radio and bunkers existed in the ghetto. Some Jews who worked in an ammunition factory managed to steal the parts needed to make weapons.¹⁸ Yosel

Unterszul and his wife were the first people to flee the ghetto and join the partisans. However, the Judenrat opposed such escapes, as it feared German retribution if people were discovered to be missing.¹⁹

At sunrise on November 1, 1942, German units surrounded the Prużana ghetto. Police forces armed with machine guns were positioned at 15-meter (49-foot) intervals, and nobody was allowed to leave the ghetto area. Faced with this tense situation, a group of intellectuals—physicians, teachers, and attorneys—resolved to commit suicide. The poison did not work in all cases; an additional attempt at asphyxiation—by blocking the chimney of Velvel Schreiberman's house—was interrupted, and many of the people were resuscitated.²⁰ However, as German authorities liquidated almost all of the other provincial ghettos in the Białystok region and deported their inhabitants to extermination camps via transit camps, the siege of the Prużana ghetto was lifted after a few days, and food supplies were restored. Although the Prużana Jews were given a brief reprieve, they nonetheless recognized that the ghetto's days were numbered.

In mid-December 1942, Heinrich Himmler issued orders for the remaining 30,000 Jews in the provinces of the Białystok region, including the Jews of the Prużana ghetto, to be sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp. On January 27, 1943, the German authorities arrested 7 members of the Jewish Council, allegedly for having contacts with the partisans; however, the arrests more likely were to forestall possible resistance to the ghetto's impending liquidation.²¹ The next day, German officials informed the remaining members of the Jewish Council that the inhabitants of the ghetto would be deported to a labor camp in Silesia. The Germans permitted the Jews to bring with them up to 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of luggage. The ghetto was liquidated in four successive large transports of about 2,500 Jews each, over four days from January 29 to February 1, 1943.²² The Jews were transported on peasants' sleds to the railway station at Linowo, where up to 150 people were crammed into each freight car. Out of the approximately 9,161 Prużana ghetto inmates deported to Auschwitz, only 1,675 people—1,183 men and 492 women—were held back as prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp. The remaining 7,486 people were gassed on arrival.²³

Only 200 to 300 of the selected Jews from the Prużana ghetto survived their ordeals in Auschwitz and other labor camps. At least 100 Jews managed to evade the ghetto roundup or jumped from the transports. Among them was Olga Goldfajn, who was assisted by a Catholic nun. Subsequently she joined a group of partisans that conducted operations around Wołkowysk.²⁴

SOURCES There are several yizkor books for Prużana and the surrounding towns, including, in Hebrew, Joseph Friedlaender, ed., *Pinkas Prużani yeha-sevivah: (Tol) dot ye-zikaron le-kehillot she-bushmedu ba-sho'ah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Prużani yeha-sevivah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1983), which—although it contains some original material—is a condensed version of the earlier yizkor book edited by Mordechai Wolf Bernstein, *Pinkes fun finf fartilikte kehiles: Pruzshene, Bereze, Maltsh, Sheshev, Selts: Zeyer oyfkum, geshikte un umkum*

(Buenos Aires: Aroysgegebn fun Landslayt-fareyn fun Pruzshene, Bereze, Małtsh, Shershev un umgegnt in Argentine, 1958); and Dov Kirschner and David Forer, eds., *Hurbn Pruzshene* (Buenos Aires: Aroysgegebn fun Landslayt fareyn fun Pruzshene, Bereze, Małtsh, Shershev un umgegnt in Argentine, 1974). English translations of the table of contents of both books appear on the Children of Pruzany and the Surrounding Area (CPSA) Web site at <http://cpsa.info>, under the Pruzany link, with some of the chapters on the early history of Pruzana from the 1983 book and the Szereszów chapters from the 1958 book also translated there.

Other relevant memoirs and works include Moishe Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest: From Shershev to Auschwitz to Newfoundland* (Canada: Moishe Kantorowitz, 2004), with earlier testimonies from the same author available as Meishke Kantorovich, *Shershev: Agony and Death of a Shtetl: In Memoriam*, which, in turn, originally formed chapters 16–18 of Jacob Auerbach, *The Undying Spark* (Long Beach, NY: J. Auerbach, between 1976 and 1992), with the last also cited below as RG-02.113; Avraham Harshalom, *Alive from the Ashes* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at Milo, 1990); and Moris Sorid, *One More Miracle: The Memoirs of Moris Sorid* (Jonathan Sorid, 2007).

The testimony “The Story of Olga Goldfajn,” in Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Black Book: The Ruthless Murder of Jews by German-Fascist Invaders Throughout the Temporarily-Occupied Regions of the Soviet Union and in the Death Camps of Poland During the War of 1941–1945*, trans. John Glad and James S. Levine (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981), pp. 206–212, covers a part of the below-cited AŽIH, 301/1380, testimony of Olga Goldfajn, by a physician employed prior to the war in the Pruzana hospital. Goldfajn's story of survival, including the assistance she received by Sister Genofewa (née and later Genofewa Czubak, as she was defrocked for sheltering Goldfajn), of the Order of St. Ignatius of Loyola, is retold in English by Mordecai Paldiel, *The Path of the Righteous: Gentile Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1993), pp. 213–215.

An interview with Fania Krawczak, originally from Szereszów, by Pia-Kristina Svenhard, appears on the Web site of the Pruzhany Uyezd Research Organization, at www.pruzhanydistrict.com.ar/people_sub/fania.htm; and two interviews with Aida Brydbord, by Collette Krause and Rachel Licht, appear on Judy Cohen's Web site “Women of Valor, Partisans and Resistance Fighters,” www3.sympatico.ca/mighty1/valor/aida.htm. Though published by his family posthumously as a biography, also valuable is Mildred C. Nitzberg and Marilyn M. Segal, *I Chose Life: A Survivor's Search for Peace* (Bloomington, IN, 2007), the biography of survivor Saul I. Nitzberg.

Historians disagree over which Einsatzgruppe detachment was responsible for the executions of the 18 Jews (and an unknown number of Polish and Belorussian victims) in Pruzana in July 1941, in part because so many different units are known to have passed through Pruzana on their way to Minsk. Historians most frequently cite the presence in Pruzana of Einsatzkommando 7b, a detachment of Einsatzgruppe B, because documentation, including the Tätigkeitsbericht des Chefs der Einsatzgruppe B für die Zeit vom 23.6.1941 bis zum 13.7.1941, in Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), p. 377,

places it in Pruzana, Rožana, Kobryń, and Bielsk Podlaski between June 29 and July 2. However, Andrzej Żbikowski, in *U genezy Jedwabnego: Żydzi na kresach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej, wrzesień 1939–lipiec 1941* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2006), has suggested that survivor accounts, specifically the previously cited Goldfajn testimony (AŽIH, 301/1380), which dates the executions to July 10, 1941, indicate that they occurred after Einsatzgruppe 7b had passed through Pruzana; they therefore were more likely the work of the Einsatzkommando led by SS-Untersturmführer Wolfgang Birkner.

The deportation and in some instances the escape of Jews from the Białowieża Forest communities to the Pruzana ghetto is described in several of the memoirs and testimonies detailed above; a brief summary of the expulsions can be found in Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), pp. 535–536 (Hajnówka).

The issue of the removal of Białystok refugees to the Pruzana ghetto is covered in a large number of archival and memoir sources, including the memoirs by Michel Mielnicki, *Bialystok to Birkenau: The Holocaust Journey of Michel Mielnicki*, ed. John A. Munro (Vancouver, Canada: Ronsdale Press, 2000). There also is much coverage of the deportations and their impact on the Białystok ghetto community in Sara Bender, *The Jews of Bialystok during World War II and the Holocaust*, trans. Yaffa Murciano (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), pp. 108–112, 172, 283.

Documents relating to the Pruzana ghetto and the annihilation of the Jewish population of the town can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301 [511, 984, 1269, 1380, 1849, 2000, 2256, 2604, and 3521]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/14223); FVA (HVT [232, 962, 1269, 2889, 2903, 3072, 3147]); IPN (SAWr 16-18); IPN-Bi (S-105/67); NARA (T-175, reel 233); NARB (378-1-784; 861-1-3); USHMM (RG-02.113; RG-50.030*0040; RG-50.030*0390, RG-50.106*0020, and RG-50.120*0182); VHF (# 2162, 9046, 8303, 12392, 20198, 31918, 36941); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Friedlaender, *Pinchas Pruz'ani*, p. 91.
2. Tätigkeitsbericht des Chefs der Einsatzgruppe B für die Zeit vom 23.6.1941 bis zum 13.7.1941, in Klein, *Die Einsatzgruppen*, p. 377.
3. Friedlaender, *Pinchas Pruz'ani*, pp. 91–92; Harshalom, *Alive* p. 37.
4. Friedlaender, *Pinchas Pruz'ani*, p. 92; and Harshalom, *Alive*, pp. 40–41.
5. *Pinchas Pruz'ani*, p. 92; USHMM, RG-50.030*0390, testimony of Joseph Elman, p. 32 (transcript).
6. Harshalom, *Alive*, p. 42.
7. Ibid. “The Story of Olga Goldfajn,” p. 207, dates the establishment of the ghetto on October 25, 1941.
8. Harshalom, *Alive*, p. 43; NARB, 861-1-3, p. 36; Nahman Blumental, *Darko shel Yudenrat* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1961–1962), p. 278.
9. Mielnicki, *Bialystok to Birkenau*.
10. AŽIH, 301/1970, testimony of Symcha Bursztajn (Białowieża); 301/1072, testimony of Josef Blinder (Białowieża); 301/1849, testimony of Szymon Kamiński (Narewka);

301/2212, testimony of Benjamin Wolf (Narewka), p. 4; Berl Blustein, "The Destruction of Lineve," in Friedlaender, *Pinkas Pruz'ani*, pp. 151–153.

11. AZIH, 301/138.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Friedlaender, *Pinkas Pruz'ani*, p. 95.

15. Harshalom, *Alive*, p. 44.

16. Friedlaender, *Pinkas Pruz'ani*, p. 95.

17. Ibid., pp. 95–96.

18. Ibid., pp. 100–101.

19. Ibid., pp. 102–103; and USHMM, RG-50.030*0390, pp. 36–37.

20. Harshalom, *Alive*, pp. 47–48; "The Story of Olga Goldfayn," p. 208, notes that 47 people took poison and died.

21. BA-L, B 162/14223 (II 205 AR-Z 226/60, Verdict of LG-Biel on April 14, 1967, in the case of Dr. Wilhelm Altenloh and others), pp. 57–77.

22. NARB, 378-1-784, pp. 2–9 and reverse, daily reports of the Oranczyce station to the Reich Transport Office (Reichsverkehrsdirektion) in Minsk, January 29–February 1, 1943. The four transports carried 2,612, 2,450, 2,835, and 1,265 persons, respectively. See also Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 729.

23. Harshalom, *Alive*, pp. 52–54.

24. "The Story of Olga Goldfayn," pp. 206–212.

RADZIŁÓW

Pre-1939: Radziłów (Yiddish: Radzilovo), village, Szczuczyn powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Radzilov (from 1940 Edvabne raion) Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Radzilow, Kreis Grajewo, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Radziłów, Grajewo powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Radziłów lies 60 kilometers (38 miles) northwest of Białystok. Its 1937 population of 2,500 included 650 Jews. The Germans occupied Radziłów from September 7, 1939, but soon turned the village over to Soviet forces. Controversial official statistics from 1940 note a population for the Radziluv sel'sovet of 2,865, including 500 Jews.

The Germans reoccupied Radziłów on June 23, 1941. On June 27, they named Józef Mordasiewicz and Leon Kosmaczewski the heads of a local collaborationist administration. Stanisław Grzymkowski was named the secretary. Aleksander Dołęgowski, the priest, served in the administration. They appointed an auxiliary police force, commanded by Konstanty Kiluk.¹ At least 10 policemen, including Kiluk, had been released from People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) prisons because of the war.

Over the course of the next few weeks, the Jews of Radziłów, as well as refugees from other villages, suffered violence and depredations at the hands of Wehrmacht troops, SS units, and Poles. They forced Jews to desecrate their holy texts; beat and robbed them; raped Jewish women; forced Jews to perform hard labor; and murdered many hundreds of

them. The violence reached a peak on July 7 when local Poles, acting under SS encouragement or orders (accounts vary), forced Jews into a barn and set it on fire. Anyone trying to escape was shot, while later captives were thrown into the flames alive. The hunt for fugitives continued for three days. Estimates of the number killed range from 600 to 2,000. Only about 30 survived, some with the help of local Poles.

In early August, the Jews were commanded to report to a ghetto. When they failed to appear, Kiluk, on August 7 or 14, 1941, ordered them rounded up and locked in the synagogue, the site of the first Radziłów ghetto. Stanisław Ramotowski notes "a few families" resided there. Menachem Finkelsztejn places the ghetto population at 18.² The Polish police daily led the inmates out under armed guard to remove heavy boulders from the stream for construction of a bridge. A bribe to Kiluk enabled the Jews to move after three weeks to a house on Kościelna Street. In this period, the police likely ordered the Jews to dismantle the Bet Midrash.

With the establishment of a Gendarmerie post in Radziłów, most likely in September, under the command of Otto Wider, the Germans assigned the Jews somewhat lighter labor, including street cleaning. Gendarmes permitted Mojżesz Dorogoj to return to his home and workshop. They permitted others, including Chaja Finkelsztejn's family, to live on the farms of Poles for whom they worked. The Gendarmes arrested some surviving Jews, including Benjomin Kruk, Szabsaj Maraszewski, and a few others, denounced by local Poles. The men perished in unknown circumstances.³

On June 1, 1942, the Gendarmes deported most of the ghetto inmates to Milewo (Szczuczyn gmina and powiat) for labor on the Milbo estate, the property of the Grajewo Kreiskommissar. Perhaps as few as 10 Radziłów Jews were sent there. They included 5 members of Rachela Finkelsztejn's family, including her mother, sister, and nephews, and likely also Dora Dorogoj's mother and younger brother. Some Jews, including the Finkelsztejns, either went into hiding to avoid deportation or were permitted to continue working for local Poles.

On November 2, 1942, the Germans deported the Jews in Milewo to a transit camp located just north of Grajewo, in Bogusze village, near the railway station in Prostken, East Prussia. Jews still working near Radziłów also were transported to the Bogusze transit camp.⁴ About three weeks later, the SS sent the Radziłów Jews at the transit camp to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp.

About nine people, including the Finkelsztejn family and Rachela Finkelsztejn-Ramotowska, evaded the deportation and survived the war hiding in villages near Radziłów. Also counted as survivors are Berek Wasersztejn and Chemia Suraski, postfire refugees to the Białystok ghetto, and Fruma Dorogoj, who on June 22, 1941, fled to Latvia. On January 28, 1945, five days after the Red Army liberated Radziłów, the former auxiliary policemen Józef and Antoni Kosmaczewski murdered survivors Mojżesz Dorogoj and his son Akiwa.

Of the eight perpetrators tried after the war in Poland, two were found guilty and sentenced to prison terms of four and six years for murdering the Jews of Radziłów. During the

criminal investigations, Antoni Kosmaczewski mentioned he already was serving a 15-year prison term for murdering two Jews, but the documentation to confirm whether he and Józef were convicted of murdering the Dorogojns is not available. SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Schaper was never tried for the Radziłów murders. In 1976, he received a six-year prison term for the killings of other Jewish and Polish civilians. It was overturned on appeal. His health was declared too fragile for a new trial. In 2002, a special prosecutor from the Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (a division of IPN) (KŚZpNP-IPN) questioned Schaper about the Radziłów murders. The 91-year-old Schaper, citing his failing memory, refused to answer any questions.

In March 2001, the KŚZpNP-IPN in Białystok reopened its 1978 investigation of the murders on July 7, 1941, in Radziłów. A detailed study is expected, though the investigation is still under way at this writing.

SOURCES The pogrom in Wąsosz and the murder of the Radziłów Jewish community form parts of an extremely controversial series of events that also involved the Jedwabne massacre. See Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 3–29; Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 57–69; Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: KŚZpNP-IPN, 2002), vol. 2, *Studia*. Also important are the diaries and compilation of press coverage about Radziłów originally published in *Gazeta Wyborcza* by Anna Bikont, *My z Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, 2004), including the interview with Stanisław and Marianna (Rachela Finkelsztejn) Ramotowski. A number of Polish-language accounts discuss Stanisław Ramotowski, named by Yad Vashem in 1990 as Righteous Among the Nations, with the most accessible English-language account in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, p. 674.

Some of the more important press coverage on the destruction of the Radziłów Jewish community appears in English translation on José Gutstein’s Jewish community of Radziłów Web site and the Fundacja Pogranicze Web site page “Voices on the Jedwabne Tragedy,” at www.pogranicze.sejny.pl/archiwum/english/jedwabne. Still pertinent are the older entries in Abraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 422–423 (Radziłów) and pp. 187–188 (Wąsosz). A polished English translation of the Radziłów entry appears on the Web site of the Jewish community of Radziłów at www.radzilow.com/pinkas.htm.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Radziłów Jewish community during World War II includes APB (e.g., WSRB, Sr 386/47); APSuOE (e.g., SOE [V K 139/48, V K 154/48, V K 790/47]); AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety [unnumbered], 301/78, 301/974, 301/1284, 301/1846); BA-L (e.g., B 162/5863 [AR-Z 13/62]); IPN (e.g., SAB [86, 179], SWB [142, 179, 183]); VHF (e.g., # 10378); and YVA (e.g., 03/033-2636/255). Among the most valuable of these sources is the 306-page testimony, at YVA, by Chaja Finkelsztejn. It forms the basis for this entry. In addition to the Finkelsztejn testimony, the only other

known coverage of Wąsosz is provided in the above-cited AŻIH, 301/1846, testimony by Chaja’s son, Menachem Finkelsztejn, who unfortunately was not an eyewitness. AŻIH, 301/1993, a secondary account about Wąsosz by Szymon Datner, is based on Menachem’s testimony.

A large part of the primary documentation listed above is available in a variety of other forms and languages, including in George Gorin et al., eds., *Graveyard yisker bukh* (New York: United Graveyard Relief Committee, 1950), pp. 228–231 (AŻIH 301/78, in Yiddish), pp. 232–234 (AŻIH 301/1846, in Polish); and Gross, *Neighbors*, pp. 57–69 (AŻIH, 301/974, in English). The above documentation also is found in English translation on José Gutstein’s Jewish community of Radziłów Web site. The Web site includes an English translation of the August 16, 1966, interview, included in YVA, 03/033-2636/255. In addition to Polish-language versions of the same documentation, additional source material can be found in Polish in the IPN source companion *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 156–166, 195–199, pp. 246–247 (AŻIH, 301/78), pp. 249–257 (AŻIH, 301/974), pp. 260–262 (AŻIH, 301/1846), pp. 263–317, 318–325 (YVA, 03/033-2636/255, pp. 1–15 [interview]); with additional sources including pp. 169–178 (BA-L, B 162/5863 [AR-Z 13/62]), pp. 258–259 (AŻIH, 301/1284), pp. 263–317 (YVA, 03/033-2636/255, excerpt), pp. 359–360 (AŻIH, 301/1993), and pp. 872–983 (dispersed throughout excerpts of Polish court documentation for postwar trials at APB, WSRB, Sr 386/47; APSuOE, SOE [e.g., V K 139/48 and V K 154/48 (old 790/47)]; and IPN [e.g., SAB (86, 179), SWB (e.g., 142, 179, 183)]. Andrzej Żbikowski and Sylwia Szymańska, the editors of the survivor testimonies in the volume, include in a footnote in the above-cited AŻIH, 301/1846, testimony a transcription of the ŻIH Ankiety documentation for Milewo.

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NOTES

1. APB, WSRB, Sr 386/47, pp. 15–19 (deposition, Berek Wasersztejn).
2. Quoted in Bikont, *My*, p. 60; and AŻIH, 301/974, pp. 6–7 (typescript).
3. AŻIH, 301/1846, pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., 301/1284, testimony of Chana Finkelsztejn (Ann Walters), pp. 1–2.

RAJGRÓD

Pre-1939: Rajgród (Yiddish: Raigrod), town, Szczuczyn powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Raigorod, Graevo raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1945: Rajgrad, Kreis Grajewo, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Rajgród, Szczuczyn powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Rajgród is located 18.8 kilometers (11.7 miles) north-northeast of Grajewo and 72 kilometers (44.7 miles) north-northwest of Białystok. It lies on a peninsula on Lake Rajgród. Its 1937 population of 2,400 included 600 Jews. At the start of World War II, the Germans occupied the town initially but turned it over to Soviet military authorities at the end of September 1939.

More than a week after the initial German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Rajgród again was occupied briefly by a Wehrmacht unit. A small SS contingent, of 2 to 10 men, arrived there in early July. Because they came from Augustów, some historians suspect the men belonged to a special command from the State Police in Tilsit, known to have been deployed along the former German-Lithuanian border area from June 24, or to its subordinate, the Sudauen (in Polish, Suwałki) border unit, also attributed with the executions, on July 3, of a part of the Jewish community in Augustów.¹ The SS commander recruited several Poles as collaborators, including Antoni Len, a teacher of German, and Jan Turoń, known to have robbed three Jewish stores and the Soviet border guard headquarters during the German invasion.

On the command of the SS, the collaborators rounded up and drove to the market square about 100 Jews, alleged sympathizers of the former Communist regime. They beat those who refused to comply. Some of the accused, including the store owner Finkelsztejn, appear to have been unlikely Soviet allies. The prisoners were ordered to parade in their underwear through the streets of Rajgród, singing Soviet songs. The Polish guards surrounding the column threw the captives' clothes to Poles gathered along the marching route.² After a Polish bystander claimed that one of the prisoners was responsible for the arrest, in the Soviet period, of a family member and described how People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) interrogators had permanently disabled him, the Poles along the route may have attacked the Jews in the column. The SS and the Polish guards reportedly reassembled only some of the captives. Taken 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside of Rajgród, to the "Choinki" Forest, at least 30 of the Jews were shot by the SS and by some of the Polish guards.³

Before leaving Rajgród, an SS member supposedly told the collaborators that they would not be held responsible if more Jews perished as long as they maintained an outward civility so as not to attract the attention of the Wehrmacht. Three days later, German military authorities in Grajewo appointed Len the mayor of Rajgród and ordered him to form an auxiliary police force. He named Toruń its commander. The Polish auxiliaries, particularly Adamcewicz, plundered Jewish homes and raped Jewish women.⁴ Many Jews fled to other towns, including Grajewo.

When two SS officers arrived in Rajgród in late July to oversee the creation of a ghetto, they ordered Len and the Polish auxiliary police to find the escapees. To secure their return, the SS and the Polish auxiliaries held 20 Jewish women captive in a basement. They warned the rabbi of Rajgród that the women would be hanged if he failed to prevail on the Jews to return. The rabbi set off for Grajewo personally at 11:00 P.M., returning two days later with about 20 Jews. Over the next few days, Polish auxiliary policemen Feliks Bęćko and Adamcewicz, acting on German orders, murdered as many as 50 Jews. The victims included mainly the elderly, handicapped, sick, and the wealthy. The Jews were murdered at Góra Rykowa in two separate Aktions.⁵

Located on Pacowski Street, the Rajgród ghetto occupied an area of 600 square meters (0.2 acres) in a neighborhood around the Bet Midrash. Bounded on a second side by the market square, it was encircled by water on its two remaining sides. The ghetto was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. Between 550 and 800 Jews, including people from villages near Rajgród, were concentrated there. The head of the Judenrat was Szyja Grodzieński, an illiterate 44-year-old chauffeur. Turoń initially oversaw the ghetto. With the establishment of a German civil administration in Rajgród, on September 5, 1941, authority for the ghetto passed to the German police, assigned to the Gendarmerie post established there and to the Grajewo Amtskommissar, Hans Pogoda.⁶

The ghetto was overcrowded, with a few dozen people occupying each house. Food rations were insufficient. Although some inmates smuggled food into the ghetto, many others died there from starvation. The rabbi was forbidden to leave the ghetto. The remaining residents were required to perform forced labor. Some labor gangs worked on road construction projects, which required the conscripts to bring all the Jewish gravestones (*matzevot*) from the Jewish cemetery in Okoniówek to use for paving underlayment on the road to Barszcze village. Women and children deepened the fish ponds in Wojdy village, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) southwest of Rajgród. Local Poles could pay the German Arbeitsamt 3 Reichsmark (RM) daily for a Jewish conscript to assist in agricultural work.⁷

Local German authorities occasionally entered the Rajgród ghetto to harass and beat Jews to death, including Berl Lewintin, murdered in 1942. When Lewintin's father sought permission to bury his son, the German authorities ordered him harnessed to a cart to bring the body to Orzechówka village, about 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) from Rajgród. After the father placed his son's body in the grave, the Germans ordered him to stone the corpse. They then reharnessed Lewintin to the cart and ordered him to return it to its owner in Rajgród.⁸

The Rajgród ghetto was liquidated on October 25, 1942, the date its inmates were deported to the Grajewo ghetto. Two butchers, the Jaków brothers, Mosze Pinchas, and Icek Cukierbaum perished resisting the expulsion order.⁹ The Rajgród Jews lived in Grajewo for six days before being deported, on November 2, along with the remaining inmates of the Grajewo ghetto, to a transit camp located in Bogusze, a war-devastated village 4.8 kilometers (3 miles) north of Grajewo, near the railway station in Prostken, East Prussia.

The Rajgród Jews lived in the Bogusze transit camp for 3 to 10 weeks together with 5,000 to 8,000 Jews from other nearby localities. The Germans sent them, mostly to their deaths, in two deportations. In the first, about 3,000 to 5,000 camp inmates were told on December 15, 1942, that they were being sent to a labor camp in Silesia. The Germans shot about 200 of the Jews the next day on the muddy road to the Prostken railway station. From there, the survivors were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. The 2,000 or so Jews in the final deportation from Bogusze were expelled on January 3, 1943, to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Upon arriving at Auschwitz II-Birkenau on January 7, 1943, at midnight, 1,489 of the

passengers in the transport were gassed. Another 511 Jews—296 men and 215 women—became concentration camp inmates. The incomplete records from Auschwitz indicate at least 5 of the 296 men were from Rajgród. By the end of January, at least 2 of these men had perished.

After the Jews were deported from Rajgród, Pogoda and the Gendarmes searched the Rajgród ghetto for valuables, confiscating what they could find, including pianos. The Germans blew up the synagogue, the Jewish hospitality house, and the Bet Midrash. Some local Polish authorities turned in Jews who had evaded the deportation to Grajewo. The village administrator (sołtys) of Woźnawieś, about 11.6 kilometers by road (7.2 miles) southeast of Rajgród, denounced Luba Lewintin for living there under forged identity papers. Lewintin was shot.¹⁰

No more than 10 Rajgród Jews survived the war. They include the sisters Shayna (Szejna) and Sonia Stolnicka, hidden by a Polish family, though Sonia died of tuberculosis shortly after liberation; and Moshe (Mosze) Kruszewski, a fisherman, who had secured false papers and volunteered as a Pole for forced labor in the Reich.¹¹ Steven Guzik fled with his brothers from Rajgród as the Germans arrived there, moving through a number of regional ghettos and a labor camp, in Zielona (Brzostowica Wielka gmina, Grodno powiat) before fleeing to Białystok and surviving the liquidation of the ghetto there.¹²

After the war, seven Polish collaborators, including Len, Toruń, and Bęćko, were tried for a number of war crimes, including the murder of Jews in Rajgród. For participating in the murder of at least 15 Jews, among them the Tajba family, Bęćko was sentenced to death on June 7, 1952. The sentence subsequently was commuted to life imprisonment.¹³ Only part of the documentation from the other three investigations has been located.¹⁴

SOURCES Important secondary accounts include the relevant entries in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its District* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 419–421; its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 162–165; and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 184–186. The Rubin work contains a rough English translation of a part of the Żbikowski text.

Archival documentation pertaining to the history of the Rajgród Jewish community under German occupation during World War II includes AŻIH (e.g., 301/2600, 301/3149); IPN (e.g., SOE 29, SWB 111, 186, 187); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/674, 1/1028); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN], 46/115); and VHF (e.g., # 18378). AŻIH, 301/2600, is available in a Polish translation, by Sylwia Szymańska, in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Dokumenty* (Warsaw: IPN and KŚZpNP, 2002), pp. 326–327. Its author, Lejb Lewintin, collected the documentation by in-

terviewing Christian eyewitnesses upon his repatriation to Poland.

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NOTES

1. Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 184.
2. IPN, SWB 187, cited in *ibid.*; and AŻIH, 301/2600, testimony of Lejb Lewintin, p. 1.
3. IPN, SWB 187, cited in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 185.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 185–187; and AŻIH, 301/3149, testimony of Lejb (Lewintin) Lewinsztajn, p. 1.
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 14, 46/115; and AŻIH, 301/2600, pp. 1–2.
7. AŻIH, 301/2600, pp. 1–2; and IPN-Bi, 1/1028, p. 405 (deposition, Halina Przastko Masztalerz).
8. AŻIH, 301/2600, p. 1.
9. IPN-Bi, 1/674, p. 8 (deposition, Jan Blando); and AŻIH, 301/2600, p. 2.
10. AŻIH, 301/2600, pp. 1–2.
11. List of survivors in *ibid.*, pp. 1–2.
12. VHF, # 18378, testimony of Steven Guzik.
13. IPN, SWB 111.
14. IPN, SOE 29; and SWB 186–187.

RÓŻANA

Pre-1939: Różana (Yiddish: Rozhanoi or Rozbinoi), town, Iwacewicz powiat, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Ruzhany, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rozana, Kreis Wolkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Ruzhany, Pruzhany raen, Bera's'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Różana lies 120 kilometers (75 miles) northwest of Brześć nad Bugiem. By World War II, when Różana came under Soviet occupation after September 17, 1939, the Jewish community numbered about 3,500. About 3,000 Jews lived in Różana and another 500 lived in two neighboring agricultural colonies, Pawłowo and Konstantynowo, which, in 1921, had Jewish populations, respectively, of 292 and 217, about 97 and 95 percent of their overall populations.

The Germans occupied Różana on June 24, 1941. They immediately executed about 25 Jews.¹ A German commander of a mostly Austrian force soon arrived to oversee a local provisional military administration. He appointed a local Belorussian as mayor and established an auxiliary police force. The force likely was ethnically mixed, as survivors divide over whether Belorussians or Poles predominated.² In September, a Gendarmerie post was established in Różana as a first step to creating a German civilian administration. In early October, Amtskommissariat Rozana was incorporated into Kreis Wolkowysk, in Distrikt Białystok.

By then, regional military authorities already had issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including orders requiring Jews to wear round yellow patches, on their chests and backs,



Exterior of a synagogue in Różana, 1986.
USHMM WS #97256, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

and to establish Jewish Councils (Judenräte). The Różana Judenrat chair, Epstein, was a 75-year-old communal leader. The Różana Jews also were subjected to German violence. Either on July 12 or 14, 1941, an SS unit broke into many Jewish homes and, after robbing and beating their residents, drove about 1,000 men to the marketplace.³ Of these, 15 intellectuals, mostly recent arrivals from war-devastated Wołkowysk, were executed. Two days later, the SS executed 17 Różana Jews, including 3 women, and one Pole for Communist subversion.

Shortly before Yom Kippur, on October 1, 1941, the Germans ordered an open ghetto established in Różana on just a few streets around the market square. On the resettlement day, hundreds of families rushed to move in there, as the Amtskommissar had ordered executed all Jews found outside of the ghetto the next day. The 78 Jewish families from Pawłowo also were moved to the ghetto.⁴ However, the Konstantynowo Jews were not, reportedly because the pre-war civil administrator (wójt), remembered only by his first name, Mordechai-Eshia, had lavished the local Belorussian village administrator (sołtys), a pre-war friend, with bribes and personally had appealed for him to plead with local German authorities to suspend the expulsion orders.⁵ Some survivors of anti-Jewish violence in the fall of 1941 in Słonim and Kosów Poleski also entered the ghetto.⁶ These transfers brought the ghetto population to about 3,500.⁷

Overcrowding posed a problem in the Różana ghetto, as about 30 to 40 people were crammed into each house. On Yom Kippur 1941, a group of Germans entered the ghetto, raided the synagogue, murdered some of those they found at services, and stormed houses to rob and beat up their inhabitants.⁸ After the initial terror, the Jews mostly were permitted to continue working in their pre-war trades as tanners, spinners, and weavers. The Judenrat was required to fill a daily forced labor quota, largely for road construction projects, but the local Belorussian foremen permitted Jewish conscripts to leave work upon completing specific assign-

ments. The relatively lax labor discipline combined with the open nature of the ghetto created possibilities for Jews to avoid German-ordered assemblies by seeking short-term refuge in other villages and to supplement meager rations by bartering with Christians.⁹

However, the outlets created by an open ghetto were constricted after an SS unit arrived in the spring of 1942 to search for Russian partisans. The search rendered the forest (an important refuge particularly for survivors of the June 1942 liquidation of the Słonim ghetto) inaccessible. After the SS rounded up several villages of Belorussian peasants and executed them in Łysków, a village about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) west-southwest of Różana, many Jews feared they would be the next victims. A Polish auxiliary policeman's discovery of an armed Jewish forest fugitive staying temporarily with family in the Różana ghetto increased these fears, even though the Judenrat had paid a bribe to secure the release of 50 captives that the Germans had threatened to execute in retribution.¹⁰ The SS joined the local German administration in a wholesale expropriation of Jewish property. A group of SS also chained the pre-war Konstantynowo civil administrator and his son to the back of a car and dragged them to death through the streets of Różana.

The Różana Gendarmerie commander also imposed harsh punishments on Jews (and on local Christians suspected of contacts with Jews). Beginning in the spring of 1942, he strolled through the ghetto every evening, taking the opportunity to beat unconscious those he believed had violated prohibitions of Jewish-Christian trade, including, for example, the mother of a child that he found eating buttered bread. He hanged another Jew, the Gendarmerie's only translator, for a minor offense. The commander also humiliated the Judenrat chair, ordering him to serve as a waiter at a party for the security forces stationed in Różana and concluding the festivities by beating him nearly to death.

By then, some Jews, particularly those without family in Różana, had fled to other nearby communities and ghettos. Many Słonim fugitives arranged false identity papers (as Białystok ghetto residents) and moved to Wołkowysk, where a few Białystok Jews worked as forced laborers. Izaak Harshaw, a Różana-born Wołkowysk physician permitted to establish a medical practice in Różana and to live outside the ghetto in Konstantynowo, obtained permission in the early spring of 1942 to transfer his practice and a part of his family to Łysków, a village with about 640 Jews, where the Amtskommissar reportedly refused to condone either beatings of Jews or "unjust" seizures of Jewish property.¹¹ Those without official possibilities to secure transfers fled to the Mosty or the Piaski ghettos because the German authorities there reportedly were less coercive and the local populations less terrorized and therefore more willing to assist Jews.¹²

The Germans liquidated the Różana ghetto on November 2, 1942. An SS contingent, on horses, joined by Belorussian and Polish auxiliary policemen, took the Jews of Różana

and Konstantynowo to a meadow outside of Podorosc, about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) northwest of Różana. There, they joined almost all the Jewish communities from the southern and southeastern parts of Kreis Wolkowysk also marched that same day from their villages, including from Łysków and Podorosc, home to about 50 Jews. Surrounded by SS guards, the approximately 4,500 to 5,500 Jews spent a terror-filled night as the Germans periodically fired over their heads and shot dead about 100 captives. Believing they would be executed the next morning, some Jews committed suicide. Another 500 either were shot or trampled (by the SS's horses) to death during the forced march to Podorosc or on a second 25-kilometer (15.5-mile) march the next day to a transit camp, which the SS had established just outside of Wołkowysk on the grounds of a former Polish military garrison.

Because they were the last of the about 20,000 Jews from Kreis Wolkowysk to arrive at the transit camp, the Różana prisoners received the worst accommodations, eight former horse stables and underground storage facilities for animal fodder. Even after the Łysków and Podorosc communities were transferred to other barracks, a large part of the remaining inmates in the Różana barracks still had to sleep standing up. Because of the resulting unsanitary conditions, the three communities also suffered the greatest death toll, with about 20 Jews from the Różana bunkers perishing daily in a typhus epidemic that struck the camp. Perhaps for these reasons, the Różana, Konstantynowo, and Pawłowo communities were the first Jews sent from the transit camp, likely on November 28, 1942, to the Treblinka extermination camp. (The Łysków and Podorosc Jews were sent either on the second transport to Treblinka, on December 2, or on the third transport, which also included the Jewish community of Izabelin, on December 10.)¹³ They were all gassed on arrival.

Only a handful of Różana Jews survived the war, mostly refugees who had reunited earlier at the transit camp with family from Wołkowysk. Among the native Różana-area survivors were Konstantynowo resident Michla Pomeraniec (or Pomerantz, later Miriam Weissman) and her cousin, the physician Harshaw. Excluded from the Treblinka deportations to help contain a typhus epidemic at the camp, the two were among the final group of 1,700 to 2,000 Wołkowysk inmates sent on January 26, 1943, to the Auschwitz extermination camp and among the handful of survivors from the 350 people who were held back from the transport as prisoners of the concentration camp. Pomeraniec's brother, Shlomo, among at least 10 Różana Jews who had fled to the forests during the expulsion to Podorosc, is believed to have been 1 of just 3 survivors from the group. He joined the Red Army after Różana was liberated in June 1944 and perished in combat.

Little is known about the Jewish communities of Podolsk and Izabelin. A few lines in the Goldberg memoir suggest that some type of German anti-Jewish violence occurred in Podolsk and detail the fates of its physician and his wife, among the Wołkowysk transit camp's Auschwitz deportees

consigned immediately to death. The lack of sources for documenting Jewish life under the German occupation in Izabelin makes it impossible to determine if a ghetto existed there.

SOURCES The following published sources contain information about the ghetto: Me'ir Segev (or Sokolovski), ed., *Rozinoi: Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Rozinoi veba-sevivah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Rozinoi be-Yisrael, 1957) (a supplement "Once there was a Shtetl" is available online at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/ruzhany/Ruz001.html); and Izaak Goldberg, *The Miracles versus Tyranny: The Fight for Life and Death between the Jewish People and the Nazis* (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1979). Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949) is available in an English translation as "What Happened in Liskovo," in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, translation by Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pp. 291–297.

Useful, too, are the relevant entries in *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie*, ed. Shmuel Spector (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 275–276 (Pawłowo), p. 310 (Konstantynowo), pp. 315–318 (Różana); and vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek*, ed. Spector and Bracha Freundlich (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 123–124 (Izabelin) and pp. 397–400 (Łysków).

Documentation on the fates of the Różana, Konstantynowo, Pawłowo, Łysków, Podolsk, and Izabelin Jewish communities in World War II, under the German occupation, includes: AŻIH (e.g., 301/1973, 2114, and 4938); GARF (7021-83-22, pp. 4, 26); VHF (# 3986 and 35581); and YVA (e.g., M-33/711 [GARF]).

Laura Crago and Alexander Kruglov

NOTES

1. Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1987), p. 373.

2. Compare VHF, #35581, testimony of Michael Jourdan-Lichtenstein; and AŻIH, 301/2114, testimony of Hanka Szpiler-Wołk, pp. 1–3.

3. Different dates in AŻIH, 301/2114, p. 1; and Goldberg, *The Miracles*, pp. 46–47.

4. GARF, 7021-83-22, p. 4.

5. Goldberg, *The Miracles*, pp. 54–56, 90.

6. AŻIH, 301/1973, testimony of Anna Wincygysztern-Rybałowska, p. 1.

7. GARF, 7021-83-22, p. 26.

8. Goldberg, *The Miracles*, p. 57.

9. VHF, # 35581.

10. AŻIH, 301/1973, p. 3; and Goldberg, *The Miracles*, pp. 89–90, 99.

11. Goldberg, *The Miracles*, p. 86.

12. VHF, # 35581; and Maxime Rafailovitch, "The End of the Piaski Community," on the Lida ShtetLinks homepage, at jewishgen.org.

13. Compare Einhorn, "Destruction of Wolkovisk," in Einhorn, *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh*, p. 921; and Goldberg, *The Miracles*, pp. 133–138.

SIEMIATYCZE

Pre-1939: Siemiatycze (Yiddish: Semyatits), town, Bielsk Podlaski powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Semiatichi, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Siemiatycze, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: powiat center, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Siemiatycze lies 82 kilometers (51 miles) south-southwest of Białystok. Its pre-war 1939 population of 8,138 included 4,303 Jews.

The Germans occupied Siemiatycze briefly, from September 11 to September 21, 1939, before ceding it to Soviet occupation. Under Soviet rule, the Jewish population rose to 7,000 to 8,000, including 2,000 refugees from German-occupied Poland. With Siemiatycze's inclusion in the spring of 1940 in a border security zone, local authorities ordered most refugees to move and deported others to the Soviet interior. They permitted local refugees, expelled from the border zone in April, to remain. Among the latter were 1,100 to 1,200 Jews from Drohiczyn, Mielnik, and Niemirów.

The Germans shelled Siemiatycze from 4:00 A.M., on June 22, 1941, before occupying the town the next day. A local military commander immediately established an open ghetto by ordering all Jews to return to Siemiatycze and forbidding them from leaving the town without permission. He required Jews to mark the outside of their houses with yellow signs and to wear similar identifying marks.¹

In late June, German soldiers held the able-bodied male population captive at the Melba Factory. German guards asked the Polish prisoners to identify which Jews were Communists. A Pole nicknamed "Rudy," perhaps, as the yizkor book suggests, for his surname Rudnicki, picked 10 to 23 mostly non-Communist Jews. Before releasing the men, the Germans murdered up to 23 of the alleged "Communists."²

On July 4–5, local Poles robbed Jewish homes and beat, raped, and murdered their residents. Survivors divide over whether the Germans participated in the attacks, which claimed



The Siemiatycze ghetto fence, only months after its inhabitants were murdered at Treblinka, February 1943.

COURTESY OF GŁOS SIEMIATYCZ (ARCHIVE OF ANTONI NOWICKI); AND VIRTUAL SHTETL, [HTTP://WWW.SHTETL.ORG.PL](http://www.shtetl.org.pl)

at least nine lives.³ Most likely on July 10, a small SS unit ordered the entire local population assembled to watch members of a local Polish guard compel Jewish communal leaders to tear down the Lenin statue and to hold a mock burial for it. Survivors disagree about whether Ignacy Gilewski, a teacher, or Tadeusz Rudnicki, brother of the future commander of the auxiliary police, led the guard.⁴ The collaborators beat and threw some "funeral marchers" into the Kamionka River. Glazier Moishe Kozudrowicz perished in the violence.

The violence continued with the German appointment of a Polish administration, led by Mayor Gilewski, and a Polish auxiliary police force, commanded by Józef Rudnicki.⁵ In one account, the new authorities encouraged the local population to plunder Jewish property and to murder Jews. Only the establishment of a Gendarmerie post in early August, followed by the arrival that same month of a German-appointed mayor, brought the Jews security.⁶

On August 10, 1941, the Gendarmerie commander ordered Rabbi Gerstein to form a 12-person Jewish Council (Judenrat). Izrael Rozencajg (Rosenzweig) was its chair. The council organized a 12-man Jewish police force, commanded by Aleksander Wajnberg. The Gendarmerie commander also in August demanded the Judenrat pay a "contribution" or "fine" of 140,000 to 250,000 rubles.⁷

In August 1941, the German authorities reinforced the open ghetto in Siemiatycze by ordering Jews living in Christian neighborhoods to relocate to the Jewish neighborhood. A curfew was imposed. Jews not officially at work could appear on the streets only between 1:00 P.M. and 3:00 P.M. The Gendarmes and Polish police beat Jews, in two instances to death, found outside beyond curfew.⁸

In the late summer, officials expelled to Siemiatycze Jews from most nearby localities, including 18 people from Markarki village and the rest of the Mielnik community (about 400 people in September 1939). The Niemirów refugees are believed to have been ordered to remain in Siemiatycze because their village had been razed in the Soviet period. However, documentation for the community is sparse. Jews from Drohiczyn were permitted to return home. About half did so.

The Gendarmes and the Schutzpolizei in Siemiatycze ordered hundreds of Jews conscripted to clean up the town's war devastation. Other Jews repaired damaged rail lines. In May 1942, the Judenrat conscripted 50 men for labor on the Białystok-to-Minsk road construction project. After the men did not return, the Judenrat refused to assign additional workers to the project. To fill a new quota, local authorities rounded up men arbitrarily from the streets.⁹ Women cleaned the houses and offices of German officials. Others carried steel rails and wooden ties as railway work gang members.

In the spring of 1942, Landrat Tubenthal, Kreiskommissar of Bielsk, ordered closed ghettos established throughout the Kreis, including in Siemiatycze. In June, the Judenrat sought a ghetto area of 1.95 square meters (21 square feet) per future resident, but Polish appeals to German authorities reduced the area to 0.95 square meters (10.2 square feet).¹⁰ The ghetto was located across the Kamionka River, in the Zamość

neighborhood. Its area included Słowczyńska, Górna, Wysoka, and Koszarowa Streets. Its wooden fence was topped with barbed wire. There was one gate. Postwar Polish documentation notes the “Ghetto Commissar” was a Gendarme nicknamed “Rudy.” Whether the documentation is mistaken and “Rudy” was instead the local Polish auxiliary police commander or perhaps Wilhelm Rudolph, a member of the Schutzpolizei mentioned by another survivor, is unknown.¹¹

On August 1, 1942, the Jews were relocated to the ghetto. When they arrived, they were ordered to camp for three days in a field in order for the non-Jewish occupants of houses in the ghetto to have more time to move out and to enable a thorough inspection of the goods the Jews had brought with them.

The Siemiatycze ghetto population stood at 5,000 to 6,000. Severe overcrowding in the ghetto forced its inmates to transform barns and sheds into living quarters. Because many people had transferred foodstuffs to the ghetto, the population did not starve. A Jewish bakery outside the ghetto supplied the daily 120-gram (4.2-ounce) ration allotted to laborers and half rations for the unemployed. The Judenrat organized a public kitchen to distribute 1,500 meals, three times a day. Because of the poor diet, the stress, and the complete absence of medical care, mortality was high, with about 10 people perishing daily.¹²

Since the Germans had ordered all Jewish religious activities suspended, only a few prayer groups met clandestinely at considerable risk. The Judenrat paid a bribe to allow most Jews to stay home from work on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, on September 12, 1942, to privately observe the holiday. That day, the Germans, and perhaps the Polish auxiliaries, stormed the ghetto. At an assembly, they subjected religious Jews to beatings before commanding barbers to shear off the beards and *payot* (side locks) of all male inmates. An unknown number of women were raped and murdered.¹³

After several conscripts at the railway yards encountered a train of Dutch Jews headed for the Treblinka extermination camp, some ghetto residents built bunkers in which to hide, should the Siemiatycze community also be expelled.¹⁴ On November 1, 1942, the Judenrat likely received two warnings of the ghetto’s impending liquidation. Rudolph, from the Schutzpolizei, mentioned to Rozencwajg that something soon would happen to the Jews.¹⁵ A local Polish Home Army (AK) commander also may have informed the Judenrat chair of the liquidation and provided tools to cut the ghetto fence.¹⁶

The next day, on November 2, 1942, at 4:00 A.M., the Germans surrounded the ghetto to organize its final liquidation. Rozencwajg called out: “Children save yourselves! Have faith in G-d.”¹⁷ He then fled through a hole cut in the ghetto’s fence. About 300 to 500 people followed him. The Germans and Polish auxiliary police shot dead some 200 escapees, including Rozencwajg, and ordered the guard around the fence reinforced.¹⁸ Likely that same day, the Germans expelled to the ghetto the Jewish communities of Drohiczyn, Grodzisk and Siemiony.

On either November 4 or 8, 1942, the Germans drove 2,450 people from the Siemiatycze ghetto to the railway sta-



Jewish survivors and Polish workers exhume bodies of Jews murdered during the liquidation of the Siemiatycze ghetto, so that they may be properly reburied at the entrance to the Jewish cemetery, 1947–1950. Pictured is Yehoshua Kejles (in business suit with fedora), whose father, Efraim, was among those murdered.

USHMM WS #57741, COURTESY OF SIDNEY JOSHUA ZOLTAK

tion and ordered them onto trains destined for Treblinka. In the final expulsion, on November 10, approximately 3,200 Jews were expelled to Treblinka.¹⁹ During the expulsions, 50 to 70 people were shot.²⁰ Because the second Treblinka deportation train was composed partly of passenger wagons, many deportees jumped from the cars’ unlocked windows.²¹

At Treblinka, about 5,498 people from the two Siemiatycze transports were gassed on arrival. Some 152 men were held back from the second transport for labor at the Treblinka I camp. Kalman Krawiec (Saul Kuperhand) escaped from the camp in September 1943, made his way back to the Siemiatycze area, and was sheltered by the Jagiełło family in Bryki (Bielsk powiat) village. Benyamin Rock, the only other Siemiatycze survivor of Treblinka, was shot and left for dead as the Germans abandoned the camp.²²

Near Siemiatycze, Poles sheltered at least 40 of the 100 to 200 ghetto escapees. The family of veterinarian Bolesław Leszczyński, in Bocianka colony, Kajanka village, hid 15 members of the Feldman and Grodziski families. In Krynki-Sobole village, Stanisława Kryńska’s family sheltered 6 fugitives, including Chaim Brzeziński and 4 members of the Żółtak (or Zochtak) family. However, at least 54 Jews had perished by early 1943 as the result of denunciations, Russian thieves murdering Jews hidden in forest bunkers, and a number of Polish aid-givers murdering those they had promised protection. To prevent further loss of life, Herz Szabbes (Herschel Shabbes) established a self-defense organization that helped 70 Siemiatycze and Drohiczyn Jews survive the war.²³

In 1949, the former auxiliary policeman Józef Fleks was sentenced to death for murdering Kozudrowicz in 1941 and about another 40 Jews during the Siemiatycze ghetto liquidation. He died in prison in 1950.²⁴ Approximately 13 Polish civilians were tried for denouncing or handing over to German authorities Jews who had fled from the ghetto. At least 1 was convicted. He received a 15-year prison term.²⁵

SOURCES Published primary sources include two testimonies published jointly by Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), with the second testimony, by S. Kuperhand, “Escape from Treblinka,” an expanded version of AŻIH, 301/4086 (cited below), by the same author; the yizkor book, Eliezer Tash, ed., *Ḳehilat Semyatits’* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Semyatits’ be-Yisrael ye-Artsot ha-Berit, 1965), which includes an English overview, also includes survivor testimonies. R.K., in Isaiah Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution: Collective and Individual Behavior in Extremis* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), pp. 98–99, offers a description of the ghetto; “Sydney [Jehoszua] Żółtak—spotkanie z przeszłością—Nigdy nie zapomnimy,” *Głos Siemiatycz*, October 31, 2003, an interview with a survivor, is available online (www.siemiatycze.com.pl); correspondence between the Kuperhands and the Łeszczyński families is translated into English at the virtual photography exhibit “And I Still See Their Faces: The Vanished World of Polish Jews,” on the Web site of the Simon Wiesenthal Center (www.wiesenthal.com), under the section “There Were Seven Children—Weddings.” Also valuable for the fate of the Makarki community is an interview with Maria Kopiec, an aid-giver to Siemiatycze survivor Cwi Kramer and to his future wife, a fugitive of the liquidation of the ghetto in Drohiczyn, by Iwona Sawicka, “Bóg wciąż mi to wynagradza. Rozmowa z Marią Kopiec z Makark—odznaczoną medalem Sprawiedliwy Wśród Narodów Świata za ratowanie w czasie wojny ludzkiego życia,” at the Web site of Stowarzyszenie Ruch na Rzecz Ziemi (www.nawschodzie.pl), on the part of the Web site devoted to the Podlascy Żydzi.

Some of the documentary material appears in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KSzpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Documenty*, pp. 185–186 (AŻIH, 301/973), pp. 334–336 (AŻIH, 301/1463); the virtual Archiwum Etnograficzne includes AŻIH, 301/2592, at www.archiwumetnograficzne.edu.pl/read/article.php?article_id=35. English-language excerpts of some testimonies are in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 176–177 (AŻIH, 301/973, 301/1463, testimony of Rachel Keils [or Kejles] Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, pp. 201–207).

Also useful are the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 414–415 (Mielnik), p. 449 (Niemirow), pp. 614–620 (Siemiatycze); Rubin, *The Rise*, vol. 1, p. 132 (Mielnik), p. 140 (Niemirow), pp. 170–176 (Siemiatycze); Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 1, p. 452, pt. 2, pp. 738–739; and in Polish, Szymon Datner, “Ratownictwo na Białostocczyźnie,” in Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewinówna, eds., *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej. Polacy z pomocą Żydom, 1939–1945*, 3rd ed. (Warsaw: Świat Książki, 2007), p. 532; and Waldemar Monkiewicz, “Za cenę życia. O ratowaniu Żydów w Białostockiem w okresie okupacji niemieckiej,” *Białostoccy Żydzi 2* (1997): 187 ff. Andrzej W. Ołędzki, “Hersz Szebes—morderstwa w Czartajewie—marzec 1944, oraz podobne w Miłkowicach, Maćkach i Kłyzówce,” which originally appeared in *Głos Siemiatycz* and is available online,

includes physical descriptions of the Siemiatycze ghetto and its liquidation but reaches controversial conclusions about Szabbes and therefore is better read together with the relevant parts of Kuperhand and Monkiewicz.

Documentation pertaining to the history of the Siemiatycze Jewish community during World War II includes AŻIH (e.g., 204 [i.e., YVA, M-11/B146], 301 [e.g., 107, 283, 973, 1463, 2592, 4086]); IPN (e.g., ASG [1/154-55, 1/157, 46/54], SAB [17, 160, 231], SOB [293, 331, 416], SWB [72, 152, 174, 194]); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/236, Ko [38/88, 70/88, 73/88, 100/94, 177/88], S-183/68); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN], 1/154-55, 1/157, 46/54); VHF (e.g., # 1194, 2245, 5184, 7089, 7427, 7713, 9967, 11175, 12112, 13985, 14564, 15406, 16434, 16542, 17287, 21468, 22924, 24839, 25084, 26576, 28499, 29056, 30115, 31534, 33917, 34353, 34915, 35500, 37064, 38838, 39922, 41157, 44194, 50632, 51387); and YVA (e.g., M-11/B146, M-49-E [e.g., 1257, 1463, 2592], O-3 [e.g., 3887, 5093, 7531], O-16/415, O-22/54). About two thirds of the VHF testimonies are by Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland, deported by Soviet authorities in the spring of 1940 to the Russian interior.

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NOTES

1. Testimonies of Miriam and Saul Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, pp. 19–20, 94–97, respectively; VHF, # 50632, testimony of Miriam Kuperhand.

2. Low and high figures, respectively, in AŻIH, 301/1463, testimony of Jehoszua (Joszua) Kejles, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:334; Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. iii.

3. Compare AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:334–335, and testimony of Rachel Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. 202, with M. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, p. 21, for German participation; victim estimate from AŻIH, 301/973, testimony of Wolf Wiśnia (Zev Vishnia), p. 1.

4. AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:335; Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. 202, respectively, for the two collaborators.

5. Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. 202.

6. AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:334–335.

7. Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. 203; R.K., in Trunk, *Jewish Responses*, p. 98.

8. AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:335.

9. Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, pp. 204, 207; AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:335.

10. AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:335.

11. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/54, pp. 1–2; AŻIH, 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:355.

12. M. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, p. 29; R.K., in Trunk, *Jewish Responses*, p. 98.

13. Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. v; M. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, p. 29.

14. Kisogorski, in Tash, *Ḳehilat Semyatits’*, p. 205; M. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, pp. 32–34.

15. AŻIH, 301/4086, testimony of Kalman Krawiec, p. 1 (Polish trans.), 301/1463, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:335.

16. Olędzki, “Hersz Szebes.”

17. AŻIH, 301/4086, p. 1.

18. Ibid., AŻIH, 301/283, testimony of Etkā Żółtak, p. 1, respectively, for low and high escapee figures; dead at USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1, 1/155, pp. 1–2.

19. Deportation figures from AŻIH, 301/4086, p. 1; S. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, p. 105, notes the second transport left the station the next day.

20. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1, 1/154, pp. 1–2; and high victim range from grave-site plaque.

21. VHF, # 7089, testimony of Regina (Gruskin) Kugler.

22. S. Kuperhand, in *Shadows*, pp. 104–142, 173–174; VHF, # 7713, testimony of Benyamin Rock.

23. AŻIH, 301/1463, p. 3, for number of survivors.

24. IPN, SAB 17.

25. Ibid., SWB 194.

SKIDEL

Pre-1939: Skidel (Yiddish: Skidel), town, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Skidel', raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Skidel, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Skidzel', Hrodna raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Skidel lies on the Skidelka (Belarusian: Skidzel'ka) River 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) east-southeast of Grodno and 78 kilometers (48.5 kilometers) east-northeast of Lida. On the eve of World War II, Jews comprised just over 80 percent (2,800) of Skidel's population, with Poles, Belorussians, and Tatars making up the remainder of its residents.

On June 24, 1941, during Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, Skidel sustained massive aerial shelling, which destroyed much of the settlement. German armed forces occupied Skidel on June 27. By July 12, the Germans had appointed a civilian administration and an auxiliary police force. Little is known about Skidel's collaborationist civilian leaders, who were quickly subordinated to a German civil administration, under the leadership of Amtskommissar Plotz.¹ The Germans also established a large Gendarmerie post in Skidel early on, which in turn was subordinated to the Gendarmerie-Kreisführer in Grodno. In 1941, it was commanded first by Leutnant Müller and subsequently by Hauptwachtmeister (from 1943, Meister) Padberg.² The auxiliary police were subordinated to the Gendarmerie, working there as Schutzmannen. The Schutzmannen at Skidel's post were of Polish, Tatar, and Belorussian nationality.

The Germans and their collaborators immediately harassed Jews and instituted anti-Jewish measures in Skidel. The German military commander's first decree required Skidel's Jewish population to assemble at the main square to watch German soldiers use a tank to overturn the Lenin statue. The Germans then commanded the Jews to break the statue into small pieces, collect the rubble in their hands, form a column,

and give the statue a mock burial in the Skidelka River. According to one historian, the auxiliary police played a leading role in humiliating and severely beating the Jews during the “burial rite.” A Jewish survivor, Efrim Lozovskii, claims that after observing the Germans brutally beating several prominent Jews during the burial procession, he fled to Minsk, where he entered the city's ghetto. After the humiliations, the Germans ordered the Skidel Jews to wear yellow distinguishing marks, in the shape of a Star of David. They also ordered the appointment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Little is known about its composition. In June 1942, its secretary was surnamed Auszberg (or Auschberg). In addition, the Germans forbade the Jews to leave the boundaries of Skidel.³

The Germans also expropriated Skidel's Jewish-owned factories in the summer of 1941. But it seems likely that they distanced themselves from ongoing anti-Jewish violence there, even as they continued to condone it by permitting the auxiliary police to terrorize the Jews. According to an account by a Jewish woman who had fled the Wilno ghetto and stayed overnight in Skidel, the Germans “treated the Jews of Skidel very well.” They permitted them to work at their trades and even allowed a Jew, surnamed Shulman, to administer his former factory on their behalf. However, she noted that local Poles “torture[d]” the Jews “at every opportunity,” and as a result, they had “suffer[ed] many hardships.”⁴

In late 1941, all the Jews of Skidel were forced to move into a ghetto. It was located near the Jewish cemetery, at the former Soviet military air base. It seems likely the ghetto was enclosed by a fence in August 1942. Jews in the Skidel ghetto undoubtedly worked at a variety of tasks, but the extant documentation confirms only their labor in the spring and summer of 1942 on road construction crews, organized to cobble and pave roads in Skidel and from Skidel to Grodno.⁵

Conditions in the ghetto were miserable, in part because the six, two-story wooden buildings at the air base could not accommodate even a small part of the Jewish community. To create additional residential space, many ghetto residents dug earthen pits and built lean-to structures on the ghetto's grounds. The diet was poor, with the Germans providing few or perhaps no rations to its residents. Undernourished and exposed to the cold and the elements, many Skidel Jews suffered from illnesses in the winter of 1941–1942. The death rate was high. The Jews continued to be subject to robbery and beatings by the local auxiliary police. According to one source, inebriated auxiliary policemen, including Konstantin Mozolevskii, randomly entered the ghetto to shoot indiscriminately at its residents, particularly women and children.

The Skidel ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. Its children and less able-bodied were loaded onto carts. The remaining members of the Jewish community followed on foot, contained behind ropes held by the Jews on the perimeter of the procession. The Skidel Jewish community, about 1,230 people, was expelled to the Kielbasin transit camp, south of Grodno.⁶ At Kielbasin, the Skidel community joined Jews from about 22 other communities (about 22,000 to 28,000 people)

also deported there from November 2 to November 5, 1942. The Skidel Jews were the first community driven by the Germans from Kielbasin to the Łosośna railway station, for deportation to the region's extermination camps. The first transport carrying much of the Jewish community of Skidel arrived at the Auschwitz extermination camp on November 9, 1942. Either there or somewhere earlier in transit, some Skidel Jews likely were forced to sign postcards, addressed to the Kielbasin transit camp, in which they attested that they had arrived safely and noted that the conditions in the new camp were better than at the transit camp. A survivor from Krynki recalled that upon receipt of the Skidel Jews' postcards, Karl Rinzler, Kielbasin's commander, had ordered that each of the remaining inmates receive 50 grams (less than 2 ounces) of sausage, known as the Skidel sausage, as a further demonstration that the expulsions and deportations supposedly heralded better times.⁷ In the meantime, at Auschwitz, the Germans had held back as prisoners of the concentration camp just 190 men and 104 women from the first (Skidel) transport. The remaining Jews in the transport, at least 706 people, were gassed on their arrival. A large number of Skidel Jews also were on a second transport, officially of 1,500 Jews, which arrived at Auschwitz on November 14, 1942. The Germans chose as prisoners 282 men and 379 women from the Skidel, Druskieniki, and Grodno I ghettos and from Korycin and Sidra. The remaining 839 people on the transport were gassed on arrival.⁸

After the deportation, the German administration in Skidel sold off the remaining Jewish property there, including from the ghetto. It collected 23,236.50 Reichsmark (RM) in proceeds.⁹

There were almost no Jewish survivors from Skidel. Most of the male Skidel prisoners at Auschwitz, for instance, already had perished or been consigned to death by the end of January 1943.

SOURCES Secondary accounts include the Skidel entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 512–515; I.A. Borisov, “Skidzel,” in *Pamiats’. Historyka-dakumental’naia khronika Hrodzenskaha raiona* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Entsyklapedyia, 1993), pp. 32–33; and the appropriate sections in *Skidzel’: 500 hod historyi* (Hrodna: Hrodzenskaia drukarnia, 2008). A partial English translation of the first appears in the larger work by Linda Hugle, “Skidel History,” and the second, in a complete translation, by Larry Cannon, as Il’ya Aleksandrovich Borisov, “The Tragic Fate of the Skidelian Jews,” on the Skidel ShtetLinks site at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/skidel/skidel.html.

Documentation regarding the Jews of Skidel under German occupation in World War II includes: GAGO (e.g., 1-1-54, 335, 365, and 512); GARF (7021-86-40); IPN (SWOI 71-74); NARB (845-1-8); USHMM (e.g., RG-53.004M [GAGO], reels 1, 4, and 5); and YVA. Some materials above have been published in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-280, p. 6; and 1-1-312, pp. 75–78.
2. Ibid., reel 3, 1-1-280, p. 7.
3. VHF, # 37395; and USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 5, 1-1-512, p. 163.
4. “Vilna and Environs. The Wartime Experience of a Twenty-Two-Year-Old Jewish Woman,” in Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1987), p. 359.
5. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 5, 1-1-512.
6. GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4; and also in GAGO, 1-1-54, p. 38.
7. Feivel Wolf, “After the Departure for Treblinka,” in Dov Rabin, ed., *Pinkas Krynki* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Krynki in Israel and the Diaspora, 1970), p. 286.
8. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne. Polish Jews in KL Auschwitz: Name Lists* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 99–100, 103–104.
9. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 77–79.

ŚNIADOWO

Pre-1939: Śniadowo (Yiddish: Shnadova), village, Łomża powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sniadovo, raion center, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Sniadowo, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Śniadowo, Łomża powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Śniadowo lies 12.5 kilometers (7.8 miles) from the southern outskirts of Łomża. In 1931, 503 Jews lived in the large Śniadowo gmina.

In World War II, the Germans occupied Śniadowo for about three weeks in September 1939. They deported an unknown number of male Jews and Christians to a forced labor camp in East Prussia before evacuating Śniadowo to make way for the Red Army.

Located just 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from the new Soviet-German border, Śniadowo flooded with Jewish refugees from neighboring German-occupied Poland. Because the recently established Sniadovo raion shared a 50-kilometer (31-mile) border with German-occupied Poland, Soviet authorities in the spring of 1940 declared it a border security zone and ordered its refugees to move to the interior. War-time territorial divisions nonetheless brought an expansion in the local Jewish population, as Soviet authorities incorporated into the raion the southwestern Piski and Troszyn gminy as well as parts of the pre-war Jasienica and Komorowo gminy, which had belonged, respectively, to the Ostrołęka and Ostrów Mazowiecka powiaty, which mostly came under German occupation. In the south, the Szumowo and Lubotyń gminy, from the pre-war Łomża powiat, were joined to the raion. The raion was the permanent home in February 1940 to 33,856 Poles, 2,614 Jews, and 159 Belorussians.

Shortly after reoccupying Śniadowo on June 22, 1941, a sergeant in command of a small contingent left behind to establish a military administration in the settlement demanded a group of older, outwardly more devout Jews take apart a statue of Lenin, erected in the Soviet period, and bury it at the Jewish cemetery, because, as he explained, Lenin “had been a Jew.” Some local Poles forced the Jews to participate in the burial ritual as the Germans photographed the humiliating spectacle. On the way home, the Jews feared they would be murdered, but the sergeant refused to allow them further harm. Several days later, another group of Germans, in several cars, stopped by Śniadowo on their way to Łomża. After forcing Bencyjon Drzewak, a Jewish tailor, to indicate where the Jews resided, the unit rounded up about 50 mostly male Jews and shot them in a forest on the road to Ostrów Mazowiecka. On another evening, an SS unit executed the rabbi of Śniadowo. Another German, Krohl, went from home to home appropriating whatever he wanted from the Jews’ possessions. He subsequently ordered the Jewish Council, likely established in July, to turn over the remainder of the Jews’ valuables.¹

The Germans altered preexisting residential patterns in a series of decrees that ultimately established the Śniadowo ghetto. A July decree, probably designed to separate Christians and Jews, required Jews to move from homes on Śniadowo’s main streets to residences on its smaller ones. On August 1 or October 1, 1941, the Germans established a more formal ghetto by limiting Jewish residence to Łomża Street.² The ghetto was not fenced. It remained open throughout its existence. Polish postwar court documentation lists the ghetto population as 217.³ Szymon Datner gives a much larger number, 600 to 650, but provides no source for the estimate.

Widespread German violence in the summer of 1941 makes it difficult to determine which, if any, Jews from the former Sniadovo raion survived to be consolidated in the ghetto. From mid-July to August 1941, the Germans, likely the same SS unit responsible for executing the Jewish community of Kolno, murdered almost all the Jewish communities in the south and southwest of the former Sniadovo raion.⁴ Among the victims were the Jews of the pre-war Szumowo, Lubotyń, and Jasienica gminy. These included, in the first case, the communities of Szumowo Nowe, Szumowo-Górze, and Koskowo villages; in the second case, the Jews of Lubotyń Stary and Podbiele; and in the third, the community of Paproć Duża (Königshold) and a portion of the Prosienica community. The Germans held the Szumowo and Lubotyń victims prisoner in Szumowo Nowe village, about 16.5 kilometers (10.3 miles) south-southeast of Śniadowo, before executing them in small groups in Soviet-era antitank ditches in the Rząśnik (or Klonowo) Forest, part of the larger forest of Czerwony Bór.⁵ Some Jews may have sought refuge in Śniadowo. Others, from the northern part of the former raion, may have survived and been consolidated subsequently in the Śniadowo ghetto.

The inmates of the Śniadowo ghetto were conscripted for forced labor. Some remained at their pre-war shoemaking and tailoring trades but labored in workshops for the Germans.

Others reported to the railway station to unload wagons full of property confiscated on the Eastern Front; to sort the merchandise at the station, which the Germans had transformed into a storage warehouse for this purpose; and to reload the sorted goods onto trains destined for the German interior. Some inmates worked in a nearby forest, hewing trees. Still others were conscripted for agricultural labor, including repairing farm machinery.

Violence at times marked ghetto life. After discovering, on a Friday, that a 33-year-old Gendarme had been having an affair with a ghetto resident, surnamed Lis, local German authorities ordered the woman’s entire family to report on Monday for labor at the railway depot. When the members of the family did not return with the other conscripts, the other Jews presumed they had been murdered.⁶ In 1941, a Jew surnamed Drzewak was executed.⁷

The ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. At dawn, the Judenrat was told that the Jews would be evacuated. They were given a half hour to pack no more than 25 kilograms (55.1 pounds) of belongings and to report to the market square. Some who attempted to evade the evacuation were shot. The survivors were transported, via Łomża, to a transit camp in Zambrów. They were soon joined by others from Śniadowo who had evaded the deportation. Denied anything more than a day or two of shelter by local Christians, the fugitives had been forced to hide in local forests, where they became subjects of two large forest sweeps, organized by the Gendarmes, with the assistance of Ukrainian auxiliaries. At least 12 Śniadowo Jews perished during the searches, including an uncle of then-11-year-old Noemi Centnerschwer (Centnerszer). Those who surrendered voluntarily, such as Centnerschwer’s sister, aunt, and several cousins, were brought to the Zambrów transit camp.⁸

At Zambrów, the Śniadowo community joined 17,500 to 20,000 Jews deported there from other nearby localities. The Germans began liquidating the transit camp, around January 10, 1943, by ordering more than 2,000 inmates assembled, for deportation on sleds, to the Czyżewo train station. Deported to the train station on January 15, along with Jews from Czyżewo and Łomża, the Śniadowo Jews were loaded onto train wagons destined for the Auschwitz extermination camp. They arrived at Auschwitz II-Birkenau on January 17, 1943. Of the approximately 2,000 Jewish men, women, and children in the transport, about 1,775 were gassed on arrival. Another 225 men were held back for labor at the concentration camp. Only a handful of the prisoners were from Śniadowo. They included the brother of Noemi Centnerschwer, who likely perished in January 1943.⁹ Only 1 Śniadowo Jew, Jacob Bandymer, is known to have survived as an inmate of first Auschwitz and later the Dachau concentration camp.

Only a handful of Jews survived the war hiding near Śniadowo. Noemi Centnerschwer found long-term shelter masquerading as a Christian, working for the Jasiński family, in Szabły village. David Rozenberg survived with a group of Jewish fugitives hidden in a bunker located closer to Ostrów Mazowiecka.

SOURCES Useful secondary accounts include the Śniadowo entries in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 441–442; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 212–213; and on Polin, the Heritage of Jews of Poland Web site, www.zchor.org; and Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 45 (tab. 6).

Archival documentation for the Śniadowo Jewish community under German occupation during World War II includes AŻIH (i.e., 301 [2750, 4407]); IPN (e.g., Ankiety); IPN-Bi (S-582/71); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 14, 46/76); VHF (# 16888); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2750, testimony of Noemi Centnerschwer, p. 1; and VHF, # 16888, testimony of Jacobo Bandrymer, in which Krohl is described several times as a German “mailman,” in a “brown uniform” and as “not a military man, but, mobilized . . . in charge.”

2. For August, VHF, # 16888; for October 1939 [*sic.*], USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/76, pp. 1–2, with the month perhaps significant.

3. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/76, pp. 1–2.

4. On the connections between the Kolno and Śniadowo executions, see the testimony collected by Jan Żaryn, “Przez pomyłkę. Ziemia łomżyńska w latach 1939–1945. Rozmowa z Ks. Kazimierzem Łupińskim,” *Biuletyn IPN*, nos. 8–9 (19–20) (August–September 2003): 112–113, 117 fn.5.

5. *Ibid.*, for the murder of the Szumowo and Prosiénica Jewish communities; USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/191, pp. 1–2, noting Rzaśnik as the execution site of 1,500 Jews from the town of Zambrów and from the Lubotyń and Andrzejewo gminy; for the Koskowo Jewish community, AŻIH, 301/4407, testimony of Dawid Rozenberg, p. 2 (Polish trans.); *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945. Województwo ostrołęckie* (Warsaw: GKBZHwP and IPN, 1985), p. 74, for executions of the Podbiele community.

6. VHF, # 16888.

7. *Rejestr miejsc*, p. 220, with no first name mentioned to indicate whether the victim was the same Drzewak mentioned earlier in the entry.

8. AŻIH, 301/4407, p. 2.

9. According to ITS records, the last record for Centnerschwer (Centnerschwer), a prisoner at Auschwitz-Buna, is a hospital list of inmates with typhus transferred back to the main Auschwitz camp on January 29, 1943, at USHMM, ITS, 1.1.2.1, folder 149, doc. 529843.

SOKÓŁKA

Pre-1939: Sokółka, town, powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sokulka, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Sokolka, Kreis center, Distrikt Białystok; 1944: Sokółka, Sokółka powiat, Białystok

województwo, Poland; post-1999: województwo podlaskie, Poland

Sokółka lies 42 kilometers (26 miles) north-northeast of Białystok and 36 kilometers (22.4 miles) south-southwest of Grodno. Its 1936 population of 19,392 included 3,232 Jews.

In World War II, the Germans occupied Sokółka initially but soon evacuated it to make way for the arrival of Soviet forces on September 22–23, 1939. That month, 56,600 native inhabitants resided in the larger Sokółka area, including 34,000 Poles, 15,300 Belorussians, 6,200 Jews, and 1,100 others. By late 1939, refugees from German-occupied Poland had swelled the Jewish population in Sokółka proper to 8,000 (70 percent of the population). In early 1940, Soviet authorities ordered a large part of the refugee population to vacate Sokółka; in May, they rounded up almost all the remaining refugees and deported them, via Grodno, to the Russian interior.¹ Many sources nonetheless note that 8,000 Jews resided in Sokółka on the eve of the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

A Wehrmacht unit retook Sokółka on June 28, 1941. The soldiers immediately broke into a Bet Midrash, on Szkolna Street, and profaned the Holy Books. The German military command that same day established a local collaborationist administration, led by a mayor, and recruited an auxiliary police force. A German officer called together Jewish communal leaders and ordered a list of the Jewish inhabitants of Sokółka. Members of the auxiliary police force used lists provided by Jewish (and Polish) authorities to identify and arrest former Communist administrators, including two Jews. The prisoners were executed. By early July, the Germans had appointed a six-member Jewish Council (Judenrat). Sources divide over whether Friedburg, an attorney, or Sonnabend, a physician, headed the council.²

By June 30, the German military commander had ordered all Sokółka Jews assembled to hear a list of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on contact with Christians, mandates to wear yellow markings, requirements for daily forced labor by all adult Jews, and directives to surrender bicycles and radios. Soldiers rounded up Jews to clean barracks and houses recently seized by German authorities, to weed public spaces, and to work at the train station. The soldiers humiliated and then shot dead a man they discovered studying Torah. In mid-July, 25 Jews rounded up for labor were taken instead to a prison in Białystok. The men disappeared two months later.³ The German military command also ordered Sokółka Jews to surrender jewelry as well as bedding, furniture, and other items to provision the apartments of German officials.

From the early summer of 1941, Sokółka swelled with Jewish refugees fleeing violence and coercion in Dąbrowa Białostocka, Kuźnica Białostocka, Krynki, Korycin, Czyżewo, and Zaręby Kościelne. In September 1941, many Jews from Janów Sokólski and Kuźnica fled to Sokółka to avoid deportation to larger, more distant ghettos. By the fall of 1941, the Sokółka Jewish population may have included 1,500 local refugees.⁴

With the establishment of a German civilian administration in late September 1941, the new authorities, likely the Sokółka Kreiskommissar, Landrat Amman, and the Amtskommissar, ordered a ghetto established in the old Jewish neighborhood in the southwestern third of the town. The ghetto encompassed an area spanning in the north from the southern side of Białystok Street to Kolejowa Street in the south. Its western border was the eastern side of 3 Maja Street. Some sources place the eastern border along the western side of Warszawa Street, also the location of the main gate. They note the ghetto was composed of three main streets: Szkolna, Sienna, and Kwiatowa. Others describe a ghetto area composed of several streets past Warszawa Street, including Krótka Street, and also Rzemieślnicza and Fabryczna Streets.⁵ It took several months to construct a 3-meter-high (9.8-foot-high) wooden fence and to brick over the doorways and windows along the perimeter of the ghetto. Jewish fugitives from Lithuania, who passed through Sokółka, described the ghetto as completely sealed off from the remainder of the town.

Just after the Sukkot holiday, on October 14, 1941, the Sokółka community was ordered relocated to the ghetto. At the gate, the members of the Sokółka Gendarmerie, including Gendarmes and members of the Polish police, inspected the items the Jews were moving in there and usually confiscated some of them. Figures for the ghetto population vary, with sources claiming that anywhere from between 3,500 and 8,000 Jews resided there.⁶ The small size of the Sokółka Judenrat perhaps narrows the figures, as the Germans generally ordered the establishment of 6-member councils in places with Jewish populations below 5,000.

A German “ghetto commander” named Schneider oversaw the Sokółka ghetto. He likely was appointed by the Sokółka Kreiskommissar. He issued orders to the Jewish Council for the payment of ransoms, confiscations, and forced labor quotas. A Jewish police force, commanded by Paltiel Szejn (or Stein), assisted the Judenrat to carry out the orders. The Polish police, including Bolesław Iracewicz and Alfons Czecko, guarded the ghetto from the outside.⁷

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. Because each inmate was accorded 2 square meters (21.5 square feet) of residential space, as many as 16 people lived in a single room, even with the Bet Midrash used as housing. The inmates relied on barter and bribery to supplement the 300-gram (10.6-ounce) daily ration of rye bread. Some Christians remember Antoni Sawicki, a local Pole, using a torrential downpour before Passover 1942 to drive a 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) steer through the fence of the ghetto. Likely, ritual slaughterers (*shochtim*) paid him to deliver the animal, as survivors mention the widespread illegal smuggling of meat into the ghetto.⁸ Donations enabled the Judenrat to provide butter and eggs to the sick. The poor sanitary conditions (from overcrowding) nonetheless led to a typhus epidemic. The Judenrat transformed the Yavne Hebrew School into a hospital and smuggled medicines into the ghetto. The Judenrat opened a new cemetery in the ghetto to bury the dead.

The Jews were ordered assembled outside the ghetto at least three times and subjected there to humiliations and beatings by German police and security forces. One day, members of the Gendarmerie rounded up 25 young men and shot them outside town. In March 1942, the rabbi of Sokółka, Yitzhak Halevi Schuster, was arrested, imprisoned in Białystok, and shot.

In the spring of 1942, hundreds of ghetto conscripts dug trenches for an underground sanitation system and constructed the Sokółka reservoir. Other conscripts widened and paved the road to Dąbrowa Białostocka. They worked on the 14.2-kilometer (8.8-mile) stretch, from Sokółka to Makowlany. A third group constructed a road to Odelsk, through Drahle village. The Germans ordered tailoring and shoemaking workshops created in the ghetto. The largest, a factory to produce felt boots for the Wehrmacht, was established at the pre-war Fajenberg tannery on Sienna Street. The workshop employed 300 to 400 people.

On November 2, 1942, an SS unit ordered the Sokółka ghetto sealed. That day, the Janów Sokółski Jewish community was expelled to the ghetto. On November 5, at 5:00 A.M., the SS ordered all the Jews assembled by the main gate. There, they learned that only 200 employees of the felt-boot factory and 200 others from communities consolidated in the ghetto would remain in Sokółka. The other inmates were to be expelled that day to a new work site, located in Kielbasin, a former estate south of Grodno.

In reality, Kielbasin was a transit camp in which the Germans consolidated about 22,000 to 28,000 Jews from 23 communities in Kreis Sokółka and Kreis Grodno to facilitate their deportation to the extermination camps. The Sokółka Jews remained at Kielbasin until the middle of December, when they were expelled from the transit camp and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. They were gassed on arrival.

On January 23, 1943, almost all the surviving Jews in Sokółka were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp on a transport that also carried Jews from the Krynki and Jasienówka ghettos. Two days later at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Germans gassed 2,107 people from the transport. They held back, as concentration camp prisoners, 193 people—161 men and 32 women. Until March 1943, when they were sent to Auschwitz, 20 specialist workers—10 from Sokółka and 10 from Krynki—remained in Sokółka.

A few Sokółka Jews evaded the expulsion. Sonnabend reportedly was transferred from Kielbasin to the Białystok ghetto, where he served as the head of the Labor Department in the Białystok Judenrat.⁹ Benjamin Kotler jumped from a deportation train.

SOURCES As well as archival documentation, the entry also is based on the testimonies of several survivors, including Aleksander (or Abraham) Kantorowski, Chaja Lea Kaplan, Benjamin (or Icchak) Kotler, and Rachel Malski-Tykociński, which appear in the Sokółka yizkor book, Ester Mishkinski, ed., *Sefer Sokółka. Dos bukh fun Sokółke* (‘a.y. *Irgun yots’e Sokółka be-Yisrael*) (Jerusalem: Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1968). Two anonymous testimonies, published in Shimon

Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1987), pp. 359–360, 365–366, provide brief, albeit important, mentions of Sokółka during the war.

Secondary sources include the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 475–481; and Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 180–186. Still relevant, particularly for demographic changes, is Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja Żydów w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 9, 48 (tab. 7). Electronic resources include an interview, from January 2006, with Mikołaj Talarczyk, “Za łapówkę do Kłajpedy,” about the Sokółka ghetto, on the Web site of the town of Sokółka, www.sokolka.pl/; and “Sokółscy Żydzi,” on the Nasza Sokółka Web site, <http://naszasokolka.wordpress.com>.

Documentation about the World War II history of the Sokółka Jewish community under German occupation and the partisans who operated near Dworzysk includes AŻIH (Ankiety [GRN Sokółka and Dąbrowa], and 301/2121 and 2965); IPN-Bi (1/1966, 15/438, and old numeration, Ko-205/88 [Dworzysk], S-12/79, S-48/68, S-70/67, S-132/69); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], reel 14, 48/88); VHF (# 8661 and 38590); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 8661, testimony of Abram Morenstein; and Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, pp. 365–366.
2. Compare “Sokółka,” in Rubin, *Rise*, p. 185; and AŻIH, 301/2121, testimony of Fania Jesielewska, p. 1.
3. AŻIH, 301/2965, testimony of Abraham Gołdacki, p. 1.
4. AŻIH, Ankiety (GRN Sokółka and Dąbrowa), cited in Datner, “Eksterminacja,” p. 9.
5. Compare Mishkinski, *Sefer Sokółka*, p. 349; and Talarczyk, “Za łapówkę.”
6. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), ASG, reel 14, 48/88, pp. 1–2, for low figure; and AŻIH, 301/2965, p. 1, for high figure.
7. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 48/88, p. 2.
8. Compare Talarczyk, “Za łapówkę”; and Mishkinski, *Sefer Sokółka*, p. 350.
9. AŻIH, 301/2121, p. 1.

SOKOŁY

Pre-1939: Sokoly (Yiddish: Sokoli), town, Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sokoly, Lapy raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Sokoly, Wysokie Mazowieckie powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Sokoły lies 38 kilometers (23.6 miles) southwest of Białystok. Its 1937 population of 2,100 included 1,400 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Sokoły on September 10, 1939. That evening, the Germans set fire to two Jewish residential streets and shot 4 Jews, probably in retaliation for the

murder of three soldiers in Truskolasy-Lachy village. On September 17, German soldiers set Wysokie Mazowieckie ablaze and expelled about 600 Jewish arson victims to Sokoły. On September 23, the Germans ceded Sokoły to Soviet occupation.

Under Soviet rule, Sokoły swelled with Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland. In April 1940, local authorities declared the refugees to be security risks and ordered them to move to localities east of Białystok. In August 1940, the Jewish population stood at 2,015, as some 500 Wysokie Mazowieckie refugees had settled permanently in Sokoły.

On June 24, 1941, the Germans recaptured Sokoły. On July 2, Wagner, the local military commander, immediately ordered all Jews to wear white armbands. This regulation was later changed to yellow markings, on the chest and arm. Wagner appointed a Polish collaborationist mayor and a 10-person auxiliary police force. The latter was commanded by Józef Janeczko. On a Sunday, German soldiers and the local police humiliated Rabbi Josef Rosenblum in front of the Roman Catholic Church. Wagner ordered Jewish houses searched for evidence of Communist sedition; 17 Jews were arrested.

However, a local translator, known as “Marszałek” (the Marshal), convinced Wagner of many Jews’ innocence. In late July 1941, Wagner appointed Marszałek mayor and accepted his proposal for the Jewish community to pay a “fine” to release the imprisoned “Communists.”¹ Because of its relative lack of terror, some survivors of anti-Jewish violence in Nowogród (Łomża powiat), Radziłów, Jedwabne, Tykocin, Rutki-Kossaki, and Kobylin found shelter in Sokoły.²

In early July, Wagner imposed the death penalty on Jews found without permission outside Sokoły. That same week, he ordered that a 12-person Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established, under the chairmanship of Alter Ginzberg. Its main responsibilities were to raise taxes and contributions demanded by the authorities and to organize workers for forced labor, made compulsory of all Jews under 42 years of age the moment the Germans arrived in Sokoły.

In September 1941, the Germans established a civil administration for Sokoły. That month, on the Shabbat of Penitence, the newly arrived German Gendarmes, or perhaps an SS unit from Łomża, and Polish policemen executed the former Jewish residents of a rest home in Mazury village. The Sokoły Jewish community had cared for the 25 to 30 victims, physically and mentally handicapped Jews from Białystok, from June 22, 1941.³

In late September 1941, Amtskommissar Wassel ordered a closed ghetto established in Sokoły. The Judenrat bribed him to suspend the order. When Wassel several more times threatened to establish a closed ghetto, the Judenrat interpreted the calls as demands for further monetary compensation.⁴

Local German authorities instead established an open ghetto, by restricting Jewish movement to Sokoły and concentrating Jews in fewer houses. They expropriated the houses of the wealthiest Jews to distribute to German and Polish officials. Wassel ordered additional Jewish houses demolished to construct a Gendarmerie post. Polish civilians expropriated

Jewish-owned businesses and workshops. Because they most often were located in the owners' homes, the families had little choice but to move. The expropriations resulted in extended Jewish families living in a single room in the remaining Jewish houses; other families moved into barns and storage sheds.⁵

The Amtskommissar, the Gendarmes, several German railway officials, a German dairy manager, the local mayor, and the Polish auxiliary police demanded furnishings, household items, and exorbitant gifts from the Judenrat. Wassel ordered all Jewish-owned cows confiscated. The Gendarmerie required the Judenrat to cover material losses some local Poles claimed to have sustained from several Jews in the Soviet period.

However, most Sokoły Jews flouted the anti-Jewish measures binding them to Sokoły. Young Jews left daily mostly to barter merchandise for food with local Poles. Radio technician Moshe Maik (Majek) established and maintained a clandestine radio for a Polish Home Army (AK) unit in Brzuzewo village. Because of the Gendarmerie construction project, about 300 craftsmen received exemptions from forced labor obligations. They worked directly for the Germans or for local Poles. On Passover 1942, almost all the 200 Jews conscripted to unload and load materials and to repair track beds at an SS-supervised railway and locomotive car facility in Łapy secured medical certificates to excuse them officially from forced labor obligations during the holidays.

An SS officer from the Łapy facility arrived in Sokoły on a Passover festival day to flog publicly and then arrest the entire Judenrat for the breach in labor discipline. A bribe secured their release. But Wassel warned the death sentence would be imposed on any Jew subsequently found circumventing German law.⁶ Seven weeks later, Wassel ordered (Dov) Beryl Kruszewski publicly hanged for hoarding goods, ignoring orders limiting Jews to Sokoły, and buying a substitute to fulfill his labor obligation in Łapy.⁷

In the fall of 1942, the Germans doubled forced labor obligations, ordering the Judenrat to send about 400 laborers daily to Łapy and another 80 each to a telegraph cabling project in the Budziska Forest and to a quarry in Jeżewo. The Judenrat conscripted all men, aged 42 to 60, twice weekly for forced labor. It mobilized women to lay cable, pulverize stone, and run the quarry's kitchen.

In the fall of 1942, a Polish train engineer told Sokoły laborers at Łapy that he twice had deported Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to a camp named Treblinka, where they had disappeared.⁸ In late October, several fugitives from the liquidations of the ghettos in Siedlce and Węgrów recounted jumping from transports taking them to the Treblinka extermination camp. The Jews began planning resistance. But, on November 1, a week before the insurgents were to purchase arms, local Poles warned they had been ordered to bring 400 wagons to Sokoły the next morning. About three quarters of the Sokoły Jewish community fled to local forests.⁹

An SS unit that arrived in Sokoły on November 2, 1942, to expel the Jewish community to a transit camp in southern

Białystok discovered no more than 300 to 500 Jews there. Pursued in the forests by the Gendarmes and by gangs of Polish and Belorussian thieves, many fugitives accepted an "amnesty" offered by German authorities to all Jews who reported to the Bet Midrash.¹⁰ Around November 15–20, the Germans transported about 400 Bet Midrash captives to the Białystok transit camp. The Białystok Judenrat transferred to its ghetto the rabbi of Sokoły, his wife, and eldest daughter. The rest of the Sokoły inmates, about 850 people, were sent between November 16 and December 15 to Treblinka.¹¹ They were gassed on arrival.

In Sokoły, in late December 1942 or early January 1943, German authorities transferred another approximately 650 Jews to "safe haven" in the Białystok ghetto.¹² Most transferees were deported during the first liquidation Aktion in February 1943. About 50 to 60 others were expelled during the final liquidation Aktion in August. A handful of the latter, deported to a number of concentration camps, survived the war.¹³

About 25 Jews from Sokoły received shelter from local Poles. Stanisław Kalinowski, in Brzuzewo, sheltered five Jews including Maik, his radio operator. In September 1943, Gendarmes from Tykocin surrounded the Waniewo farm of Władysław and Stanisława Krysiwicz, aid-givers to eight Sokoły ghetto fugitives. The Germans set fire to their house, shot dead the fugitives as they fled the blaze, and murdered the aid-givers.¹⁴

Denied shelter by local Poles, the hundreds of others who built forest bunkers suffered greater losses. As SS, SS auxiliaries, and Gendarmes embarked on sweeps of the region's forests in 1943, more than 100 were killed. Others were murdered by thieves or local farmers or denounced by Poles. Fewer than 20 Sokoły forest fugitives survived the war.¹⁵

After Sokoły's liberation on August 11, 1944, tragedy struck the survivors. On February 17, 1945, armed Poles from the AK, the anti-Communist underground, burst into a party and murdered 7 of the 24 Jewish survivors there. The dead included the engineer David Żółty, 4-year-old Tolka Żytawer, 12-year-old Jehoszua Litwak, and David Kruszewski, a survivor of the Majdanek and Auschwitz extermination camps.¹⁶

In 1949, Janeczko, the former commander of the Sokoły auxiliary police, was found not guilty of the murders of 25 to 30 Jews from the Mazury rest home and of Kruszewski.

SOURCES Published testimonies can be found in Moisheh Grosman, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kedoshe Sokoli* (Tel Aviv, 1962), which has appeared in a Hebrew translation by its editor, Shemu'el Kalisher, ed., *Sokoli ba-ma'avak le-bayim* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Sokoli be-Yisrael, 1975). An almost complete English translation, from the Hebrew, is available at jewishgen.org. The one account not yet available there has been published in English translation as Avigdor Ben-Dov, ed., *Deliverance: The Diary of Michael Maik. A True Story*, trans. Laia Ben-Dov (Kedumim, Israel: Keterpress, 2004).

Valuable secondary accounts include the relevant entries in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Poland: Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem:

Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 323–325; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 177–179; and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 219–220. Also valuable are Janusz Gwardiak, “Żydzi w Sokołach. Z dziejów gminy żydowskiej,” in Michał Gnатовski, ed., *Żydzi i stosunki polsko-żydowskie w regionie łomżyńskim w XIX i XX wieku* (Łomża: Łomżyńskie Towarzystwo Naukowe im. Wagów, 2002), pp. 105–110; and Anna Pyżewska, “Tragedia w Sokołach—17 lutego 1945,” *BIPN*, no. 12 (2005): 76–80.

Documentation remains so sparse about the specific fate of the Nowogród Jewish community, which numbered 521 people in 1921, that some scholars believe none of its members survived the Holocaust. However, Luba Wróbel Goldberg (VHF, # 18687) fled from Nowogród after the Germans set it afire in June or July 1941. Unfortunately, the extant documentation makes it impossible to determine whether a ghetto subsequently was established in Nowogród.

Documentation pertaining to the Sokoły Jewish community during the Holocaust includes AŻIH (e.g., 301/390, 391, 977, 1263, 3155); FVA (# 186); IPN (e.g., SAB 233-233a, SOŁ 114, SWB 16, WSRW 216/53); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/1158, S [19/69, 74/68, 75/68, 76/68, 77/67, 116/68, 224/68, 279/68, 296/69, 298/68, 311/68, 317/68, 323/68]); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M [IPN] [2/272, 46/131]; RG-50.120*0070; Acc.1995.A.839; RG-02.202); VHF (# 13078, 15557, 15747, 30390, 32394, 33349, 37463, 47869, 48616); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Kalisher, *Sokoli*, p. 163 (Chaim Goldberg testimony); Maik, *Deliverance*, pp. 25–28.
2. VHF, # 18687, testimony of Luba (Wróbel) Goldberg; Maik, *Deliverance*, pp. 37–40, 75.
3. Maik, *Deliverance*, pp. 41–42, and IPN, SOŁ 114, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 219–220 (depositions, Jakub Plut and Wolf Gryczak), for Gendarmes; Klisher, *Sefer zikaron li-kedoshe Sokoli*, p. 164 (Goldberg), for SS.
4. Maik, *Deliverance*, p. 56.
5. Ibid., pp. 27, 32–35, 46–47, 50–56, 67–70.
6. Ibid., pp. 29–31, 43–46, 55–66, 80.
7. Ibid., pp. 70–75.
8. VHF, # 18687.
9. Kalisher, *Sokoli*, p. 165 (Goldberg); Maik, *Deliverance*, pp. 87–98.
10. Kalisher, *Sokoli*, pp. 208–209 (Issur Wondolowicz testimony).
11. Ibid., p. 224 (Yosef Rosenblum testimony).
12. VHF, # 30390, testimony of Saul Platt; Kalisher, *Sokoli*, p. 224, p. 185 (Goldberg), p. 148 (Avraham Kalifowitz testimony).
13. Kalisher, *Sokoli*, p. 185; USHMM, RG-02.202, testimony of Sara (Majzler) Lew; VHF, # 15557, 15747, 13078, testimonies of Esther (Wondolowicz) Goldman, Motłel Tservonits, and Mala Sonnabend.

14. In 1993, Yad Vashem recognized Władysław and Stanisława Krysiewicz as Righteous Among the Nations.

15. Klisher, *Sokoli*, pp. 178–179, 183, 186 (Kalifowitz), pp. 209–211 (Wondolowicz).

16. Jerzy Zieleniewski, *Raporty wywiadu AK-AKO-WiN Obwodu Wysokie Mazowieckie w Okręgu Białystok, 1944–1947* (Białystok, 2001), 1:64; IPN, WSRW 216/53.

SOPOĆKINIE

Pre-1939: Sopoćkinie (Yiddish: Sopotkin), village, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sopotskin, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Sopotzkin, Kreis Grodno, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Sapotskin, Hrodna raen and voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Sopoćkinie lies 26 kilometers (about 16 miles) northwest of Grodno. On the eve of World War II, the Jewish population there may have numbered about 1,300 people.¹

Because of its location on the border between Soviet- and German-occupied Poland, Sopoćkinie was among the early localities attacked on June 22, 1941, the first day of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Shortly after 2:00 A.M., shelling from German border guards set Sopoćkinie ablaze. At 9:00 A.M., regular German soldiers entered Sopoćkinie to leave behind a small military contingent to establish a civil administration. The members of the military administration immediately ordered the settlement's Jewish residents to return home. As they watched the settlement burn to the ground, the Germans also compelled the Jews to dig mass graves and to extricate and then bury the dead. Jews were the overwhelming number of the hundreds of fire victims.

Within the first week of occupying the settlement, the German soldiers asked local Poles, most likely the members of a newly appointed Polish auxiliary police force, to identify the Jews who had collaborated with the former Soviet administration. The Poles took a broad view of the order, in part because they had witnessed the Polish military incur significant losses from the Red Army just outside Sopoćkinie during the September 1939 campaign and believed that some young local Jewish Communists had abetted the Soviet seizure of Sopoćkinie.² They rounded up a large number of Jews, including the rabbi of Sopoćkinie and several other distinguished communal leaders. The Germans executed the Jews outside Sopoćkinie in an antitank ditch by the Augustów Canal.

Because of the fire devastation, the soldiers immediately established a ghetto for the surviving Jews. Since there were no habitable structures in Sopoćkinie, they located the ghetto in Teolin, a settlement located immediately to the west. The ghetto occupied a Roman Catholic convent school (for a time a Russian Orthodox monastery), one of the only four structures in Teolin. Others mention the ghetto was located in a meeting hall and cinema, likely because during the Soviet occupation the authorities had confiscated the property to use for this purpose. The ghetto was fenced, though the date the fence was erected is unknown.

The German military command also issued a number of anti-Jewish decrees. These required Jews throughout the Białystok Distrikt to wear yellow markings on their chests and backs, prohibited contact with Christians, and forbade Jews from leaving their places of residence. By late July, military authorities in Łomża also had ordered the Jews to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat).

Material conditions in the Sopoćkinie ghetto were poor. Five or six families crowded into a single cell of the former convent. Sanitation facilities were inadequate. Although the Jews were brought daily from Teolin to Sopoćkinie to clear away the fire destruction, the ghetto lacked access to water and soap. Initially, the Germans provided the Jews no food. To procure sustenance, they snuck out of the ghetto at night to beg. The unsanitary conditions and poor diet, coupled with a contaminated source of water, led to an outbreak of cholera.

As rumors circulated that the Germans had prepared some antitank ditches outside the town for a mass execution, the Jews in the ghetto lived in fear and hopelessness.³ Moreover, some local Christians brought news of the executions, on November 3, 1941, of other nearby Lithuanian Jewish communities. The German Amtskommissar, most likely a man surnamed Beeskow, announced that because of the overcrowding, poor sanitation, and recent epidemic in the ghetto, the elderly and less able-bodied would be moved to a place with better conditions. When the transferees were not heard from again, the Jews presumed they had been murdered in the antitank ditches.

The Germans again reduced the size of the Sopoćkinie ghetto population in June 1942, this time conscripting for forced labor almost all of its remaining men. Taken to a labor camp in Starosielce, today a part of Białystok, Poland, the men worked on construction of a train depot and on extending and repairing rail lines. The Amtskommissar held back a few craftsmen to assist in the rebuilding of Sopoćkinie.

Sometime after the deportations, the Jews were relocated to another ghetto in Sopoćkinie. The new ghetto was composed of a few fire-damaged homes on pre-war Bolesław I Chrobry (the Brave or Valiant) Street, also known as Osoczniki Street. This ghetto, too, was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. In addition to work on ongoing reconstruction projects, the Jews in this period also were hired by local Christians for agricultural labor. The Christians contracted for their work through the German labor office in Sopoćkinie.

On November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Sopoćkinie ghetto. Beeskow informed the Jews that they were to be sent to the Ukraine for labor. He permitted them to bring with them only work clothes, one pair of shoes, and a small piece of hand luggage. After the Jews had gathered their belongings, the less able-bodied were ordered onto the wagons of local peasants. The remaining Jews were instructed to march behind the wagons. The Sopoćkinie Jews, about 537 people, were brought to the Kiełbasin transit camp, south of Grodno.⁴ They may have been the first Jews to arrive there, though other accounts suggest the Skidel community was there earlier. At Kiełbasin, the Sopoćkinie Jews were soon joined by Jews from about 22 other communities (about 22,000 to 28,000

people) in the Grodno and Sokółka regions also deported there between November 2 and 5. Housed in subterranean barracks, known as dugouts, for more than a month and a half, they lived in terrible conditions, with little food, subjected to the brutality of the camp's commandant, Karl Rinzler, and his staff. Many perished of diseases related to exposure, the poor diet, and inadequate sanitation.

However, the Sopoćkinie Jews were not among the communities deported from the transit camp to the region's extermination camps. They were still at Kiełbasin when, shortly after December 21, 1942, the Germans liquidated the camp and sent its remaining 2,000 to 3,500 Jewish inmates to the Grodno I ghetto.⁵ A few Sopoćkinie Jews escaped from the ghetto. Alter and Rachel Biblowicz, and their daughter Luba, for example, made their way home to Sopoćkinie. They survived the war sheltered by the Falczyk and Bykowski families in Kadysz-Hołówieńczyce and Nowosady villages.⁶

The remaining Sopoćkinie Jews in the Grodno I ghetto were deported to the Auschwitz extermination camp about a month later, during the Aktion of January 18–22, 1943. At least three Sopoćkinie Jews, for example, were on the Grodno ghetto transport that arrived at Auschwitz on January 20; others, including Masha Chalef and her stepmother, arrived there on January 24. From the second transport, the Germans held back Chalef and at least one other Sopoćkinie Jew, Jankiel Obalski, as prisoners of the concentration camp. Almost all the remaining Sopoćkinie Jews, including Chalef's stepmother, were gassed on their arrival at Auschwitz.⁷ The Sopoćkinie men at Starosielce are believed to have been sent, on November 19, 1942, to the Treblinka extermination camp.⁸ After the deportations, the German administration in Sopoćkinie sold off the remaining Jewish property there. It deposited 6,172.59 Reichsmark (RM) in proceeds into a trustee account of the Landratsamt in Grodno.⁹

SOURCES Several published and Internet-based works are useful: Alexander Manor (or Menchinsky), ed., *Korot 'ayarah abah; megilat ha-sigšug ve-ha-burban shel kehillat Sopotkin* (Tel Aviv: Irgun 'ole Sopotkin be-Yisrael, 1960), an English translation of which appears at Jewishgen, at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Sopotkin/Sopotkin.html#TOC-C6; Yitshak Yezhezki'eli, ed., *Kol adam ve-zikhrone: 'Ayarab, peribatab ve-burbanah, hayeba, demuyoteba ve-tipusebah: Sopotkin nikra otab* (Tel Aviv, 1964); and Parnas Hager, ed., *Sopotkin: Toldot imuts 'ayarah abah* (Kiryat Yam, Israel: Bet-ha-sefer ha-tikhon hamakif'a. sh. Rodman, 1973). A testimony by Judy (Kramlat) Goldman also appears in Alfred Neil Kramer, ed., *The Kramer Family Tree*, 3 pts. (Have de Grace, MD: Alfred Neil Kramer, 2008), pt. 2, pp. 1026–1034; see also www.kramerlaw.com/Sopockin.htm and his articles including "Sopockin: An Overview, pts. 1 & 2," *Landsmen* 9:4 (November 1999) and 10:1–2 (June 2000).

Valuable, too, is the Sopoćkinie entry in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 320–323. An English translation, by Rachel Kapen (Ivashkovsky), is available on the Kramer Konnections Web site, at www.kramerlaw.com/Sopockin2.htm.

Documentary sources for the study of the Jewish community of Sopoćkinie under German occupation during World War II include GAGO (e.g., 1-1-54, pp. 37–38; 1-1-150, pp. 18, 33–34; 1-1-335, pp. 45, 80–82; and 1-1-365, pp. 37–38); GARF (e.g., 7021-86-40, pp. 4, 56, 58); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31); USHMM (RG-22.002M [GARF], e.g., reel 13, pp. 4, 56, 58; and RG-53.004M [GAGO], e.g., reel 1, 1-1-54, pp. 37–38, reel 2, 1-1-150, pp. 18, 33–34, and reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 45, 80–82, and 1-1-365, pp. 10–14); VHF (# 3978); and YVA (e.g., O-16/5432 and O-3/3930). Some of the materials cited above have been published in Serge Klarsfeld, ed., *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno 1941–1944*, 6 vols. (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985–1992), 6: 170, 210.

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 3978, testimony of Masha (Chalef) Markovitch.
2. IPN, S-6/02/Zk; and Marek Wierzbicki, *Polacy i Żydzi w zaborze sowieckim* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Kulturalne Fronda, 2001), pp. 56, 91–92.
3. VHF, # 3978.
4. USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 1, 1-1-54, p. 38; also at GARF, 7021-86-40, p. 4.
5. Manor, *Korot 'ayarah ahat*, p. 119.
6. In 1978 Yad Vashem recognized two members of the Falczyk family and in 1990 five members of the Bykowski family as Righteous Among the Nations.
7. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 155–157.
8. Mikhael-Meir Yezursky (or Jezierski), “In the Horrible Years,” in Yosef Kohen-Tsedek *Sefer zikaron li-kehilt Ostrin, Sbts'uts'n, Vasilishki, Novidvor, Roz'ankah* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'ah nifredet shel Irgun yotse Ostrin be-Yisrael, 1966), pp. 357–361.
9. USHMM, RG-53.004M, reel 4, 1-1-335, pp. 80–82.

STAWISKI

Pre-1939: Stawiski (Yiddish: Stavisk), town, Szczuczyn powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Stavishki, Kol'no raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Stawiski, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Kolno powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Stawiski lies 24.5 kilometers (15.2 miles) north-northeast of Łomża. On the eve of World War II, its population of 3,150 included 1,700 to 2,000 Jews.

A Wehrmacht unit from the 21st Infantry Division briefly occupied Stawiski for about three weeks in September 1939. The soldiers raped Jewish women and plundered Jewish stores. Ordered to supervise Jewish labor brigades, some local Poles humiliated the conscripted workers. A Stawiski priest blamed the Jews for the murder of some soldiers. In retaliation, the Germans executed several Jews, burned the small synagogue, or perhaps a Bet Midrash, and set part of Stawiski on fire.¹ The Germans deported a group of able-bodied male Jews (and Christians) to forced labor camps in East Prussia before turning over Stawiski to Soviet forces.

The Germans returned to Stawiski on June 27, 1941.² The Wehrmacht initially posted a Feldgendarmarie unit, composed of eight men, in Stawiski to maintain order. German authorities recruited an auxiliary Polish police force to assist the Feldgendarmarie.³ Its commander likely was Józef Wiczorek.⁴ The local recruits mostly had been released from People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) prisons as a result of the war. The Germans ordered the Jews to organize a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its primary responsibility was to turn over valuables to the military authorities.

With the return of the Germans, violence against the Jews again reached a peak. The Germans, along with Polish collaborators, plundered and destroyed Jewish property, set the Jews to forced labor, and beat and often murdered them.

Beginning on August 17, 1941, the Germans executed almost the entire Stawiski Jewish community. The able-bodied, about 900 people, perished in an antitank ditch outside Mściwuje village, the execution site also of the women and children of the Kolno community and the Jewish residents of Mały Płock. Another approximately 700 Stawiski victims, mostly infants, the elderly, and the handicapped, were executed in the Płaszczatka (or Stawiski) Forest.⁵ Postwar Polish investigators initially held German Gendarmes assigned to the Stawiski and Kolno regions responsible for the execution of the Jewish communities there.⁶ Most Polish historians now believe the Stawiski executions were the work of an SS unit from the Płock (Schröttersburg) substation of the Zichenau Gestapo, under the command of SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Schaper.⁷

The Germans held back 60 Stawiski Jews from execution, for a remnant ghetto, likely established on the same day as the executions. The survivors included local medical personnel, a single representative of each skilled trade, and their families. Among the tradesmen were a tailor, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, and a locksmith.

Initially located near the synagogue, the ghetto was moved subsequently to the northern outskirts of Stawiski. The second ghetto was located on parts of Furmańska and Krzywe Koło Streets, behind the houses formerly inhabited by the Jeleniewicz (or Woliniewicz), Wilamowski, and Zalman Leibel families. It consisted of a few homes on about 4,000 square meters (almost 1 acre) of land. Though surrounded by a fence, the ghetto was not guarded from either side. After surviving Jews from Grabowo and other nearby villages were consolidated there, the ghetto population stood at about 105.⁸

Jews who had survived the mass execution in hiding were not permitted to reside in the Stawiski ghetto. After the war, local Polish authorities in Jedwabne claimed that about 100 Jews from Stawiski, presumably the fugitives, had been consolidated in the short-lived Jedwabne ghetto. However, no Stawiski survivors recall ever having been ordered to Jedwabne. Rather, they describe either seeking refuge in the ghetto in Łomża or hiding for many months, until the Germans permitted them to work as agricultural laborers for local Poles and to live on the farmsteads at which they labored.⁹

The Stawiski ghetto residents mostly provided labor to the Stawiski Gendarmerie (Order Police). Some cut wood for the Gendarmerie, and others cleared rubble from the town. Craftsmen at times worked for Poles in villages outside Stawiski. There, the Polish perpetrators of anti-Jewish violence threatened them. Wieczorek stoned three Jewish laborers to death in Skroda Mała village.¹⁰

On November 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the Stawiski ghetto, driving its residents along with the Stawiski Jews who had lived outside the ghetto to a transit camp in Bogusze, a village located 4.8 kilometers (about 3 miles) north of Grajewo, near the railway station in Prostken, East Prussia). The Stawiski community joined about 5,000 to 9,000 Jews from nearby localities also expelled to the Bogusze transit camp. The Germans liquidated the transit camp in two deportations. In the first and largest, the SS drove about 2,500 to 5,000 inmates to the railway station on December 15–16, 1942, and sent them from there to the Treblinka extermination camp. During the second deportation, on January 3, 1943, about 2,000 inmates were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Shortly after midnight, on January 7, about 1,489 Jews from the transport were gassed on arrival. Another 296 men and 215 women became concentration camp prisoners. The only Stawiski prisoner from the deportation believed to have survived the war is Rivka Jaffa (Yaffa).¹¹

As many as 50 Stawiski Jews had evaded the Prostken deportation, but most were found in subsequent German searches. On November 2, 1942, 2 Jews were shot by Gendarmes on Źródłowa Street immediately after the ghetto's liquidation. Fajwel Chonkowicz and his family, also ghetto escapees, were sheltered by Antoni Rydzewski, a farmer in Budy Stawiskie village, but in 1943, another Pole denounced their hiding places. Gendarmes shot dead the 11 Jews they discovered on the Rydzewski property, including the Chonkowiczs, and their Polish aid-giver. Another denunciation in August 1943 likely led Stawiski Gendarmes to burn down an abandoned school in Wysokie Małe village in which 5 to 10 Stawiski Jews were hiding. The Jews perished in the blaze.¹² In 1944, at least another 11 Jews, including 6 members of the Rozensztejn family, reportedly were murdered by local Poles in the Mały Płock gmina.¹³

There were no more than seven survivors among the fugitives. Herzl Cheslok, a former inmate of the Białystok ghetto, also is counted as a Stawiski survivor.

In 1947, criminal investigators examined allegations that Piotr Mrozicki, a local Pole, had participated in the murders, in July 1941, of the Całcki family and of another miller's family in Poryte village but decided to try Mrozicki instead for extricating four Jews from hiding places during the mass execution of the Stawiski community and turning three over to German authorities and murdering the fourth, a man named Goldberg. In 1948, Mrozicki received a four-year sentence.¹⁴

SOURCES Some of the archival sources below appear in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP,

2002), vol. 1, *Studia*, p. 470 (AŻIH, Ankiety, Jedwabne ghetto inquiry); vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, p. 145 (AAN, 303/III-7/1), pp. 242–243 (AŻIH, 301/1860), pp. 246–248 (AŻIH, 301/78), pp. 337–339 (AŻIH, 301/1858); and in the original Yiddish in George Garin et al., eds., *Grayeve yisker bukh* (New York: United Grayever Relief Committee, 1950), pp. 226–227 (AŻIH, 301/1860).

Published testimonies by Jewish survivors can be found in Yosef Rubin, ed., *Stavisk: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Štavisk be-Yisrael, 1973). There also is a yizkor book for the Kolno Jewish community, Aizik Rembah and Benyamin Halevi, eds., *Sefer zikaron le-kehillat Kolno* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kōlnah ve-Sifriyat-po'alim, 1971). English translations of both are available at jewishgen.org.

Useful secondary accounts include Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 325–330 (Stawiski), pp. 411–415 (Kolno). Its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 110–113 (Kolno), pp. 186–191 (Stawiski), includes translations of parts of the relevant entries from Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Machcewicz and Persak *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, pp. 167–168 (Kolno), pp. 168–169 (Stawiski). Almost all the other contributions to the first volume of *Wokół Jedwabnego* include some discussion of the Stawiski and Kolno Jewish communities.

Archival documentation pertaining to the history of the Jewish communities of Stawiski and Kolno during the World War II German occupation includes AAN (303/III-7/1/7-8); AŻIH (i.e., Ankiety, 301 [78, 1858, 1860, 1997]); IPN (e.g., ASG, SOŁ 93); IPN-Bi (e.g., S [1/71, 99/68, 101/68, 25/67/1-2]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], 2/177-78, 2/187, 46/77); VHF (# 21241); and YVA (e.g., O-3/3714, M-11 [260, B-219]).

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NOTES

1. Rivka Zilbersztejn testimony and Chaim Wilamowski account, in Rubin, *Stavisk*, respectively, pp. 318–323, 301.

2. AŻIH, 301/1858, testimony of Fajgel Gołąbek (or Golombek), in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:337–339.

3. BA-MA, M819, SF-02 (37615), p. 17 (Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS, Ic, Tätigkeitsbericht Nr. 4, July 7, 1941), cited in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 1:336–337.

4. Yehuda Chiwicho, in Rubin, *Stavisk*, p. 335, describes Wieczorek only as “the chief of the antisemites and the head of the ruffians of Stawiski.”

5. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 1, 2/177, pp. 1–2, 2/187, pp. 1–2. See also AAN, 303/III-7, vol. 1, pp. 7–8.

6. IPN-Bi, S-171.

7. Suspicions based in part on AŻIH, 301/78, testimony of Menachem Finkelsztejn, pp. 1–4.

8. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/77, pp. 1–2.

9. Chiwicho and Fuks, in Rubin, *Stavisk*, respectively, pp. 336–338, 352–361.

10. AŻIH, 301/1858, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:338.
11. Ibid., 2:339.
12. Ibid.; IPN-Bi, S-1/71, depositions, S. Borawski and J. Blusiewicz; Chiwicho, in Rubin, *Stavisk*, pp. 336–343.
13. AŻIH, 301/1858, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:339; Fuks, in Rubin, *Stavisk*, pp. 353–362.
14. IPN, SOŁ 93, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 169.

SUCHOWOLA

Pre-1939: Suchowola (Yiddish: Sukhovola), town, Sokółka powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sukhovoly, Sokolka raion, Belostok oblast, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Suchowola, Kreis Sokolka, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Sokółka powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Suchowola lies 58 kilometers (36 miles) north of Białystok. In 1931, its Jewish population stood at 1,521. During World War II, it first came under Soviet occupation shortly after September 17, 1939.

A Wehrmacht unit occupied Suchowola within days of the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. A



Pre-war portrait of two children of Aaron Shmuel Shlachter. Both were murdered in Treblinka after being held in the Suchowola ghetto. USHMM WS #89919, COURTESY OF SARAH HOLSTEIN MASLOW

military commandant's post (Ortskommandantur) controlled the town until mid-August, when a Gendarmerie post, commanded by Weiss, was established. Amtskommissar Hans Urban arrived in late August. An auxiliary police force was recruited likely from the Polish ranks of a 12-person Christian-Jewish civilian guard, appointed on June 23 by the Roman Catholic priest and the rabbi of Suchowola, Zvi Kalir, to police Suchowola after the evacuation of Soviet authorities. Its initial commander, Sieńko, was from Wólka (Suchowola gmina, Sokółka powiat). Józef Snarski, the first village administrator (sołtys), also was an auxiliary policeman. A tailor, Mikulski (or Miłkulski), was named mayor.¹

The SS and the Polish guardsmen engaged in anti-Jewish violence in Suchowola as many as three times in July 1941. (The number of occasions and the timing of events vary in the sources.) During the first visit, likely on Sunday, July 6, the SS men and the Polish guardsmen rounded up Communist sympathizers and drove the Jews to the market square. At the assembly, about 35 Jews, 30 Christians, and 2 Red Army soldiers were forced to run a gauntlet of SS and Polish collaborators armed with clubs and shovels. At least 5 Jews perished during the beatings.²

The SS returned to Suchowola on July 12, 1941, a day Jewish survivors remember as “Black Saturday.” At another assembly, the SS commander ordered the Polish collaborators, a group that perhaps included local villagers, to incarcerate most of the Jewish community in buildings across town. Jewish craftsmen were interned for several weeks until a ghetto was established.³ Other prisoners were subjected to violence. Young women, imprisoned in the synagogue, were raped and beaten by their Polish guards. Other guardsmen beat up Jewish religious leaders, including Kalir, interned in the Tarbut school. The SS made the prisoners collect and burn the community's religious texts. After the SS invited visiting German dignitaries and photographers to observe from a bridge, the Polish police drove a group of Bet Midrash prisoners into a pond. The police, joined by the SS, beat and drowned at least 12 Jews. They drove other prisoners, likely elderly business leaders, into a house and set it on fire. Policemen forced escapees back into the building. About 70 people perished in the blaze.⁴

The SS may have returned again to Suchowola on July 19 to organize and photograph additional violence, targeted at about 80 Jewish captives, reportedly former Komsomol members. The Polish police made the Jews hold a mock funeral for Soviet leader Josef Stalin. Whether a bribe of butter and eggs to the SS commander halted the procession before it reached the pond is unclear.⁵

A ghetto was established after the last July 1941 visit of the SS to Suchowola. Released from their makeshift prisons under armed guard, the craftsmen constructed a wooden fence around the ghetto, the shoemaker enclave on Janów Street. Its only gate was by the Kramer house. Once the fence was erected, German military authorities ordered the remaining captives released to move belongings there. Many prisoners discovered that their homes had been plundered.⁶ The initial ghetto population of around 2,000 included refugees from

anti-Jewish violence and property destruction in Augustów, Jasionówka, and Dąbrowa Białostocka.

Conditions in the ghetto were poor. Although kehillah leaders had paid the military commander a substantial bribe to expand the ghetto to include a well, water was rationed. Four to five extended families lived in a single dwelling. Disputes between residents forced kehillah administrators to reorder residential arrangements, so that wealthier families lived together. Some Poles burned down a Jewish residence on Kasprowicz Street and blamed the arson on Jews seeking revenge for being confined to the ghetto. The Polish auxiliary police arrested the homeowner and his sister. Communal leaders distributed \$25 bribes, including to the newly appointed Polish mayor, for the charges to be dropped and the prisoners released.⁷

At the end of August, Amtskommissar Urban, on his first day in Suchowola, ordered the establishment of a 12-member Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its chair was Symcha (or Simhah) Lazar. Urban immediately presented the Jewish Council a long list of household items he needed to furnish his house and gave the Judenrat two hours to provide them.⁸

From September 1941, regional authorities ordered expelled to the Suchowola ghetto a large part of the Jewish communities of the northern part of Kreis Sokolka, including 214 people from Sidra and 800 to 1,500 from Janów Sokółski. By December, Jewish refugees to Jasionówka had been deported there. In February 1942, the Judenrat learned of the impending arrival of another 500 to 1,000 people, including 130 from the Nowy Dwór (Nowy Dwór gmina, Sokółka powiat), 400 to 600 from Dąbrowa Białostocka, and additional expellees from Lipsk nad Biebrzą. The deportations ultimately swelled the Suchowola ghetto population to 5,100 to 7,000.

Because the deportations threatened to run dry the only well in the ghetto, the Judenrat appealed to the commander of a Wehrmacht engineering corps stationed in Suchowola to secure a pledge from Urban for a larger ghetto on a piece of land with greater access to water. Urban agreed at the end of February 1942 to establish a new ghetto opposite the Polish public school, on Kościelna and Szkolna Streets. He gave the Jews two weeks to build a 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) fence, topped with barbed wire, around the new ghetto and to construct watchtowers near its two gates. Urban reportedly extracted additional compensation for the relocation, confiscating on March 14 all Jewish-owned livestock and light industrial goods. The next day, the Sokolka Kreiskommissar, Landrat Amman, organized a gauntlet of German Gendarmes and Polish auxiliary policemen outside the ghetto entrance. He led and then photographed the German and Polish police beating and stripping the Jews of their belongings as they entered the ghetto.⁹

Because most had lost so many basic material possessions during the moves to the ghettos, the Suchowola Judenrat established a number of workshops to replace items such as tools and household crockery. It built a foundry and toolmaking forge for blacksmiths and established cooperative workshops for tailors and other craftsmen. The Judenrat received permission for traders and craftsmen to travel three times a week to nearby villages to solicit orders (at prices fixed by the

Germans) for the finished goods produced in the ghetto workshops and to complete work for Christians. It secured permission to establish a dental clinic outside the ghetto for Christians. The Judenrat retained a part of the profits to cover its administrative costs.

Because the Polish police meticulously searched the approximately 300 residents returning daily from forced labor brigades and routinely meted out 25 lashes to those discovered smuggling as little as one egg, the Judenrat bribed Weiss, likely in February 1942, to replace the Polish auxiliary police commander with Władysław Szkudlarski, the son of a Suchowola shoemaker. Although a Black Saturday perpetrator, the Judenrat considered him less violent than his predecessor.¹⁰

To provide the 100-gram (3.5-ounce) daily bread ration, the Suchowola Judenrat opened a bakery. It ordered vegetable gardens planted on all available plots of land in the ghetto and organized a communal kitchen, to provide 500 daily meals to the most impoverished. It secured permission from Urban to purchase from the state dairy skim milk reserved for pigs. The milk was sold according to a ghetto diary for 9 pfennigs a liter (a quart), of which Urban received 2 pfennigs. With the arrival of the Nowy Dwór refugees in March 1942, bribes to German authorities secured a weekly release of Jews from the ghetto, late on Thursday afternoon market day, to shop.¹¹

The Judenrat worked to improve public health in the ghetto, particularly after Urban, in the spring of 1942, blamed a lice infestation in his house on the ghetto maids assigned to clean it and ordered all women conscripted for labor outside the ghetto shorn bald.¹² When a typhus epidemic erupted, the Judenrat decided not to tell Urban, because of fears he would deprive the community of important sources of revenue by forbidding Jewish traders and craftsmen from leaving the ghetto. Instead, it opened a medical clinic, hired two additional physicians to assist the only doctor, established a pharmacy to produce medicine, and mandated periodic bathing at a public bathhouse it opened. Though many died, the epidemic was controlled.¹³

After the Sokolka Kreiskommissar in the spring of 1942 appointed Gendarme Anton Lange as the Suchowola “ghetto commander,” the Judenrat discovered its authority undermined. When it refused an order to send 100 male conscripts to work on the Janów-to-Sokółka road construction project, Lange ordered an assembly at which the Gendarmes beat up about 30 people, as he randomly chose another 100 for the assignment. The Judenrat ultimately established a labor registry to meet more equitably German demands for 200 more laborers for road construction projects and another 100 for forestry labor. A relief committee supplemented the 100-gram bread rations of the conscripts and provided shoes and clothing to them. But bribes failed to secure an exchange of exhausted workers. Most Suchowola conscripts perished at the labor camps.¹⁴

Lange ordered the wooden synagogue to be burned along with the adjoining Bet Midrash and most houses in the old ghetto. He commanded ghetto laborers remove *matzevot* (gravestones) from the cemetery and demolish its stone wall

to use for paving underlayment. He arbitrarily ordered houses in the new ghetto razed. He visited the ghetto inebriated to shoot randomly at Jews he found there. He replaced the Polish police commander with Aleksander Borowski. Under Borowski's watch, policeman Zygmunt Zieniuk shot Icchak Polak for craning his neck beyond the ghetto fence. The Judenrat closed all ghetto enterprises and organized an elaborate funeral procession to protest police violence.¹⁵

In the late summer of 1942, Mordecai Tenenbaum (or Tenenboim), the *halutz* (pioneer) underground head in the Białystok ghetto, had alerted the Suchowola community, through Tamara Sznajderman (also Tema Schneiderman), about the deportation of Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp. At the High Holidays (mid-September 1942), the community observed the days with prayer, aware that it likely was its last celebration.¹⁶

On November 1, 1942, an SS unit, led by a commander from Białystok, assumed control of the Suchowola ghetto, ordered it sealed, and organized local Gendarmes, the Polish auxiliary police, and civilian employees of the German administration to patrol its fence. On November 2, 700 to 1,000 Jews from Korycin, located 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) south of Suchowola, were driven to the ghetto.¹⁷ At 4:00 A.M., on November 5, the commander ordered the Jews, including about 2,280 Suchowola Jews, 1,720 expellees, and the Korycin community, loaded on several hundred horse-drawn carts. (The sick and elderly were shot later in Suchowola.) Just outside the town, the SS commanded adults to march on foot for the remaining 55 kilometers (34.2 miles) to a transit camp located in Kiełbasin, south of Grodno (now Hrodna).¹⁸

The Germans began sending the 23,000 to 28,000 Jews concentrated at Kiełbasin to the Auschwitz and Treblinka extermination camps on November 9, 1942, with the last transport leaving the Łosośna train station on December 20 or 21, 1942. The Germans expelled the Jews by community, with the Sidra and Korycin communities a part of a much larger transport, which arrived in Auschwitz on November 14. A Łunna survivor remembers the Janów Jews being sent, on December 5, along with his community, to Auschwitz, though most others note they were expelled to Treblinka. The Dąbrowa and Nowy Dwór Jews were sent in mid-December to Treblinka. The Suchowola Jews were still at Kiełbasin at the end of December, when the SS closed the camp and sent its remaining 2,000 to 3,500 inmates to the Grodno I ghetto. Entire Suchowola families perished there from diseases contracted at Kiełbasin. The survivors were deported to Auschwitz a month later, during the Grodno ghetto liquidation Aktion of January 18–22, 1943.¹⁹

Only a few Suchowola Jews fled the expulsion. Several families in Jatwież village, including Adolf and Hanna Kisło, sheltered Lazar and three other Suchowola Jews.

The communities of the Suchowola ghetto were not reconstituted. No Jews from Sidra are believed to have survived the war. The 23 Suchowola survivors, a figure that also includes those who spent the war in the Soviet interior, immi-

grated. They settled mainly in the United States, Mexico, and Israel.

After the war, 13 former auxiliary policemen from Suchowola were tried in Białystok for a number of war crimes. At the first trial, in October 1949, eight of the men were convicted of four main charges, including murdering Jews and Christians in July 1941 and guarding Jews confined to a ghetto. They initially received the stiffest sentences handed down at a collective Polish war crimes trial for collaboration. Four, including Snarski, received life sentences. Szkudlarski, Borowski, and two others received 15-year sentences. However, the supreme court overturned the verdicts, in April 1950, on a procedural issue. The case was undermined further in February 1951, when the state's main witness, former policeman Jan Wasilewski, was tried for drowning Jews in Suchowola in July 1941, and he retracted his previous testimony. Wasilewski and four others were acquitted. Among the latter was Zieniuk, tried for the murder of Polak. (Christian witnesses had claimed that Lange had shot Polak.) In spite of much documentation to suggest otherwise, the original eight defendants, tried again in June 1951, were found not guilty.

SOURCES Eyewitness testimonies are included in the Suchowola yizkor books, with the first, by survivor Simhah Lazar, *Khurbn Sukhovolye; lezikorn fun a yidish shtetl tsvishn Bialystok un Grodne* (Mexico: A Grupe Sukhovolier Landslayt in Meksike, 1947), available in an English translation, *The Destruction of Suchowola (in Memory of a Jewish Town between Bialystok and Grodno)* (Mexico: Drichanski Bros., 2000), and also at Jewishgen, at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/suchowola1/suchowola1.html; Hanah Pribulsky Steinberg et al., eds., *Sefer Subovolab* (Jerusalem: Entsiklopedyah shel galuyot, 1957); and *Le-zekher kehilat Subovolab: Asor le-hantsabat ha-kehilah* (Jaffa, Israel: Bet sefer Urim, 1982). The chronology of events presented in the entry, particularly for July 1941, is drawn from these accounts and from VHF testimonies cited below, in which Jewish survivors mention the SS several times visiting Suchowola.

During postwar criminal investigations into the auxiliary police in Suchowola, a Polish court, in June 1951, determined the events occurred on a single day, July 6, 1941. The trials and the various ways they were compromised are discussed by Andrzej Żbikowski, "Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych," in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), pp. 194–200.

Documentation for the Jewish communities of Sidra and Nowy Dwór remains sparse; therefore it is difficult to ascertain whether ghettos were established in either place. Testimonies of Christian eyewitnesses, summarized by Sidra researcher Jerry Levit—in an April 26, 2006, entry on a travel blog, "Wandering Who?"—suggest that some Sidra Jews may have been held back from the Suchowola expulsions (www.jerrylevit.typepad.com/wandering_who/2006/04/return_to_stasz.html). In Nowy Dwór, German authorities retained about 120 Jewish craftsmen, holding them in the Bet Midrash, in what IPN investigators maintain was a labor camp but also may have been a remnant ghetto. The remaining

Jews were deported in the spring of 1942 to the Suchowola and Grodno ghettos.

Also useful are the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 244–246 (Dąbrowa Białostocka), pp. 369–371 (Janów), pp. 444–445 (Nowy Dwór), pp. 464–468 (Suchowola), and pp. 489–490 (Sidra); and in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 62–65 (Dąbrowa Białostocka), pp. 85–87 (Janów Sokółski), pp. 168–170 (Sidra), and pp. 191–197 (Suchowola).

Documentation pertaining to the Jewish communities of Suchowola, Sidra, Nowy Dwór, and Korycin during the World War II German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/1143, 1251, and 1847); IPN (e.g., SAB 214 and SWB 31-37); IPN-Bi (e.g., old numeration, S-6/71 and S-80/67 [Nowy Dwór], S-13/82 [Sidra], S-271/68 [Suchowola], S-433/71 [Lipsk nad Biebrzą], and S-609/71 [Korycin]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [ASG], reel 14, 46/86); VHF (e.g., # 15809 and 18378); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Compare Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 6–7, 8–9; and IPN, SWB 31-38, in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 195, 197–198 (Teofilski deposition).

2. Sarah Ivri-Tikotsky, “The Shoah,” in Steinberg et al., *Sefer Subovolab*, pp. 236–238; VHF, # 18378; and IPN, SWB 31-37 and SAB 214, in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 194–200.

3. IPN, SWB 31-37, in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 196 (Marchel depositions).

4. Note differences in ages and places of incarceration between drowning and fire victims in Ivri-Tikotsky, “The Shoah,” pp. 236–238; Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 4–5; “Suchowola,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:489–490; and depositions, cited in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 194–200.

5. Note ambiguity in Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 6–7.

6. Ibid., p. 12; Ivri-Tikotsky, “The Shoah,” p. 238; and Marchel depositions, in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 196.

7. Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 8–9.

8. Ibid., pp. 9–10.

9. VHF, # 15809, testimony of Jeanette (Chena Fajenberg) Geldwert; Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 15–16; and Lazar testimony, in Steinberg et al., *Sefer Subovolab*, p. 518. In May 1942, the Landrat organized a similar gauntlet for the arrival of the Nowy Dwór Jews.

10. Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 13–14; and VHF, # 15809.

11. Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 17–19.

12. VHF, # 15809.

13. Lazar, *Destruction*, p. 18.

14. Ibid., pp. 13–14; and VHF, # 15809.

15. Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 14–17; and IPN, SWB 36 and SAB 214, in Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” respectively, p. 196, and pp. 199–200.

16. Masha Fisher-Bagner, “The Female ‘Contact’ in the Underground,” in Steinberg et al., *Sefer Subovolab*, pp. 252–254.

17. Lazar, *Destruction*, p. 19.

18. VHF, # 15809; Lazar, *Destruction*, pp. 18–20; and Ivri-Tikotsky, “The Shoah,” pp. 240–243.

19. Ivri-Tikotsky, “The Shoah,” pp. 242–243; and Lazar, *Destruction*, p. 25.

ŚWISŁOCZ

Pre-1939: Świsłocz (Yiddish: Sislevich), town, Wołkowysk powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Svisloch', raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Swislocz, Kreis Wolkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Svislach, raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Świsłocz lies 38 kilometers (23.6 miles) west-southwest of Wołkowysk.

In World War II, Świsłocz first came under Soviet occupation. Between September 1939 and October 1940, the Jewish population in the Svisloch' raion increased—from 2,700 to 3,200 (5.9 to 7 percent)—as refugees from German-occupied Poland settled there. The Jews almost all lived in Świsłocz proper. Resettlement and nationality reclassifications in this period brought a decline in the number of Poles, from 12,900 to 4,700 (28.2 to 10 percent), and an increase in Belorussians, from 29,300 to 38,700 (64.1 to 84 percent, respectively, of the 45,700 and then 46,000 inhabitants of the raion).

The Germans occupied Świsłocz on June 26, 1941. Before they arrived, several Jews had fled to the Soviet interior.¹ The German military commander appointed a local civilian administration and an auxiliary police force. Both are presumed to have been composed of Poles.² In the fall of 1941, a German civilian administration replaced the local military command. It was headed by an Amtskommissar surnamed Odenbach. A Gendarmerie post also was established.

At the outset of the occupation, German soldiers executed many Świsłocz residents accused of collaborating with the former Soviet regime. The Germans are believed to have targeted mostly Jews, in retaliation for the Świsłocz community having sheltered the parents of Herschel Grynszpan, whose assassination of Ernst von Rath, on November 7, 1938, had served as the pretext for *Kristallnacht*. (The Grynszpans had fled to the Soviet Union, where they survived the war). Some Poles also narrowly interpreted the orders to round up Communist sympathizers because they held local Jewish Communists responsible for the murder of five Polish officials before the arrival of the Red Army and Jews, more generally, for assisting the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) in deporting their co-nationals to the Soviet interior. Albin Horbin, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, sheltered several prominent Jews, including Alexander Bronowski, a lawyer and outspoken critic of Nazism.³

German soldiers in Świsłocz rounded up Jews for heavy, physical labor and plundered their property. The anti-Jewish persecution intensified with the arrival, on July 1, 1941, of a new military commander. The regional military command issued several anti-Jewish decrees, including June orders requiring

Jews to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David. (The order was changed a few days later in Świsłocz to a circular, yellow patch.) Decrees forbade Jews from contact with the Christian population and required the formation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Schlechter, the Jewish school director, chaired the Świsłocz Judenrat.

In July 1941, the German authorities ordered a ghetto created in the old Jewish neighborhood, in the northwest of Świsłocz. Its southern border was across from the municipal gardens, at Warsaw Street. Parts of Grodno Street, including the Jewish houses south of the Russian Orthodox cemetery, formed its eastern interior boundary. The western border ran near the Świsłocz River. In the north, the ghetto included the homes just past the Minc tannery. The date the ghetto was fenced is unknown. On the day that the Jews reported there, they were required to surrender their horses and other livestock.

The German authorities consolidated in the Świsłocz ghetto the Jews from other communities, including about 100 people from Mścibów and five families from Michałki.

The Germans continued to demand various “contributions” of the ghetto inhabitants. They usually gave the Jewish Council two hours to secure the items before entering the ghetto to beat its members and to steal whatever they desired. The Amtkommissar likely ordered the Judenrat to establish workshops to tan hides and to produce finished leather goods. The Judenrat also organized a daily quota of conscripts for forced labor. In the spring of 1942, most of the men were ordered to a labor camp, east of Wołkowysk, to widen and pave the road from Wołkowysk to Baranowicze. When the German overseers of the project beat some of the Świsłocz laborers to death, the Judenrat bribed officials to ease conditions. Unfortunately, the officials intensified their violence periodically to extract additional contributions from the Judenrat. Suffering from exhaustion and typhus, many of the men perished after they were returned to the ghetto in October 1942.

On November 2, 1942, the ghetto was liquidated. The Jews were ordered to assemble at the market square for deportation to a labor camp. They were joined there by about 500 Jews from Jałówka. The SS officer in charge sent part of the assembled Jews, including 1,200 to 3,000 from Świsłocz, by train to the Wołkowysk transit camp. At least 8 Świsłocz Jews are known to have evaded the deportation or to have fled from the transit camp. The remaining Jews were executed in the Wiśnik Forest, just outside Świsłocz. In one version, the executions targeted about 300 of the old and sick. Other accounts note that the Germans held back for execution some 1,563 Jews, including the elderly, the sick, mothers and their children, and a small group of men, ordered to collect and bury the dead.⁴ After the executions, the Gendarmes executed 10 Christians for looting Jewish property in the ghetto.⁵

At the Wołkowysk transit camp, located on the grounds of the former garrison of the 7th Polish Cavalry Brigade, the Jews sent from Świsłocz joined about 15,000 to 19,000 people from other nearby Jewish communities imprisoned there on

November 2–3, 1942. The Germans began expelling the inmates to the Treblinka extermination camp in late November. The Jałówka and Mścibów Jews were among the 3,000 to 5,000 people on the second Wołkowysk transport to Treblinka, which likely left on December 2. All but 60 to 70 men, held back as prisoners of the Treblinka labor camp, were gassed on arrival. The only survivor, Leib Aronzon, from Jałówka, fled to the Białystok ghetto after being left for dead near a mass grave outside the camp.⁶ The Świsłocz Jews were still in Wołkowysk when SS officials announced the deportation of all but 1,700 to 2,000 young, able-bodied inmates and medical personnel. About 200 Świsłocz Jews are believed to have surrendered to the Germans some hides and finished leather goods to remain in Wołkowysk. Several Jałówka-born Jews, perhaps residents of either Świsłocz or Wołkowysk, also secured dispensations. The remaining 4,000 to 6,000 Jews, including most of the Świsłocz community, were sent on two or three transports, likely between December 6 and 8, to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they all perished.⁷

On January 26, 1943, the 1,700 to 2,000 remaining Jews were deported to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Two days later, at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Germans gassed between 1,341 and 1,641 people from the transport and held back just 280 men and 79 women as prisoners of the concentration camp. It is impossible to determine from extant records how many of the original prisoners were from Świsłocz. Only 3 Świsłocz Jews are believed to have survived Auschwitz.⁸

About half of those known to have sought shelter closer to home also perished. Among the dead were brothers Hersz and Szmuel Lis. Cyna (or Tzeitl) Slapak, sheltered by a Pole, Wiktor Szerszenowicz, and four others, who joined the partisans, survived.

At two trials, in 1952 and 1953, in Białystok, Poland, Tadeusz Kłęk, a former Polish auxiliary policeman from Świsłocz, was found guilty of several wartime crimes, including escorting the Jews to the Wiśnik execution site. He received a death sentence, likely commuted to life in prison, and a six-year prison term.

SOURCES Alexander Bronowski, *They Were Few* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), covers the first weeks of the German occupation in Świsłocz. The Svisloch ShtetLinks page, by Nancy Holden, at jewishgen.org, contains some unique sources, including correspondence with a local Christian describing the ghetto. Also useful are Hayim Rubin, ed., *Kehilat Svislots, pelekħ grodna: Yizkor le-kehillat svislots* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa’at ‘Ole Svislots be-Yisrael, 1961); and Yerahmi’el Lifshits, ed., *Sefer Svislots 2: Mikbats te’udi, perakim nivharim, reshimat bate-av, ma’amarim, ‘eduyot, temunot u-mismakhim* (Netanyah: Irgun yots’e Svislots be-Yisrael, 1984). Particularly strong for identifying the fates of Świsłocz prisoners of Auschwitz II-Birkenau is the memoir by the Wołkowysk native and Łysków survivor Izaak Goldberg, *The Miracles versus Tyranny: The Fight for Life and Death between the Jewish People and the Nazis* (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1979).

The second Wołkowysk yizkor book, Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949), includes two chapters by Abraham Ain; the first on the pre-World War I history

of the Świsłocz Jewish community, is an abbreviated version of his landmark study “Swislocz: Portrait of a Jewish Community in Eastern Europe,” *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* 4 (1949): 86–114; and the second is about its destruction. The abbreviated form of the first and the less familiar second chapter, “The Destruction of Svislucz,” appear in English translation in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pp. 302–305. Świsłocz survivors’ understandings of the Judenrat form a part of the discussion of the first appendix in Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 584–585. Helpful, too, is the Świsłocz entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 460–465.

Archival documentation on the fate of the Świsłocz Jewish community in World War II, under the German occupation, includes AŻIH (211 [e.g., old numeration 6-7] and 301/5388); GARF (7021-86-46, pp. 24–30); IPN (i.e., SOB 4 and SWB 83); USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M); YIVO (RG-336); and YVA (e.g., M-11/5).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 1608, testimony of Emmanuel Goldberg.
2. Bykowski to Ruthberg, August 4, 1944, in English trans. on the Svisloch ShtetLinks page, at jewishgen.org.
3. Tadeusz Krahel, *Doświadczeni zniewoleniem: Duchowni archidiecezji wileńskiej represjonowani w latach okupacji sowieckiej (1939–1945)* (Białystok: Polskie Towarzystwo Historyczne, Oddział w Białymstoku, 2005), pp. 45–46, 209.
4. Compare AŻIH, 210/6-7, as cited by Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): tab. 8; with GARF, 7021-86-46, p. 5; and AŻIH, 301/5388, testimony of Szyja Rakowicki, pp. 1–2, noting 3,000 executed.
5. AŻIH, 301/5388, p. 3.
6. BLH, testimony of Leib Aronzon, in an English trans. on the Jałówka homepage of the www.avotaynu.com Web site.
7. Einhorn, *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh*, pp. 914–923.
8. Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 162–163.

SZCZUCZYN (BIAŁOSTOCKI)

Pre-1939: Szczuczyn (Yiddish: Shutsutshin), town, powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Shchuchin, Graevo raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Schtschutshin, Kreis Grajewo, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Szczuczyn, Grajewo powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Szczuczyn lies on the Wissa River 75 kilometers (47 miles) northwest of Białystok and 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) southwest of Grajewo. Its 1939 population of 5,300 included 3,000 Jews.

Shortly after occupying Szczuczyn on September 8, 1939, the Germans deported 250 to 300 Jewish men to a labor camp

in the Reich. Released in January 1940, almost four months after Szczuczyn came under Soviet occupation on September 27, 1939, the conscripts almost all perished at the border when German soldiers fired on them as they stepped off the train. About 30 returned to Szczuczyn.

On June 22, 1941, the Germans bombarded Szczuczyn, setting it afire and killing many people including a large number of Jews.¹ A Wehrmacht unit appeared briefly, on June 23. German authorities appointed a local blacksmith, Stanisław Peniuk, mayor. Kosmowski, a pre-war Szczuczyn postal worker, from Świdry-Awissa village, was named commander of an auxiliary police force.² An ongoing Polish Institute for National Memory (IPN) investigation has documented that from October 1940, Mieczysław Kosmowski (one of three brothers from the village, who may or may not have been the Kosmowski mentioned above) was a paid agent of the Security Police in Allenstein. He arrived with German forces, most likely to incite local Poles to anti-Jewish violence.³

On June 27–28, 1941, Kosmowski, his two brothers, and Peniuk organized a pogrom in which about 200 Poles plundered the houses of the richest Jewish families and brutally murdered 300 to 400 Jews.⁴ The local priest and Polish intellectuals refused to intervene in the violence. The arrival the next evening of 30 Wehrmacht soldiers enabled Jewish women to pay the unit commander soap and coffee to patrol Szczuczyn to end the collaborators’ attacks.

The Szczuczyn auxiliary police made forced labor obligatory for all adult Jews. Each household was required to send one to three laborers daily to the town square to tear out grass between its cobblestones. Policemen Wincenty Rung and Antoni Gardocki used canes and clubs to bludgeon the laborers.⁵

On Monday, July 14 or 28, 1941, Polish officials, acting on the command of an SS officer, mobilized almost every adult male Pole from the Szczuczyn area to participate in anti-Jewish violence.⁶ Polish youth, armed with clubs, drove the approximately 2,500 Jews outside Szczuczyn to the Jewish cemetery. As a Polish guard, led by Gardocki, held the Jews captive, other Poles joined the SS to plunder their houses and to set fire to the new Bet Midrash on Nowy Świat and Wąsosz Streets. The fire engulfed many Jewish homes. That evening, all but 100 men were released. The captives likely were held hostage pending receipt of a payment demanded by the Germans; 3 additional men were freed; the Polish police murdered 97 others.⁷

The Szczuczyn ghetto was established the following Friday, either July 18 or August 1, 1941. That day, after the Jews had been assembled at the market square, a small SS contingent arrived to give the local police instructions. Similarities between events surrounding the establishment of the ghettos in Szczuczyn and Augustów suggest the Germans were from an operational unit of the Tilsit State Police or from its subordinate, the Sudauen (in Polish, Suwałki) border command. Four auxiliary policemen rode on bicycles to nearby villages to order Jews there to Szczuczyn. They killed a Jewish farmer in Lipnik (Szczuczyn gmina and powiat) for refusing to accompany them.⁸ Other policemen searched houses in Szczuczyn

and extricated Jews from hiding places, beating them severely. At the square, still other policemen ordered almost all the men and working-aged single women incarcerated in various outbuildings on the Biblowicz property. A large group of local Poles brought rolls of barbed wire and began constructing a fence for the ghetto.⁹ Upon its completion that evening, the Polish police marched the women and children at the square through the Biblowicz courtyard, into the ghetto.

The ghetto was located on Krzywa Street, near the Biblowicz home. It included a handful of Jewish houses, from the Lopian to the Orniasz family homes. Because its area encompassed several fields east of the Biblowicz property, abutting the Wissa River, it spanned an area of 20,000 square meters (almost 5 acres).

Almost all the men, about 600 people, remained imprisoned, guarded by local police and German soldiers. They were brought in small groups to the Jewish cemetery over the course of the next six days and executed by the Germans. The Jewish patients of the public hospital and 4 women captives also were among the murdered.¹⁰ Late that same week, about 40 to 80 female prisoners and some conscripts from the Szczuczyn ghetto were murdered by local Poles. In the most well-documented killing, about 20 Jewish women sent for agricultural labor to an estate in Bzury were brought to the Bećkowo (Boczkowski) Forest by six Polish policemen and civilians, including Stanisław Zalewski. The men raped the women before bludgeoning them to death. The murders likely did not have German authorization.¹¹

About 100 male craftsmen and young teenagers were released to the Szczuczyn ghetto. Another 10 to 15 were spared from execution to form a 6-member Jewish Council (Judenrat) or to serve in its institutions. Jona Lewinowicz was appointed council chair. A 4-member Jewish police force included Izrael Goldfarb and Michał Kruszniański. Two physicians, Wertman and Gertz, oversaw a 2-person sanitation force and directed the local hospital. The anti-Jewish violence makes it difficult to ascertain the number of people confined to the ghetto. Survivors suggest the figure of 2,000, listed on the Polish Ankiety Sądów Grodzkich (ASG) documentation, overestimates the population by 1,400.¹² Survivor Basia Kacper notes that only 500 women and children resided in the ghetto, bringing its total population to around 600.

The local police continued to supervise the ghetto after a German civilian administration was established in Szczuczyn in late August. The new German authorities named Rung the “ghetto commander.” He and Dominik Gaszewski, another policeman, roused the inmates from their homes between 3:00 A.M. and 4:00 A.M. to form forced labor brigades. The conscripts, mostly 14- and 15-year-old boys, cleaned out and then razed the remains of the burned-out houses and dug antitank ditches in Niećkowo.

On Mondays and Thursdays, the Judenrat raised “contributions” for the German mayor, the Gendarmes, and the Polish police. To secure them, they ordered the Jewish Police to confiscate leather, cloth, silks, and other goods from ghetto inmates.

Conditions in the Szczuczyn ghetto were poor. About 25 to 50 people lived in a single apartment. Wood and peat were unobtainable to heat homes. Food was scarce. The two cows assigned to its residents did not produce enough milk for the children. Typhus and dysentery epidemics killed a quarter of its residents, particularly children. The mostly women inmates initially squabbled but ultimately banded together. They cut a hole in the ghetto fence, near the Wissa River, to sneak out at night to secure milk from local Poles and to remove wood from their former homes to use for heating fuel.¹³

The Szczuczyn ghetto was liquidated on November 2, 1942. Its residents were driven to a transit camp located 4.8 kilometers (about 3 miles) north of Grajewo, in Bogusze village, near the railway station in East Prussia, at Prostken. Several families who had evaded the deportation were rounded up, brought to Bogusze, and executed in front of the Szczuczyn Jews. On December 15, the SS deported 2,500 to 5,000 inmates of the Bogusze transit camp to the Treblinka extermination camp. The remaining inmates were sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp on a transport that arrived there on January 7. Because the documentation from Auschwitz does not show a single person from Szczuczyn as being held back as a concentration camp prisoner, the community likely was among those sent to Treblinka and gassed on arrival.

Less than 10 Szczuczyn Jews survived the war. Most did so by fleeing to the Białystok ghetto. Basia Kacper, an exception, was sheltered by a Christian in Grajewo. Also counted among the survivors is Sonia Denemark, who left Białystok on June 22, 1941, with a group of 50 Jewish strangers and walked for five months before finding refuge in Kislovodsk, Russia.¹⁴

At least 16 Poles were investigated after the war for a large number of war crimes, including murdering Jews in the summer of 1941. Of these, 14, including Peniuk, Rung, Gaszewski, and Zalewski, were prosecuted at six trials between 1946 and 1951.¹⁵ Zalewski, the only person found guilty, was sentenced to death.¹⁶

SOURCES Some of the archival materials listed below and other relevant documentation can be found in Polish translations in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KSzpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 340–342 (AŻIH, 301/1958), pp. 263–316 (excerpts, YVA below), and pp. 164–165 (221 Security Division Report). The Golding-Sojka letter, a part of the larger USHMM, RG-02.002*22, collection cited below, differs substantially from another letter by the same author, in George Garin, Hayman Blum, and Sol Fischbein, eds., *Grajewo Memorial Book* (New York: United Grayever Relief Committee, 1950), pp. 218–231. Though not directly touching on the ghetto, also important are the testimonies found in the Szczuczyn yizkor book *Hurban kehillat Shetsotsin* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Shetsotsin Ye-Kupat gemilut hasadim a. sh. kedoshe Shtsotshin be-Yisrael, 1954).

Szymon Datner relied on the below-cited AŻIH testimony of Basia Kacper to date the establishment of the Szczuczyn ghetto to July 20, 1941, and to name it the earliest ghetto created in Distrikt Białystok, in “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 13. Andrzej Żbikowski, in “Pogromy i mordy ludności

żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 172–180, imbues the Kacper testimony with additional weight in citing several depositions, including by eye-witness Józef Mroczkowski, from the below-mentioned IPN, SWB 53, in which the dates are nearly identical to Kacper’s. However, historians in Israel depend more on the Golding-Sojka testimony; as a result, their works note the Szczuczyn ghetto was established in early August, including in the Szczuczyn entries in Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its District* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 445–448; and its English-language counterpart, Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 206–212. The August date falls more within the chronological parameters for other ghettos established in Kreis Grajewo, all of which appear to have been ordered created over a two-week period by members of a German operational unit that traveled from locality to locality.

English translations of the Kacper testimony and the Golding-Sojka letter, both from the Grajewo yizkor book, the Szczuczyn yizkor book, and the *Pinkas ha-kehillot* entry, have been made available by José Gutstein, at the Jews of Szczuczyn memorial Web site, www.szczuczyn.com/index.htm.

Archival documentation about the destruction of the Szczuczyn Jewish community includes AŻIH (e.g., 301/1958); IPN (e.g., ASG, SAB 134-35, SOE 22 [26, 84, 115], and SWB [53, 167]); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1 [1030, 1034, 1516]); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.002*22, RG-15.019M [IPN], 2/247, 46/120); and YVA (e.g., 03/3033-2636/255).

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NOTES

1. YVA, O-3/3033-2636/255, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:277–278.
2. IPN, SOE 84, M. Zyskowski deposition, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 174.
3. “Kosmowski pseudonim ‘Gienek,’” *Nasz Dziennik*, July 13, 2009.
4. BA-MA, RH 26-211/84, p. 1; and IPN, SOE 84, SWB 167, 53.
5. USHMM, RG-02.002*22, Golding-Sojka to Szymon [Kayman], August 30–31, 1945, p. 4.
6. IPN, SOE 84, 115, SAB 135, and SWB 53, particularly in the latter, the J. Zyskowski and J. Mroczkowski depositions, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” pp. 174–177.
7. High figure in USHMM, RG-02.002*22, pp. 4–5; and low figure and ransom in IPN, SAB 135, S. Bubrowski and J. Marcinkiewicz depositions, cited by Żbikowski, “Pogromy,” p. 177.
8. IPN, SAB 135.
9. USHMM, RG-02.002*22, p. 6.
10. Ibid., RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/247, pp. 1–2.
11. IPN, SAB 134.
12. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46 /120, pp. 1–2.
13. Ibid., RG-02.002*22, pp. 7–9.
14. VHF, # 34379, testimony of Sonia Denemark-Kaufman.

15. IPN, SAB 135, SOE 26, 84, 115, SWB 53, 167.

16. Ibid., SAB 134.

TRZCIANNE

Pre-1939: Trzciannie (Yiddish: Trestiny), village, Białystok powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Trostiany, Mon’ki raion, Belostok oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Trzciannie, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Mońki powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Trzciannie lies 40 kilometers (35 miles) northwest of Białystok and almost 21 kilometers (13 miles) west-northwest of Knyszyn. Its 1921 Jewish population stood at 1,401, about 90 percent of the total population.

The Germans occupied Trzciannie on September 14, 1939, but soon evacuated it to make way for Soviet forces. As a Jewish delegation prepared to greet the Red Army, a Polish *ublan* (cavalry) detachment still engaged in military operations arrived outside of Trzciannie. The soldiers charged the delegation, headed by the rabbi, destroyed an arch erected to welcome the Soviet military, and then rode into Trzciannie to smash the windows on several Jewish stores. A unit commander threatened to burn Trzciannie to the ground and to murder the Jews to revenge uprisings against Polish authority in Grodno and Skidel. The violence and threats claimed the first Jewish war victim in Trzciannie, when the rabbi’s daughter died of a heart attack.

About a week after Germany invaded the USSR, a small German SS unit appeared in Trzciannie, most likely on June 28, 1941. According to a Jewish survivor, after Malecki, the local priest, informed its commander that Jews comprised the majority of the residents, he ordered his men to set Trzciannie on fire. Another survivor recalls that the commander issued the order because local Poles had denounced all of the Jews as Communists.¹ One historian believes the German unit may have been a part of Einsatzkommando 8. However, similar arsons in several localities in Distrikt Białystok, including in Dąbrowa Białostocka, Kuźnica Białostocka, and Sidra, may indicate that a small German operational group was tasked with burning down settlements with overwhelmingly Jewish populations.

The Germans enlisted the help of the Polish members of a civil guard, established by a local Polish schoolteacher after the Soviet evacuation, to chase Jews escaping the fire to the neighboring village of Zubole, about 1.25 kilometers (0.8 mile) west of Trzciannie. There, the Germans beat some of the young adults, forced them to dig their own graves, and buried them alive. The remaining Jews were held captive in a pit, near the mill. The Polish guard searched for and brought there Jews who had found refuge in several nearby villages, including Zucielec, about 1.2 kilometers (0.75 miles) northeast of Trzciannie.

The German unit, which departed Trzciannie either late in the evening or early the next day, left behind one person, described in most Jewish accounts as a 19-year-old soldier and in

non-Jewish accounts as a 30-year-old SS officer.² Over the course of the next eight days, the German, assisted by the Polish guard members and other local collaborators, held the Jews captive, first at the pit and later at a barn, depriving them of food and water. The guard members forced some captives to “clean up” after the fire by dragging large boulders through Trzcianne under the force of heavy blows. Some died from the beatings. Another 500 to 800 prisoners were executed in small groups.³ Fiszal Kuszner and Meir Markowicz hold the young German solely responsible for the executions; another Jewish eyewitness notes the Polish collaborators shot a large number of the victims.⁴ In depositions taken during the postwar criminal investigation of some of the Polish collaborators, Christian eyewitnesses claimed the German soldier permitted the accused to shoot a small number of victims.

After the Jews were released, the Polish collaborators continued to organize nightly raids to attack and, in some instances, murder the surviving Jews.⁵ Exposed to nightly terror, most survivors fled to Knyszyn, Tykocin, or Suchowola or found refuge with sympathetic local Poles.

With the establishment of a Gendarmerie post in the early autumn of 1941, the Germans ordered all Jews back to Trzcianne and commanded them to reside in the few Jewish houses that the SS had left standing to establish a firebreak to protect the small Christian neighborhood. The houses in the open ghetto were barely habitable because Poles had looted and destroyed them while the Jews were being held prisoner and killed. At least one house had its front doors and windows pried off.

Although the ghetto was not enclosed with a fence, Jews were prohibited, under threat of death, from leaving Trzcianne. The Gendarmes assumed ultimate responsibility for enforcing the prohibitions on Jewish movement. Several Jews did risk leaving Trzcianne to search for family in other ghettos or to ask local Christians for milk or bread. They dressed as Polish peasants and traveled at night. Gendarmes shot at least one Jew found outside Trzcianne.⁶ Little is known of the forced labor obligations of the Jews. A young survivor notes only that they worked for the Germans.⁷

Because of the executions and mass flight of Jews from Trzcianne, it is difficult to estimate its Jewish population. Historians have suggested that 1,200 Jews resided there after June 1941. However, the estimate seems high in light of a survivor’s testimony, which notes that in October 1942 about 15 people lived in each of the handful of houses designated for Jews, making it more likely that the Trzcianne Jewish population stood at 150 to 200.⁸

On November 2, 1942, the Germans deported the Trzcianne Jews to a transit camp located in Bogusze, a war-devastated village located 4.8 kilometers (about 3 miles) north of Grajewo, near the railway station of Prostken, East Prussia. Forewarned by local Poles about the expulsion order, many Jews fled to prearranged hiding places. One eyewitness notes the Germans transported just 85 Trzcianne Jews to the transit camp.⁹

The Trzcianne Jews lived at the Bogusze transit camp for 3 to 10 weeks with about 5,000 to 9,000 Jews from other nearby localities. The Germans expelled the Jews from the camp in two separate deportations. In the first, on December 16, 1942, 3,000 to 5,000 camp inmates were removed to the Prostken railway station and most likely sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. (Accounts of the expulsion vary. One Trzcianne survivor recalls the SS executing the Jews outside of Bogusze after the train failed to arrive as scheduled.¹⁰ Another account, in the Grajewo yizkor book, maintains the SS murdered about 200 people on the way to Prostken.) In the second and final deportation, on January 3, 1943, the Germans sent the remaining 2,000 Bogusze inmates to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Upon arrival on January 7, at midnight, 1,489 of the passengers were gassed. Another 511—296 men and 215 women—became concentration camp inmates. Of the 5 women from Trzcianne taken prisoner at Auschwitz, Eva Kostre is believed to be the only one to have survived the war.

Less is known about the fates of the Jews hidden in bunkers around Trzcianne. Survivors from this second group include the family of Efraim and Rachela Rzotkiewicz (or Zutkovitz) and 6 of the 12 members of the Markowicz family (3 members of the Markowicz family died from illnesses in June 1944 in a bunker on the property of their Polish aid-givers; another 3 perished from illness two weeks after the Red Army liberated Trzcianne on August 12, 1944). The approximately 25 Trzcianne survivors emigrated from Poland, settling mainly in the United States and Israel.

After the war, nine Poles from in and around Trzcianne were tried at three trials, including for extricating Jews from hiding places in Zucielec and Zabule on June 28, 1941, driving them to the execution site, and murdering them. In 1950, five former civil guardsmen were found not guilty.¹¹ At the two trials, in 1967, of the remaining men, the former auxiliary policeman Bronisław Michniewicz (or Jan Cyrylewicz) was found guilty of murdering at least 12 people from Trzcianne during the war, including 7 Jews, some of whom he had extricated from hiding places after the liquidation of the ghetto. He was sentenced to death.¹²

SOURCES Several of the AŻIH testimonies cited below have appeared in Mariusz Nowik, *Zagłada Żydów na ziemi łomżyńskiej* (Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy Bellona, 2004), pp. 6–7 (301/1264, excerpted Polish trans.); and in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 342–344 (301/150) and p. 345 (301/983), with the second publication including several testimonies invaluable to tracking the flight of Trzcianne survivors after the mass execution, including to Knyszyn, pp. 238–239 (301/3959), and Tykocin, p. 349 (301/1971). Information for Suchowola can be found in the below-cited VHF, # 43626. The testimony of Czesław Borowski, describing the attack on the Trzcianne Jewish community in September 1939, is quoted extensively by Tomasz Strzembosz, “Przemilczana kolaboracja,”

Rzeczpospolita, January 27–28, 2001, available in an English translation in, among others, “Collaboration Passed over in Silence,” in Antony Polonsky and Joanna B. Michlic, eds., *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 233–234. As the title suggests, Strzembosz uses the example conversely. An online testimony by Pole Mieczysław Kirejczyk, recalling the executions and the subsequent German orders for the Jews to return to Trzcianne, is best searched by its title, “Wyszowate—mały fragment do wielkiej historii” (see www.historia.wyszowaty.pl).

Violence in July 1941 and the postwar trials for Trzcianne are discussed in Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Machcewicz and Persak *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1, *Studia*, pp. 211–212. Żbikowski suggests the German perpetrators may have been members of Einsatzkommando 8, in chapter 5 of *U genezy Jedwabnego. Żydzi na kresach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej, wrzesień 1939–lipiec 1941* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2006), based on a trial of a unit member, mentioned by Ralf Ogorreck, *Die Einsatzgruppen und die “Genesis der Endlösung”* (Berlin: Metropol, 1996), p. 121 fn. 51, accused of participating in the execution of around 50 Jewish men in some locality along the unit’s march, between the 1941 German-Soviet border and Białystok. Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): tab. 2, remains important for its statistical and demographic information.

Documentation on the fate of the Trzcianne Jewish community under German occupation during World War II can be found in AŻIH (e.g., 301/150, 301/983, 301/1264, 301/2124); IPN (e.g., SAB 166, SWB 268-270a); IPN-Bi (1/1209 [Ko-266/88], 65/1720 [K-48/58], 258/4 [II Ds. 57/67], S [22/67, 36/72]); USHMM (e.g., RG-15.019M); VHF (e.g., # 43624); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Compare AŻIH, 301/150, testimony of Fiszel Kuszner, p. 1; and VHF, # 43624, testimony of Eva Kostre (Gielczyńska).

2. AŻIH, 301/150, pp. 1–2.

3. With 500 victims listed at USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/ 92, pp. 1–2; and a “handful” of survivors, all escapees, in AŻIH, 301/2124, testimony of Fania Lipińska, pp. 1–7.

4. Compare AŻIH, 301/150, p. 1, and 301/983, testimony of Meir Markowicz, p. 1; with VHF, # 43624.

5. VHF, # 43624; and AŻIH, 301/1264, testimony of Gołda Żutkiewicz, pp. 1–8, in Nowik, *Zagłada Żydów*, p. 61.

6. VHF, # 43624.

7. AŻIH, 301/983, p. 1.

8. VHF, # 43624.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. See IPN, SAB 166, SOB 328, and SWB 102.

12. See *ibid.*, SWB 268-270a; and IPN-Bi, 65/1720.

WASILKÓW

Pre-1939: Wasilków, town, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Vasil'kov, Belostok raion and oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wasilkow, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Wasilków, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Wasilków is located 8 kilometers (5 miles) northwest of Białystok in Poland. In 1921, the Jewish population was 950. The Jews resided mostly around the market area in the northern part of the town and along Białystok Street. In September 1939, the Jewish population was probably around 950 people out of a total population of some 5,000.

On September 1, 1939, Wasilków witnessed the massive flight of civilians along Białystok Street ahead of the advancing German forces. Amid the uncertainty of the first days of war, including massive looting of abandoned military warehouses, the Polish army unit in the town encouraged local residents to resist the Germans with homemade bombs. These plans came to nothing as the Polish forces hastily fled once the Germans approached. In the ensuing brief interregnum, a committee representing both Polish and Jewish residents maintained order, wearing white armbands to demonstrate their neutrality. Soon after entering Wasilków, German security forces locked up a number of Jews in the Russian Orthodox Church, with no food or water. Rabbi Israel Halperin’s petition for their release was rejected, but the Russian Orthodox priest, who objected to their being held in a place of worship, successfully obtained their release. After five days of looting by the Wehrmacht, not only of private homes and businesses but also of the town’s textile factories, the Germans departed, leaving the town in Soviet hands.¹

When the Soviets established control over eastern Poland, Wasilków was rapidly “Sovietized,” involving the nationalization of all private enterprises and the establishment of co-operatives in place of small craft shops. Soviet party officials from Minsk exerted heavy-handed control, persecuting class enemies (i.e., nationalists, officers, wealthy entrepreneurs, and their families) and deporting them into the heartland territories of the Soviet Union. The impact of the Soviet occupation on the Jewish population of Wasilków was ambiguous: on the one hand, many Jews suffered from the policy of economic nationalization alongside the Poles. On the other hand, the Soviets were successful, if not in eliminating antisemitism altogether then at least in making it less publicly visible.

Following the news of the German invasion on June 22, 1941, Wasilków witnessed another mass evacuation, this time by the Soviet army, which fled to the east along with many civilian refugees from the border areas. The Germans entered Wasilków on June 27, 1941, and the attacks on Jews commenced shortly afterwards. The German administration recruited local Polish residents into an auxiliary police force. As the Wehrmacht moved eastward with the offensive, only a small German garrison stayed behind, consisting, according to one testimony, of only six elderly Germans.² As the Germans relaxed their grip on the town, if only temporarily, the local mob felt emboldened

to launch a series of pogroms against the Jews, plundering houses and attacking their owners, leaving many killed and wounded behind (17 dead on the night of the first pogrom alone).³ Witnesses recall a certain Feliks Zawadski who led the gang that terrorized Jewish homes around Yakimer Street.⁴ During another less spontaneous and better organized attack, the crowd gathered after Sunday Mass and was fired up by a young priest who shouted, “Death to the Christ killers!”⁵ Poles armed with sticks and clubs studded with nails chased Jews out of their houses along Białystocka Street and down to the bridge over the Supraśl River, in which they wanted to drown all the Jews. On this occasion the Jews were saved by the intervention of the Germans, who chased the crowd away, sensing that the anarchy of a pogrom would undermine their authority. The entire event was filmed for propaganda purposes to record how “orderly Germans stopped the barbaric and violent Poles.”

Sources differ on when the ghetto was set up and whether it was enclosed by a fence. According to the historian Przemysław Czyżewski, the Germans established a ghetto in Wasilków in August 1941 between Rynek, Białostok, and Wojtachowska Streets. It was surrounded by a wooden fence with barbed wire. It held up to 1,200 Jews, not only from Wasilków but also from Czarna Wieś Kościelna, Choroszcz, Łomża, and Warsaw.⁶ *The Wasilkower Memorial Book*, however, dates the creation of the ghetto about six months into the German occupation. The Jews were concentrated into 38 houses in the area adjacent to the synagogues, and some had to live in the main synagogue itself due to the overcrowding. A typical Jewish home in the ghetto, consisting of only one or two rooms and a kitchen, had to house between 20 and 40 people. Jews had to wear yellow stars or patches, but some did so only on leaving the ghetto for work or to do business in town. The ghetto was administered internally by Pesach Abramov and David Weiss. At the beginning, the Germans permitted the Jews to leave the ghetto to buy or barter food from Polish peasants; later it was forbidden. The situation was particularly grim for the older and poorer inhabitants of the ghetto, who had no valuables they could exchange for food, but Abramov tried to ensure that they still received something.⁷

Under the supervision of the Polish police, the residents of the ghetto were made to perform forced labor in the peat bogs and at the local stone quarry; they also worked on repairing roads, loading timber in the shunting yards, and loading trains with other plundered goods for the Germans. Random terror was practiced, with some Jews killed at the whim of the police chief or even by local residents. Jews who escaped from the ghetto either before or during its liquidation encountered difficulties surviving in the surrounding countryside. In addition to German searches and denunciations by local peasants, most groups of the Polish Home Army (AK) operating in the region did not allow them to join, chasing them away or even killing them.

The SS carried out a large massacre of the Jews before the liquidation of the ghetto, assisted by the local police. One night they brought a group of Jews, randomly assembled from

various places, to the yard of Trillings Textile Factory and killed them all. Several dozen other people (including two local Poles) were murdered elsewhere in town. According to official postwar Polish statistics, the number of people murdered was at least 39, including 15 children.⁸

On the eve of November 2, 1942, German security forces surrounded the ghetto. Abramov announced to the Jews that they would be transferred to a labor camp and that they could take only their most essential belongings with them. Although Abramov himself was offered the possibility of avoiding deportation, he refused, choosing to share the fate of his community. The next morning more than 1,000 inmates of the ghetto were loaded onto peasant horse carts and taken first to a transit camp some 10 kilometers (6 miles) away, near the city of Białystok. Almost all the ghettos of the surrounding area were cleared simultaneously at this time. The Wasilków ghetto inmates were transferred to the military barracks of the Polish 10th Cavalry Regiment. With no food supplies and in appalling hygienic conditions, the Jews had to spend from 7 to 15 days waiting for the train transport that would take them to the Treblinka extermination camp. Many died of starvation and exposure in the transit camp. The Wasilkower Jews were sent off to the extermination camp at Treblinka on November 19, 1942, and were all gassed on their arrival.⁹ Of the entire Jewish community of Wasilków, only a few people survived the Holocaust.

Several men were tried after the war by Polish courts for crimes committed in and around Wasilków during the Nazi occupation, including participation in the arrest and murder of Jews.¹⁰

SOURCES The two main published sources on the fate of the Jews of Wasilków during the Holocaust are Leon Mendelewicz, *The Wasilkower Memorial Book: Memories of Our Town Wasilkow, Which Has Been Annihilated by the Nazis*, trans. Mark Langsam and Bene Gothajner (Melbourne, 1990); and Michel Mielnicki, *Białystok to Birkenau: The Holocaust Journey of Michel Mielnicki*, ed. John Munro (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2000).

Archival documentation can be found in the following locations: AŻIH (301/1266); IPN (SAB 177, SOB 337); IPN-Bi (e.g., S-506/71, Ds 83/68, S-84/68); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Mendelewicz, *The Wasilkower Memorial Book*, pp. 90–92.
2. AŻIH, 301/1266, testimony of Mendel (Michel) Mielnicki, November 9, 1945; Mendelewicz, *The Wasilkower Memorial Book*, pp. 108–114.
3. Mielnicki, *Białystok to Birkenau*, p. 103.
4. Mendelewicz, *The Wasilkower Memorial Book*, p. 99.
5. Mielnicki, *Białystok to Birkenau*, p. 104.
6. See http://wasilkow.polska.pl/miastodawniej/article_Podczas_II_wojny_swiatowej,id,307808.htm.
7. Mendelewicz, *The Wasilkower Memorial Book*, pp. 97–100.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
9. *The Wasilkower Memorial Book* claims that the Jews spent a week in the military camp, while according to the date of deportation to Treblinka mentioned in other sources, the

stay in the camp was probably longer. Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 396, gives the figure of 1,180 Jews from Wasilków deported to Treblinka from the Białystok transit camp between November 10 and December 15, 1942.

10. See, for example, IPN, SAB 177, SOB 337; and IPN-Bi, Ds 83/68.

WOŁKOWYSK

Pre-1939: Wołkowysk (Yiddish: Volkovisk), town and powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Volkovysk, raion center, Grodno oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wołkowysk, Kreis Wołkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Vaukavysk, Vaukavysk raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wołkowysk lies 94 kilometers (58.4 miles) east of Białystok. In January 1939, its population of 17,254 included 8,627 Roman Catholics, 6,901 Jews, 1,208 Russian Orthodox followers, and 518 of other faiths. During World War II, after the area came under Soviet occupation on September 20, about 3,000 Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland settled there. Prior to Germany's invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, 9,000 to 10,000 Jews lived in Wołkowysk.

Between June 23 and 27, 1941, Luftwaffe bombardment destroyed 75 percent of Wołkowysk, including almost all of its central and southern Jewish neighborhoods. About 1,000 to 1,500 people, mostly Jews, were killed. Several hundred Jews fled elsewhere, including to Grodno, Konstantynowo, Łysków, Różana, and Świsłocz, in Distrikt Białystok; and to Lida, Słonim, and Zdzięcioł, in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

After occupying Wołkowysk on June 28, 1941, Wehrmacht soldiers robbed and humiliated Jews. Provocations by local Poles led the SS, likely members of Einsatzkommando 8, a detachment of Einsatzgruppe B, to execute, on July 3, several dozen Jews for communism. In mid-July, another SS unit executed about 200 Jews, mostly from the professional and business elite and the physically and mentally handicapped.¹

The German military administration issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on leaving Wołkowysk and mandates to wear yellow patches on the chest and back. In early July, an SS commander, likely the head of the Einsatzkommando 8 detachment, appointed Icchak Weinberg, the public hospital medical director, chair of a 12-person Jewish Council (Judenrat). Noach Fuchs was the vice chair. Weinberg's closest council associate was pediatrician Jakub Siedlicki. A Jewish police force was established. Its first commander was Kantow (Kantof). Galatz (or Glat), a Soviet-era refugee from pre-war southern Poland, succeeded him.

From July 1941, refugees fleeing anti-Jewish violence in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien arrived in Wołkowysk, including from Kosów Poleski, Słonim, and Dereczyn. Their numbers were significant enough for the Judenrat to establish

a committee to assist them. They brought the Jewish population to around 7,000.

Whether a ghetto was established in Wołkowysk remains debated. The majority of survivors note the city's physical destruction made it impossible for the Germans to concentrate the Jews into a ghetto or to establish a single Jewish quarter. However, another survivor mentions that the war devastation resulted in a ghetto emerging "naturally," as thousands of homeless Jews moved in with those whose residences remained intact.²

Upon arriving in Wołkowysk in the fall of 1941, German civil authorities formalized the concentration of the Jews into an open ghetto. Labor officials ordered brigades of Jewish labor conscripts to raze war-devastated Jewish dwellings. Women scraped salvaged bricks of mortar. German municipal officials confiscated the building materials, auctioning some of them to local Christians. It is unknown if the confiscations resulted from a separate decree or were a part of another group of decrees issued by Wołkowysk Kreiskommissar Landrat Pfeifer in the early spring of 1942 that expropriated all Jewish-owned land and structures.³

The expropriations combined with orders forbidding Jews from living in houses owned by Christians or together with Christians maintained the Jewish community's concentration on a few streets in three areas of Wołkowysk. In town, the Jews lived mostly along the northern part of Nowa Street, the location also of the Judenrat headquarters, and on the less-devastated part of Tatarska and Chołodowski Streets. In the southern Za Mostem neighborhood, they were concentrated on Kolejowa Street. The less-destroyed eastern Karczyzna district, a pre-war Jewish neighborhood, was the third residential area. Because of the housing shortage, a Judenrat committee assigned living space, with 5 to 10 families crowded into each residence. The German administration required the Jews to install yellow signs above the doors of their houses.⁴

Questions about the existence of a ghetto nonetheless remain because survivors disagree over the degree of compulsion used to bind the Jewish community to Wołkowysk. Refugees from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, in particular, note that because Wołkowysk belonged to Distrikt Białystok, which the Germans treated as a part of the Reich, municipal authorities did not impose the death penalty on Jews found violating German decrees; instead, they issued monetary fines, corporal punishment, and short-term prison sentences. The wide-scale corruption of local officials, including Winter, the German mayor, and the auxiliary police, also established formal bribery channels, giving refugees the impression that the Wołkowysk community enjoyed greater freedoms, including occasional travel to Białystok, than its members officially were permitted.⁵

However, survivors in Wołkowysk from the outset of the German occupation describe the auxiliary police daily patrolling the streets of Jewish neighborhoods and raiding houses to conduct searches for violations of the anti-Jewish decrees. They note that Jews found illegally outside Wołkowysk or failing to report for work were subject to the death penalty

and mention that the commander of the Gendarmerie routinely resolved the problem of prison overcrowding by ordering its Jewish inmates executed.⁶

The Wołkowysk Jews were conscripted by the German municipal administration and the Wehrmacht, including the German Red Cross (DRK), for demolition and construction projects. In the spring of 1942, hundreds of Jewish conscripts began construction of a DRK rest-and-relaxation facility for Wehrmacht soldiers in Pietraszowce, just southwest of Wołkowysk. So great was the demand for Jewish labor that a group of 200 to 360 women conscripts were brought from the Białystok ghetto in September 1942 to harvest potatoes to permit Jewish construction crews to continue working uninterrupted. Because the Germans only sometimes compensated forced labor, the Jews illicitly bartered coins and jewelry to secure the sustenance to survive.⁷ Some Jews, including Zvi Roitman and Weinberg, the Judenrat chair, established contact with a group of Soviet partisans, respectively, repairing a radio and treating a wounded partisan.

In the late summer of 1942, the SS arrested all 15 of Wołkowysk's physicians, dentists, pharmacists, radio technicians, and an engineer on suspicion of aiding the partisans. Under pressure from German employers deprived of skilled workers and a Christian populace without dental care, the SS released the 3 radio technicians and 2 women dentists.⁸ After the Jewish community paid a bribe, the SS commander agreed to free the remaining prisoners but executed them instead on October 14, 1942. Physicians and engineers from the Białystok ghetto were ordered to Wołkowysk to fill the positions of those executed.

The Germans liquidated the Wołkowysk ghetto on November 2, 1942. Fuchs, the new Judenrat chair, walked through the downtown Jewish quarter, ordering its residents to assemble by noon outside the pre-war cavalry garrison. An SS commander explained that a closed ghetto was to be established there for the Wołkowysk Jews.⁹ Some people resisted the expulsion orders. At least 7 were shot dead for breaking through the cordon of guards; another 16 subsequently discovered hiding in bunkers met the same fate, as did a group of elderly too feeble to walk to the garrison.

In reality, the ghetto was a transit camp in which the SS concentrated all the approximately 20,000 Jews of Kreis Wolkowysk to facilitate their deportation to the Treblinka death camp. For the first three weeks, the Wołkowysk Jews lived in the same deplorable conditions as the other inmates, on starvation rations, crowded into underground bunkers, subjected to the strict orders of the camp commander, Lieutenant Tsirka (or Zirka), and his men. At least 300 of the thousands of Wołkowysk inmates who contracted typhus from the unsanitary conditions died. Communal leader Shlomo Gallin was badly beaten and then executed by Tsirka for purchasing gasoline from a Christian acquaintance to light a fire in the communal kitchen.

However, pressure exerted for the return to work of 2,000 inmates from Wołkowysk and another 300 from Świsłocz led the SS to exclude the two communities from the initial de-

portations to Treblinka, between November 29 and December 10, 1942. Appeals and bribes by Fuchs to German labor officials at the DRK facility to establish a closed ghetto for the remaining Jews were partly successful. On December 20, Wehrmacht officials announced they would transform a part of the transit camp into a closed ghetto for 1,700 to 2,000 Jews, under 50 years of age. They further limited residence in the ghetto to specific categories of "essential" male workers whose labor was required to complete unfinished construction projects. These included Wehrmacht and DRK employees, certain municipal workers, those with professions and trades underrepresented in the Christian population, and 250 Świsłocz railway laborers. The Judenrat negotiated successfully to include 100 women within the quota.¹⁰ Those assigned to the remnant ghetto were ordered to reside in a separate block fenced off from the rest of the camp.

The remaining Wołkowysk Jews, approximately 4,600 to 5,250 people, including almost all of the community's women and children (a handful of the latter were smuggled into the ghetto), were sent along with all but 250 to 300 Świsłocz Jews to the Treblinka extermination camp in several transports at the end of December 1942. After the Jewish physicians at the medical clinic, relocated to the area designated for the ghetto, refused to euthanize 80 people, mostly elderly and young children left behind from the transports, they met the same fate as the Jews sent earlier to Treblinka.¹¹ The SS gassed them to death, though with the sulfur it used to delouse vacated bunkers.

A relatively large number of Wołkowysk Jews evaded the deportations. At the end of November, Ephraim Barash, the head of the Białystok Judenrat, arranged to transfer approximately 500 Wołkowysk inmates to his ghetto, including the 200 to 360 women laborers. The Białystok underground also may have organized the escape of about 27 pre-war Polish military officers and soldiers with the weapons experience necessary to plan the ghetto insurrection there, though the transfers may also have involved a German owner of a plumbing company in Białystok—or perhaps the latter also organized similar transfers for several dozen Wołkowysk Jews. For a 1,000 Reichsmark (RM) fare, Gendarmes from Białystok ferried to the ghetto there at least two more truckloads of Wołkowysk inmates. Other escapees fled to the local forests. Among them were several women who cut their hair and dressed in men's clothing to disguise themselves as male laborers, the only inmates, aside from a female dentist, permitted to leave the camp.

On January 26, 1943, the Germans liquidated the ghetto, sending the approximately 1,700 to 2,000 remaining Jews to the Auschwitz extermination camp. Two days later, at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Germans held back 280 men and 79 women as prisoners of the concentration camp. The other 1,341 to 1,641 people were gassed on arrival.

At least 70 Wołkowysk Jews survived the war, including 12 men and 3 women imprisoned at Auschwitz and approximately 30 people in the Soviet interior at the time of the German invasion; most of the rest had joined local partisan units.

SOURCES The three Wołkowysk yizkor books are available in a single English translation, *Sefer zikaron Volkovysk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000). With the exception of the English-language Einhorn contribution in the second, or 1949, yizkor book, all other citations in the notes to the yizkor books are from the Berger translation in which the 1949 yizkor book comprises part 1; the earlier published 1946 yizkor book, part 2; and the 1988 yizkor book, part 3.

See also the memoir by Izaak Goldberg, a Wołkowysk resident until the end of July 1941, *The Miracles versus Tyranny: The Fight for Life and Death between the Jewish People and the Nazis* (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1979); and Chaika Grossman [Haika Grosman], *The Underground Army: Fighters of the Białystok Ghetto*, trans. Shmuel Beeri, ed. Sol Lewis (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987).

A partial list of the prisoners held back from the Wołkowysk deportation to Auschwitz is available in Stanisław Mączka, ed., *Żydzi polscy w KL Auschwitz: wykazy imienne* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 2004), pp. 162–163.

Documentation about the history of the Wołkowysk Jewish community under German occupation in World War II includes AŻIH (e.g., 301/37, 1252, 1283, 1830, 1855, 1973, 2002, 2114, 2214, 2596, and 302/36); GAGO (e.g., 1029-1-31, p. 62); GARF (7021-86-37, pp. 4–24 and 82–95); IPN (e.g., S-54/67 [old numeration], SAGd 23, SOB 262 and 372, SOSz 58 and 59, SSK-Gd 125, SWB 205-207, SWGd 41, and SWWr 113-15); IPN-Bi (e.g., 3/138 [formerly, W-1237/51 (i.e., IPN, SWB 205-207)] and Ko [old numeration] 71/86 and 124/92); NARB (845-1-8, p. 31, and 861-1-7, pp. 63 and 67); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 13 [7021-86-37]); VHF (# 3986, 4296, 8170, 40793, and 50720); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Goldberg, *The Miracles*, pp. 26–28, 30–31; Zui Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 4; and Shayna Lifschitz, “Memories,” p. 62.
2. Compare Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 3; and “The Tribulations,” p. 56.
3. Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 12.
4. Noah Kaplinsky, “Volkovysk,” p. 32; and IPN-Bi, S-53/01-Zn, pp. 13–15, and S-211/71, pp. 39–40.
5. Kaplinsky, “Volkovysk,” p. 33.
6. Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 6; and Yitzhak Tchopper, “The Tragic Fate,” p. 415.
7. On compensation, compare Roitman, “The Destruction,” pp. 4, 12; and “The Tribulations,” p. 4.
8. Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 10; and Moses Einhorn, “The Destruction,” p. 935.
9. Roitman, “The Destruction,” p. 14.
10. “The Tribulations,” pp. 142–143; and Kaplinsky, “Volkovysk,” pp. 41–42.
11. Kaplinsky, “Volkovysk,” pp. 43–44.

WOŁPA

Pre-1939: Wołpa (Yiddish: Volp), town, Grodno powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Volpa, Volkovysk raion,

Grodno oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wołpa, Kreis Volkowysk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Vaupa, Vaukavysk raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Wołpa is located 11 and 28 kilometers (6.8 and 17.4 miles) north-northwest of Roś and Wołkowysk, respectively. Survivors estimate the Jewish population stood at 1,000 to 1,500 when the Soviets occupied the town on September 21, 1939.

On June 25, 1941, the fourth day of the German invasion of the USSR, Luftwaffe bombardment targeted at the local airfield set Wołpa ablaze. The fire destroyed all the structures in the Jewish neighborhood.

The Germans had occupied Wołpa by July 1, 1941. Information is scarce about the establishment of the German military and civil administrations there. Wołpa likely served as a regional administrative center (Amstkommissariat). The Germans also appointed a local collaborationist administration and an auxiliary police force.

In July, the regional German military administration issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including prohibitions on Jews leaving the places where they resided and orders to wear identifying marks on clothing. By late August, Jews throughout Distrikt Bialystok were required to wear yellow patches on the chest and back. By mid-July, the Germans also had ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) be established in Wołpa. Either Szlomo Bajerski (or Bojarski) or Fishel (or Fiszel) Rubinson was named its chair.¹

Soon after arriving in Wołpa, likely by the fall of 1941, local German authorities established an open ghetto by declaring the village’s Jewish inhabitants no longer residents of Wołpa. It is not clear if the declaration resulted in the formal expulsion of the Jews to a discrete living area outside Wołpa or if local German officials redrew Wołpa’s boundaries to remove the Jewish neighborhood from the town and then ordered all the Jews concentrated there. The only source mentioning the decree notes only that “the Jews were declared to be outside of the settlement.”²

Additional decrees by local German officials in Wołpa suggest the latter was more likely the case. The decrees required the Jews to raze their fire-devastated homes and to carry all the salvageable building materials (mostly bricks) several kilometers to a construction site. Jewish forced laborers were ordered to use the bricks to construct buildings for the local German administration, beginning with an office for the Amstkommissar. The razing of the houses left Jewish residents little option but to reside in the holes left in the ground, where their basements had once stood. Because the Kreiskommissar in Wołkowysk, Landrat Pfeifer, refused to permit Jews to rebuild homes lost to war devastation and then in the spring of 1942 expropriated all Jewish residences and arable property, the Jews who had not previously lived in the neighborhood and those former residents without basements had few options but to dig pits in which to live.

Because of the fire, many Wołpa Jews initially suffered from hunger. Only some Christians from nearby villages helped them to procure food. Many other Christians were hostile,

with some locals, including an auxiliary policeman, Litwinowicz, threatening the lives of prominent communal leaders. Two German Gendarmes beat and tortured the rabbi of Wołpa, Mordechaj Segal.

By the spring of 1942, German officials eased living conditions in the Wołpa ghetto by permitting local Christians in nearby villages to hire its inmates as laborers. The Jews lived on the property of the Christians but were forbidden to reside in the same residence. (They usually slept in barns or in the craft workshops at which they were employed.) A survivor portrays such labor as a form of servitude, akin to serfdom, in which the Christians were the “owners,” or the “masters,” of the Jews, perhaps in part because the Jews received no compensation, as the Christians were required to pay the wages of the Jewish laborers to the German labor office.³

On November 1, 1942, local German authorities in Wołpa ordered the Judenrat to assemble all the Jews the next morning at the market square for resettlement to a labor camp. That morning, about 30 Germans, including police and soldiers, surrounded the Jewish quarter in Wołpa. The German in charge of the expulsion required the Jews to leave all their hand luggage behind. He separated from the assembly 34 to 60 of the advanced elderly and infirm, supposedly because an old-age home was to be established for them in Wołpa.⁴ Young children were loaded into a limited number of peasant carts. The remaining Jews were ordered to march to Wołkowysk on foot. After the Jews had departed, in the Jewish ritual bath (*mikveh*) the Germans executed the Jews ordered to stay behind along with 3 to 6 others who had evaded the deportation. Reportedly, because of the traditions and practices associated with the Christian holiday popularly known as Zadzuszki, or Dzień Zaduszny (All Souls’ Day), the Belorussian grave diggers refused the German order to strip the corpses of clothing.⁵

The Wołpa prisoners were ordered to stop in Roś to add the Jewish community there to the deportation. Because the authorities responsible for the expulsion of the Roś Jews had permitted them to bring with them whatever they could carry, the Wołpa Jews assisted them in transporting some food-stuffs, including flour and potatoes, and firewood to their destination, a transit camp located in a pre-war Polish cavalry garrison in eastern Wołkowysk.

At the transit camp, where the SS consolidated the approximately 20,000 Jews of Kreis Wolkowysk to facilitate their expulsion to the extermination camps, the Wołpa and Roś communities lived together for almost a month in deplorable conditions in an internally fenced-off block within the camp, crowded together in underground bunkers, deprived access to adequate sanitation facilities, and provided with only starvation rations. Many perished there in a typhus epidemic. The Wołpa and Roś Jews were sent on December 2, 1942, two days before the start of Hanukkah, to the Treblinka extermination camp. They were all gassed on arrival.

At least 10 Wołpa Jews (and about half as many from Roś) evaded the Treblinka deportation; 6 people sheltered by local Christians reportedly were denounced subsequently by their

purported rescuers and executed by the Gendarmes in Wołpa.⁶ Others, including Icchak Wodowoz, Aaron the hat maker (*kapelusznik*), and a young man surnamed Solkis, were among the dozens of inmates smuggled out of the transit camp on the daily burial wagon, usually for a fee, by the former hardware merchant Epstein, the head of the Chevra Kadisha Society, and Jankiel Paltes, in charge of the burial detail. Extended shelter initially by Kazimierz Grabicki, Wodowoz’s former Christian employer, the 3 men later joined a partisan unit. Aaron, Solkis, and Maks Bursztejn, another Wołpa transit camp escapee, died during partisan military operations.⁷

Wodowoz, the only known survivor of the German occupation of Wołpa, joined a partisan group of 8 to 15 Christian fugitives, initially led by Seweryn (or Siewek) Strok, from Bobry village. The unit, which included several Red Army soldiers, joined Wodowoz in taking revenge on those in Wołpa responsible for the persecution and expulsion of the Jews. The group burned to the ground all of the German residences in Wołpa and murdered Litwinowicz and the two Gendarmes responsible for torturing the rabbi. In July 1943, they raided a German distillery in Czerlona, across the Niemen River from Łunna. A Roś survivor attributes Wodowoz with derailing 10 German troop and supply trains.⁸

After the war, Soviet authorities sentenced the head of the local Wołpa civilian administration to 10 years in prison.⁹ In 1947, the auxiliary policeman Napoleon Truszyński, from the Skidel Gendarmerie, was tried in Poland for capturing civilians from Łunna suspected of abetting the Czerlona distillery raid. Sentenced to 2 years in prison, he was released in March 1949.¹⁰

SOURCES The second Wołkowysk yizkor book includes a contribution by Zvi (Herschel) Kaplan, “Incidents in Volp,” in Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949). It is available in an English translation in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000), pt. 1, pp. 309–312.

Because documentation for the World War II history of the Jewish community of Roś is sparse, it is difficult to determine if a ghetto existed there. Survivors from Wołkowysk mention that the aerodrome in Roś was among the first places in the region bombed by the Germans in June 1941, but AŽIH, 301/2002, cited below, testimony of Jasza Klin notes that the Roś Jews lived “completely peacefully, without any persecution, until the final liquidation of the Białystok province, on November 2, 1942.” It also mentions that the second Roś survivor, Wolf Janowski, was hidden by a local peasant.

Useful, too, are the summary accounts, “Volpa Jews during World War II,” on the Volpa ShtetLinks page at jewishgen.org; and the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 295–298 (Wołpa), and pp. 595–596 (Roś).

Documentation for the Jewish communities of Wołpa and Roś under German occupation in World War II is sparse and focuses mostly on the experiences of the handful of Jews who joined the partisans. It includes: AŽIH (301/2002); GAGO

(also at USHMM [RG-53.004M, reel 3], 1-1-295, pp. 50–64); GARF (e.g., 7021-86-37, pp. 110–111); IPN (e.g., SOOl 26); and YVA (e.g., O-3/342). An English translation of YVA, O-3/342, testimony of Yitzhak Vodovoz (or Wodowoz), is available on the Volpa ShtetLinks page at Jewishgen, www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/volpa/Volpa-vodovoz-testimony.html.

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NOTES

1. Compare YVA, O-3/342; and Kaplan, “Incidents,” p. 309.
2. Kaplan, “Incidents,” p. 309.
3. YVA, O-3/342.
4. For low number, see GARF, 7021-86-37, pp. 110–111; and YVA, O-3/342, for high number.
5. Kaplan, “Incidents,” p. 310.
6. Ibid.
7. AŽIH, 301/2002, p. 1.
8. YVA, O-3/342; USHMM, RG-53.004M (GAGO), reel 3, 1-1-295, pp. 50–64; and AŽIH, 301/2002, p. 1.
9. Kaplan, “Incidents,” p. 310.
10. IPN, SOOl 26, case of Napoleon Truszyński.

WYSOKIE LITEWSKIE

Pre-1939: Wysokie Litewskie (Yiddish: Vysoka di Lita), village, Brześć nad Bugiem powiat, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Vysokoe, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wisokie-Litowsk, Kreis Bielsk, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1991: Vysokae Kamianets raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Between the two world wars, Wysokie Litewskie was located 50 kilometers (31 miles) southeast of Bielsk Podlaski and 38 kilometers (23.6 miles) north-northwest of Brześć nad Bugiem. In 1921, its population stood at 2,395, including among others 1,994 Jews, 121 Russian Orthodox followers, and 77 Roman Catholics. An additional 132 Jews resided in the Wysokie Litewskie gmina, including 89 in the unincorporated areas just outside the borders of Wysokie and another 3 near the train station. By 1925, the Jewish population in the town had expanded to 2,875 (about 89.7 percent of the overall population).

On June 23, 1941, the second day of Germany's invasion of the USSR, a Wehrmacht unit occupied the town. Little is known about the establishment of German military or civil institutions there or about the appointment of a local auxiliary police force. The Germans instituted a number of anti-Jewish decrees, including orders for all Jews to wear yellow patches on their backs and chests.

German authorities also immediately ordered a ghetto established for the Jews of Wysokie Litewskie. Located on what in Yiddish was known as Bod Street, the ghetto likely was on the same street as the Jewish ritual bath (*mikveh*). Initially an open ghetto, its inmates were confined to the homes in which

they were concentrated and not permitted to appear in public on the street.¹ The ghetto was fenced, likely in the late spring of 1942, as the result of an order issued by the Bielsk Podlaski Kreiskommissar, Landrat Tubenthal, requiring the closure of all ghettos in the Kreis. Another Jewish eyewitness suggests that the ghetto was much larger, noting that when local German authorities ordered the Jews to fence the ghetto, they insisted it be divided in half to prevent disrupting traffic along the major thoroughfare through Wysokie. Houses on either side of the main street comprised the outermost borders of the two different parts of the enclosed ghetto.²

Little is known about life in the Wysokie Litewskie ghetto. Overcrowding was a problem; three families shared a single room in the houses in the ghetto. Housing conditions deteriorated further after refugees, escaping partial liquidation Aktions in the summer of 1942 in the neighboring Reichskommissariat Ukraine, including in Wołczyn and Kobryń, sought shelter in the Wysokie ghetto.³ Inmates were conscripted for forced labor, including at a bog outside of Wysokie to dig peat for heating fuel. Local German authorities randomly entered the ghetto to round up Jews for forced labor and to raid homes.

Arbitrary violence was a problem from the inception of the Wysokie Litewskie ghetto. One survivor recalled by name 9 people shot dead by the Germans in the ghetto but attributed the Germans with actually killing many more Jews there. Because the Germans forbade the Jews from burying the dead at the cemetery outside the ghetto, a cemetery was established in the ghetto.⁴ On June 22, 1942, the Germans executed 70 Jews in Ogrodniki village (pre-war Wysokie Litewskie gmina, Brześć nad Bugiem powiat). Because only 4 Jews had lived in Ogrodniki in 1921, the majority of the victims are believed to have been from the Wysokie ghetto.⁵

The Wysokie Litewskie ghetto population likely numbered 2,500 on the eve of the ghetto's liquidation. Some scholars have suggested that Jews from other communities in the pre-war Wysokie Litewskie gmina, including from Raśna (Brześć nad Bugiem powiat), a small town with a 1921 Jewish population of 17, were concentrated in the Wysokie ghetto. Although it seems likely, the extant sources do not reveal whether Jews from other communities were resettled in the ghetto or if they were imprisoned there only briefly before November 12, 1942, the date on which German police records indicate that the Jewish communities in this part of Kreis Bielsk were liquidated.⁶

On November 12, 1942, members of the 5th Battalion of Police Regiment II (known before July 29 as the 1st Company of Reserve Police Battalion 13) liquidated the Wysokie Litewskie ghetto. At 5:30 A.M., the unit's commander gave the Wysokie Jews 30 minutes to assemble at the main market square. After separating men from women and placing children in another group, the police marched the groups separately to the Wysokie train station, where they forced them onto freight wagons. By noon the Wysokie Jews had been loaded onto the train, which likely did not depart the station

until other members of the same police unit had marched 2,500 Jews from Kamieniec Litewski to Wysokie, a distance of 31 kilometers (19.3 miles). David Wolf, a Wysokie survivor, who jumped from the train just before it arrived at its destination, the Treblinka extermination camp, recalled that it did not arrive until late evening.⁷ All the Jews in the Wysokie Litewskie deportations were gassed on arrival at Treblinka.

A large number of Wysokie Jews are known to have evaded the deportation. Some, including Adam Kamiński (subsequently, Adams), procured false identity papers, enabling them to live outside the ghetto. Paweł Korzec, a survivor of the Białystok ghetto, also recalled that in October 1942 he briefly joined a self-defense organization of Wysokie Jews already living in the nearby forests.⁸

However, none of the forest fugitives are believed to have survived the war, as most were caught in systematic searches of the forest. On November 26, 1942, a rear group (Nachkommando) of the 5th Battalion of Police Regiment II arrived in Wysokie Litewskie to assist the Gendarmes there to execute 61 Jews apprehended since the ghetto's liquidation.⁹ Of the 400 people shot by German authorities in Wysokie between 1942 and 1943, at least a third are believed to have been Jews fleeing the liquidation of their communities, though Soviet documentation records the names of just 37 Jewish victims from Wysokie. Most of the executed were buried in a mass grave, near the center of town.¹⁰

The Wysokie Litewskie Jews who survived the war living under the German occupation received assistance from a handful of local Christians. After jumping from the deportation train, Wolf made his way back to the Wysokie area and was sheltered there by a local Polish family.¹¹ Kamiński, a Kobryń refugee with false identity papers, was visiting family in the ghetto on the day of its liquidation. He fled to the local forests after his papers came into question but ultimately returned to Wysokie, where a family friend arranged for a guide and the documents necessary for him to travel to Warsaw. There, he used his new identity papers to volunteer for forced labor and was sent to Riga, Latvia. Also counted among Wysokie survivors are the immediate family members of lawyer Aaron Wirszubski. Deported in the Soviet period from Wysokie to Hajnówka (Bielsk Podlaski powiat), Wirszubski perished during the liquidation, most likely in early August 1941, of the 600-person Jewish community and its expulsion to Prużana. Lidia (or Lidka) Michnowska, a friend and a sister of Wysokie Litewskie's wartime Polish mayor, arranged for Wirszubski's wife Eugenia and two daughters to be aided and sheltered in Narew by the Roman Catholic priests Jakubowski and Kardasz.¹²

Schutz Männer employed at the Wysokie Litewskie Gendarmerie post were tried after the war in Poland for participating in roundups and executions of at least 60 Jewish partisans. In 1967, Jan Charyton was found guilty of participating in actions against the partisans. He received a prison term of 5 years and 6 months but was released conditionally in 1971. In 1970, another six Poles were convicted in

two separate trials for participating in the killing of civilians and taking actions against the partisans: Jan and Józef Lichota, Antoni Mazur, Wincenty Wojewódzki, Mieczysław Chrostowski, and Piotr Dziekan. The men received prison sentences ranging from 5 years and 1 month to 10 years, with the longest sentence reduced to 7 years on review by Poland's Supreme Court. All of the men had been released conditionally by 1974.

SOURCES Significant published and Internet sources include *Yizkor!: Gevidmet dem beyligen ondenk fun di kdoysbim fun Visoka-Litovsk un Voltsbin* (New York: United Wisoko-Litowsker and Woltchiner Relief, 1948) (an English translation is available on jewishgen.org, at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/vysokoye/vysokoye.html); "Vysokoye History," at www.brest-belarus.org.

Also useful is the Wysokie Litewskie entry in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 249–250; and the entry for Anna Paszkiewicz in Israel Gutman and Sara Bender, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, vol. 2, *Poland*, 2 pts. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), pt. 2, pp. 596–597.

The handful of archival sources documenting the history of the Jewish community of Wysokie Litewskie under the German occupation in World War II includes GARF (7021-83-12, pp. 4, 7, and 7021-148-186); IPN (e.g., SWB [251, 275-78, and 288-90]); IPN-Bi (e.g., 3/128, 130, 139, 143-44); USHMM (RG-22.014M [e.g., GARF, 7021-148-186], reel 18, pp. 165, 167); VHF (# 17696, 28531, and 45233); and YVA (e.g., O-3/6180).

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NOTES

1. David Wolf, "Two Letters," *Yizkor!*, www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/vysokoye/vysokoye.html.
2. VHF, # 17696, testimony of Adam Adams.
3. Ibid.
4. Wolf, "Two Letters," p. 22.
5. GARF, 7021-83-12, p. 7.
6. "Wysokie Litewskie," in Spector, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 5:250; and USHMM, RG-22.014M (e.g., GARF, 7021-148-186), reel 18, p. 165 (War Diary, 1st Company, Reserve Police Battalion 13, November 12, 1942).
7. Wolf, "Two Letters," pp. 22–23.
8. YVA, O-3/6180, pp. 48–53, in Sarah Bender, *The Jews of Białystok during World War II and the Holocaust*, Yaffa Murciana, trans. (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), pp. 126–127.
9. USHMM, RG-22.014M, reel 18, p. 167 (November 26, 1942).
10. Wolf, "Two Letters," p. 23, notes 120 Jews executed for hiding in and around Wysokie; and GARF, 7021-83-12, p. 4, for low figure.
11. Wolf, "Two Letters," and "Second Letter," respectively, p. 23 and pp. 24–25.
12. VHF, # 28351 and 45233, testimonies of Sara (Wirszubka) Szymańska and Adela (Wirszubka) Boddy.

WYSOKIE MAZOWIECKIE

Pre-1939: Wysokie Mazowieckie, town and powiat center, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Wysokie, Chizbeva raion, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wysokie Mazowieckie, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: powiat center, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Wysokie Mazowieckie is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) southwest of Białystok, not far from the main railway line to Warsaw. According to the 1921 census, there were 1,898 Jews living in Wysokie Mazowieckie, comprising 59.1 percent of the total population.¹ In 1936 there was a pogrom against the Jews of the town in which many Jewish houses were looted and more than 20 people were injured.² In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were probably around 1,900 Jews residing in Wysokie Mazowieckie.

German armed forces captured the town on September 10, 1939. On September 12, all Jewish and Polish men older than 17 years of age were arrested, about 1,000 people in total. Two days later, they were taken away to perform compulsory labor in Zambrów. From there around 800 men were transported to a labor camp in East Prussia. During their brief occupation the Germans also burned to the ground as much as 90 percent of the town. In connection with the fire, on September 19, 1939, the Germans ordered the Jews to leave the town within 24 hours. The Germans shot 4 Jews and drowned 1 as they drove the Jews from the town. Apart from those taken away earlier, most sought refuge in neighboring towns, including about 600 Jews who fled to Sokół.³ Others made their way to Białystok. On September 26, 1939, the Red Army took over the town in accordance with the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and the Jews were allowed to return. Almost half of them came back over the following weeks, bringing the Jewish population of the town together with some refugees up to around 1,000.⁴

On June 24, 1941, the town was again captured by German forces, two days after their invasion of the Soviet Union. Immediately, Germans accompanied by local Poles began to loot Jewish homes and shops.⁵ The Germans then introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) comprising 13 members was established, and a man named Alter Zack was appointed at its head. Jews were registered and marked with the Star of David, they were forbidden to perform kosher slaughtering, and they were obliged to perform forced labor (including women and older children). Shortly after the start of the occupation, the Germans arrested a few Jews as suspected Communists, including Shmuel Grinberg, who was sent to Białystok to be shot.⁶

In July 1941, a German military commandant briefly controlled the town. In August 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Wysokie Mazowieckie was incorporated into Kreis Lomscha, in Distrikt Białystok. The senior German official in the town was the Amtskommissar.

In July or August 1941, the German authorities ordered the Jews to assemble for a medical inspection with the excep-

tion of a small group of Jewish craftsmen who were exempted. As it turned out, the inspectors did not arrive, as they were busy elsewhere, but rumors of the expulsion and murder of Jews from other towns spread fear among the Jews in Wysokie. According to the yizkor book, "[T]his first Aktion, plus reports from other places that life was more secure in the ghettos, influenced the heads of the Jewish community to request the authorities to set up a ghetto." It was thought that this might provide some protection from pogroms by local non-Jews.⁷ After some local negotiations, a ghetto was created in Wysokie Mazowieckie by the end of August 1941, in an area mostly occupied by Jews before. The ghetto was located around the market square and on the nearby Dolna, Mysłkowska, Kościuszkowa, Jagiellońska, and Długa Streets, with Polna Street forming its southeastern border. The main gate was on the side of the market square.⁸ Over the following weeks, several hundred Jews from neighboring villages, including Kulesze Kościelne, Jabłonka Kościelna, Dąbrówka Kościelna, Szepietowo, Rosochate Kościelne, and others, were resettled into the ghetto, which was surrounded by barbed wire. In the fall of 1941, the Judenrat, assisted by the Jewish Police, had to meet a demand for a "contribution" of 20,000 rubles.⁹

The Jews from the ghetto were taken out every day to perform forced labor on road construction and on the surrounding large estates. Their wages, in the form of potatoes and other agricultural products, were passed on to the Judenrat, which divided them up among the Jewish population. Craftsmen (tailors, cobblers, and watchmakers) who were still able to earn their own living were exempted from forced labor in return for a payment to the Judenrat. Using these funds, the Judenrat also organized a soup kitchen, which provided two hot meals a day for those in need, especially those brought in from the villages. As winter approached, the Jews were sent out to collect firewood for the Germans from the forests. At the same time they were permitted to dig up tree roots for the Judenrat to distribute among the Jews for their own heating and cooking needs.¹⁰

The ghetto was guarded by the Jewish Police on the inside and Polish police on the outside. Smuggling food in from the "Aryan" side became increasingly more dangerous over time. In the overcrowded ghetto, the elderly, the poor, and some of those without family were placed in the fire department building, where they survived on the charity provided by the community. To avoid excessive overcrowding there, some solitary individuals were placed in other homes. Despite these precautions, at least one outbreak of typhus was recorded in the ghetto, and there were a number of deaths from hunger and disease.¹¹

Throughout the spring and summer of 1942, there were no major Aktions in Wysokie Mazowieckie, but tension in the ghetto increased as a number of refugees from the liquidation of the smaller ghettos in Distrikt Warchau (Generalgouvernement) arrived in the town. The anti-Jewish regulations were strictly enforced; for example, one Jew was shot for illegally purchasing an animal for slaughter.¹²

On Sunday, November 1, 1942, about 300 horse-drawn wagons came into Wysokie. Together with other indications, such as Germans reclaiming unfinished items sent for repair, this warned many Jews of an impending Aktion, and several hundred fled the ghetto into the woods. Then on November 2, German and Polish police surrounded the ghetto and rounded up the remaining inmates (about 1,500 men, women, and children), transporting them without their possessions by wagon to the transit camp in Zambrów (although one account indicates that some may have been deported directly to the extermination camps from the Czyżewo railway station). The Germans shot those people who were too sick to be transported. Many non-Jews from the area also came into town on this day in hope of gaining some of the Jewish property.

In Zambrów, some 17,500 to 20,000 Jews from the surrounding ghettos were concentrated in overcrowded conditions with very little to eat. Scores of Jews died every day of starvation. On January 15, 1943, the Germans started to deport most of the remaining Jews from Zambrów to the extermination camp Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where the majority was gassed on arrival.¹³ Many of those who had successfully fled the ghetto were eventually caught by patrols or fell into German hands following reports by Polish informers. Some received help from local Poles, often in return for payment, but only a handful remained alive when the town was recaptured by the Red Army in the summer of 1944.

SOURCES Information about the extermination of the Jews in Wysokie Mazowieckie can be found in the following publications: Y. Rubin, ed., *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh* (Tel Aviv: Visoke-Mazovyetsker landslayt-farayn in Yisrael, 1975); Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1989), pp. 190–193; and Avigdor Ben-Dov, ed., *Deliverance. The Diary of Michael Maik. A True Story*, trans. Laia Ben-Dov (Kedumim, Israel: Keterpress, 2004).

Documents regarding the persecution and extermination of the Jews in Wysokie Mazowieckie can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/969, 2248-49, 2614, and 3590); IPN-Bi (e.g., S-283/68, S-255/69/1-2, S-292/69, Ko-55/88, Ko-178/87, Ko-90/88); USHMM (RG-15.019M); VHF; and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 4:190.
2. “The Pogrom at Wysokie Mazowieckie in 1936,” in Rubin, *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh*, pp. 86–98.
3. Mosheh Grosman, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kedoshe Sokoli* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Sokoly, 1962), pp. 159–160, 224–228.
4. Rubin, *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh*, pp. 274–275; AŻIH, 301/969. Other sources indicate, however, that probably less than 1,000 Jews returned.
5. AŻIH, 301/3590, testimony of Złotka Gutman.
6. Ibid., 301/969.
7. Rubin, *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh*, p. 274.

8. AŻIH, 301/3590; Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Rejestr miejsc i faktów zbrodni popełnionych przez okupanta hitlerowskiego na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945: Województwo łomżyńskie* (Warsaw, 1985), p. 229.

9. AŻIH, 301/969 and 2248, testimony of Abraham Berl Sokal. In 1921, 185 Jews were living in Kulesze Kościelne, 157 in Jabłonka Kościelna, and 55 in Dąbrówka Kościelna; see *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965), Poland, pp. 2–6.

10. Rubin, *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh*, p. 273.

11. Ibid., p. 272; USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, “Białostockie,” pp. 133 and reverse.

12. AŻIH, 301/969.

13. Rubin, *Visoke-Mazovyetsk yizkor-bukh*, pp. 270–272; Wein, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 4:190–193; AŻIH, 301/2614, testimony of Towia Groll.

ZABŁUDÓW

Pre-1939: Zabłudów (Yiddish: Zablodov), town, Białystok powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zabłudov, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Zabłudow, Kreis Białystok, Distrikt Białystok; post-1998: Zabłudów, Białystok powiat, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Zabłudów lies about 18 kilometers (11.2 miles) southeast of Białystok. Its 1939 pre-war population of 3,500 included 1,952 Jews.

During World War II, the Germans occupied Zabłudów for about a week in September 1939 before ceding it to Soviet occupation.

On June 23, 1941, German aerial bombardment destroyed a nearby airport and sparked a fire in Zabłudów. Scores of Jews perished in the attacks before a small Wehrmacht unit briefly occupied the town that day. On June 26, another small unit, composed of about four soldiers, burned the rest of Zabłudów to the ground. Many Jews perished in the blaze; others were shot. On June 30 the survivors either fled voluntarily or were driven from Zabłudów by drunken German soldiers and local Polish and Belorussian peasants.¹ The Jews fled to Białystok, Bielsk Podlaski, Gródek Białostocki, Michałowo, Narewka Mała, and Orla. About 300 people either followed the rabbi of Zabłudów or were expelled with him to Narew. Many Zabłudów refugees in Białystok and all the Narew refugees were deported in the fall of 1941 to the ghetto in Prużana.

In the meantime, in Zabłudów, German military authorities had appointed a collaborationist local administration. Its formal head was Jerzy Manteuffel-Szoegge, whose family had owned Zabłudów since 1856. Andrzej Kuczyński was named mayor, and Franciszek Teofilewicz became the civil administrator (wójt). The Germans recruited a local auxiliary police force. In late July or August 1941, they established a Gendarmerie post. The Gendarmerie commander, named Franzek, often is misidentified in documentation as Piłat, the nickname



A narrow street in Zabłudów, 1916.
USHMM WS #05927, COURTESY OF JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

(from Pontius Pilate) local Poles gave him.² Other Gendarmes included Dembowski, Krejbus, Hettig, Sommer, and Beckmann. An Amtskommissariat was established for Zabłudów-Słomianka, under the leadership of an East Prussian named Olech. Employees of the Amtskommissariat were local Poles and Belorussians.³

Shortly after July 12, 1941, the Germans and their local collaborators subjected Jewish men who had returned to Zabłudów to violence. They compelled them to behead a statue of Lenin and to bury it at the Jewish cemetery. The Germans and local police shattered the legs and crushed the skulls of several Jews, including Szymon Lewin and Jakub Kapliński. A Polish policeman seized Benjamin Felgrund, accused him of communism, and killed him.⁴

From late July 1941, many Jews, mostly refugees in Białystok, began returning to Zabłudów. Some left the city to avoid entering the Białystok ghetto, established on August 1. Others, in October, accepted travel passes offered to refugees by the Białystok Judenrat to return to their hometowns. The number of Zabłudów returnees varies in the sources. One survivor notes 500 Jews lived in Zabłudów. Another places its population at 600. A third suggests it far exceeded 750.⁵ Drawing on these survivors' accounts, historian Szymon Datner concluded the Zabłudów Jewish population registered a decline of about 70 percent (to around 586 people). However, in the same work, he cites a much larger figure, of 1,400, more reflective of the 1,200 to 1,400 population noted in Polish postwar documentation for Zabłudów.⁶

Fire damage, combined with German military orders issued in early July 1941 that forbade Jews throughout Distrikt Białystok from leaving the towns in which they lived, effectively created an open ghetto in Zabłudów. Initially, the returnees lived together in the Bielsk Street Bet Midrash, one of the few Jewish-owned buildings not destroyed in the fire. Though a few lived illicitly in the barns of non-Jews, later ar-

rivals mostly moved into several (formerly) Jewish-owned tannery factories in southeastern Zabłudów.

There was little to eat and no soap. Posters throughout Zabłudów forbade Christian-Jewish contact.⁷ Members of the Gendarmerie ordered the Jews to wear yellow identifying marks on the left arm and back and ordered a Judenrat established. Its chair was Szymon Wysocki (Weissotsky). The Judenrat organized a Jewish police force. It was commanded by Judel Packstein. The Judenrat organized labor conscription. It collected whatever material items the German authorities demanded, including valuables, clothing, and furniture.

Authorities enforced the orders that had established the open ghetto. Butcher Shalom Epstein, found outside of Zabłudów, was shot dead. At least 6 other Jews were murdered by German authorities.⁸ Others were beaten severely for sneaking out even momentarily at night from the factory buildings in which they lived. In the autumn of 1941, Polish policeman Zygmunt Kozłowski arrested Paltiel Łopata for leaving his home without wearing yellow identifying markings. After Łopata punched Kozłowski and fled to Białystok, the Gendarmes ordered almost all the Jews, perhaps 750 people, held hostage to secure his return. The next day, after Łopata could not be located, the Judenrat paid a large bribe to free the hostages.⁹

Shortly before Passover 1942, likely in January, the authorities ordered the Zabłudów Jews concentrated into a more formal ghetto. The ghetto was located on the grounds of the Białostocki, Hertz, and Judelmann tannery factories, between one of the Jewish and the Russian Orthodox cemeteries. Most Jews already lived there. The others were required to relocate to the ghetto, which probably was surrounded by a fence.

In the spring of 1942, the Germans ordered 10 Zabłudów Jews conscripted for weeklong stints on crews repairing and expanding the road from Białystok to Wołkowysk; 10 other Jews daily hewed trees, and another 10 worked at a nearby quarry. Locally, the Gendarmes conscripted Jews to remove Jewish gravestones (*matzevot*) and the stone wall from the cemetery. They were used as paving underlayment on the road construction project. The Judenrat rotated almost all men through the forced labor assignments, even those employed under German supervision at local workshops to manufacture leather goods or as blacksmiths and tailors.¹⁰

Conscripts assigned to labor outside Zabłudów collected clothing from others to barter for food with farmers near their work sites. Some Jews also sneaked off to Białystok, smuggling themselves into the ghetto there to exchange agricultural goods secured around Zabłudów for homemade necessities, including soap.

The SS, local Gendarmes, and the Polish police liquidated the Zabłudów ghetto on November 2, 1942. Only about 70 Jews managed to hide, in part because many believed they were being transferred to the Prużana ghetto, where many former Jews from Zabłudów already resided.¹¹ The authorities drove the rest of the Zabłudów Jews to a transit camp located in southern Białystok. The Białystok Judenrat secured the transfer of several Zabłudów Jews, including Wysocki, to

the Białystok ghetto. Fritz Friedel, the official in charge of Jewish affairs (Judenreferent) of the Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD (KdS) Białystok and the head of the Białystok transit camp, shot the remaining members of the Zabłudów Judenrat. On November 10, 1942, the Zabłudów inmates were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹² They were all gassed on arrival.

Some of the Jews who had evaded deportation to the Białystok transit camp were shot dead during searches for escapees following the Zabłudów ghetto liquidation. Yitzhak Herschel and Abrahamel Fajnman (Feinman) were among the early victims. Children reported the hiding place of Abram Tajchman to authorities. He was shot dead by the Gendarme, or perhaps Schutzmann, Tyberski.¹³

Most Zabłudów fugitives sought shelter in the Białystok ghetto. They almost all were deported to a number of death camps during the liquidation of the ghetto in 1943; only a small number fled. Józef Lewin (Josel Levine) and his son Szymon were sheltered by Belorussian farmers in Gneciuki village. Łopata, Kapliński, Moshe Flikier, and Izrael Bramzon received assistance from the Daniluk family, also Belorussians, in Solniki village. The aid-giver of David Levine reportedly murdered him near the war's end.¹⁴

On May 9, 1945, tragedy struck the less than 10 Jewish survivors from Zabłudów. That day, an armed Polish gang, including former auxiliary policeman Zygmunt Kozłowski, opened fire on a party held by the Daniluk family to celebrate the Allied victory. Seven people, including Flikier and two aid-givers, Włodzimierz and Luba Daniluk, were killed.¹⁵

In 1949, Friedel was tried in Poland for numerous war crimes related to his administration of the Białystok ghetto and transit camp, including for personally murdering 2,000 Jews, among them the Zabłudów Judenrat members, and for sending 13,000 Jews from the Białystok transit camp to their deaths. Found guilty, he was sentenced to death and executed in 1952. In 1947, Kozłowski was tried for serving as an auxiliary policeman. The state sought the death penalty, but supposedly because a Jewish survivor testified on his behalf, the court sentenced him to an eight-month prison term.¹⁶

SOURCES A small portion of the memoir *From Białystok to Birkenau: The Holocaust Journey of Michel Mielnicki* (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press and Vancouver Holocaust Education Center, 2000) covers the early part of the 1941 German occupation in Zabłudów. The memoir is based on the author's AŻIH, 301/1266, testimony (see below), which also appears in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 356–358.

Testimonies from survivors and some Polish postwar documentation are in Shemu'el Tsesler et al., eds., *Zabludove Yizkor-Bukh* (Buenos Aires: Aroysgegebn fun dem Yizkor-Bukh-Komitet tsum tsyantsikstn yortog fun di ershte Yidishe korbone's fun hurbn-Zabludove, 1961), with a partial Hebrew translation in Nechama Shmueli-Schmusch, ed., *Zabludow: Dapim mi-tokh yisker-bukh* (Israel: Yots'e Zabludov be-Yisrael,

1987). An English translation of the book's Holocaust sections is available on the Zabludow memorial Web site, at www.zabludow.com. Tilford Bartman, the author of the site, includes English translations of several documents cited below, such as USHMM (IPN) ASG and AŻIH, 301/3602, and provides many unique materials, including correspondence with officials at OKZBH-Bi (IPN-Bi) and Yad Vashem documentation.

Secondary accounts include the relevant entries in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 331–335; Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 230–235; and Andrzej Żbikowski, “Pogromy i mordy ludności żydowskiej w Łomżyńskim i na Białostocczyźnie latem 1941 roku w świetle relacji ocalałych Żydów i dokumentów sądowych,” in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 2, *Studia*, pp. 208–209. Also valuable is Szymon Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim,” *BŻIH*, no. 60 (1966): 9, 11, tab. 2; and Grzegorz Pietrowski, “Zabłudów okresu międzywojennego i czasu II wojny światowej,” available on an APB sponsored Web site, at <http://zabludow.polska.pl/historia/article,,id,304270.htm>.

Archival documentation pertaining to the Jewish community of Zabłudów during the Holocaust includes AŻIH (e.g., 301/1266, 2416, 2417, 3598, 3602, 3604); IPN (SAB [20, 35], SOB 135); IPN-Bi (e.g., 1/921, 292/20, S [87/68/1-2]); USHMM (RG-15.019M [IPN], 46/33); VHF (e.g., # 1303, 5984, 14990, 25431, 32893, 35777); and YVA (e.g., M-11/4 [120, 122], M-11/267, M-11B/199, M-49Q/263, M-49E [AŻIH, 301] [2426, 3535, 3604, 3958]).

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NOTES

1. Pinie (Paul) Chorowski testimony, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, pp. 366–367, for flight; AŻIH, 301/1266, testimony of Mendel Melnicki, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:357; Ephraim Rubins testimony, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, p. 402, for expulsion.

2. Zabłudów memorial Web site, Tilford Bartman, introduction to English trans. of USHMM, RG-15.019M (ASG), reel 14, 46/33, pp. 1–2.

3. IPN-Bi, 1/921, vol. 1, p. 49 (deposition, Józef Żyłkowski, April 20, 1973).

4. AŻIH, 301/2417, testimony of Szymon Lewin, p. 1.

5. Respectively, AŻIH, 301/2416, p. 1; Rubins, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, p. 402; AŻIH, 301/3602, testimony of Paltiel Łopata, p. 1.

6. USHMM, RG-15.019M, reel 14, 46/33, pp. 1–2; Datner, “Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim.

7. AŻIH, 301/2416, testimony of Szymon Lewin, p. 1.

8. YVA, M-11/4/120, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, p. 395.

9. AŻIH, 301/3602, p. 1.

10. Chorowski, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, pp. 373–374.

11. AŻIH, 301/3598, testimony of Józef Lewin, pp. 2–3; Chorowski, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, p. 377.

12. Chorowski, in Tsesler et al., *Zabludove*, p. 377.

13. AŻIH, 301/2417, pp. 2–3; IPN-Bi, 1/921, p. 92.

14. AŻIH, 301/2417, pp. 1–2.
15. Ibid., 301/3602, pp. 2–4. In 2003, Yad Vashem recognized the four-member Daniluk family as Righteous Among the Nations.
16. Ibid., p. 4; IPN, SOB 135.

ZAMBRÓW

Pre-1939: Zambrów (Yiddish: Zembrove), town, Łomża powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zambrov, raion center, Belostok oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Zambrow, Kreis Lomscha, Distrikt Bialystok; post-1998: Zambrów, powiat center, województwo podlaskie, Poland

Zambrów lies on the Jabłonka River about 26 kilometers (16.2 miles) south-southeast of Łomża. Its 1937 population of 7,620 included 3,330 Jews.

From September 1, 1939, scores of Jews were killed as Zambrów sustained German aerial bombardment, and then the garrison became engulfed, from September 10–13, by the Battle of Zambrów. After the German XIX Army Corps, commanded by General Heinz Wilhelm Guderian, transformed the garrison's training grounds into a makeshift prison for about 1,200 captured Polish soldiers (Christians and Jews), Wehrmacht soldiers daily robbed Jewish stores and homes. About 50 Jewish civilians were executed before the Germans turned Zambrów over to Soviet forces at the end of September.¹

The Germans reoccupied Zambrów on June 22, 1941. They immediately invited local Poles to help them identify and round up Jews for forced labor. Together the Germans and their Polish collaborators demolished Jewish-owned stalls at the market square. A few days later, an SS unit appeared to humiliate outwardly religious Jews. The Germans invited local Poles to help them rob Jewish property.² By July 20, the German military administration had ordered Jews to wear a yellow Star of David on an armband, forbade Jews from leaving Zambrów without permission, and made forced labor compulsory for all adult Jews. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) also was ordered established. Its chair was Gershon Srebrowicz. The Germans demanded Zambrów Jews pay a large contribution, in cash and valuables, threatening to execute the new council members if it was not forthcoming.

The German military appointed a local administration and an auxiliary police force. Little is known about their composition or subsequent activities. By August 1941, the German military authorities had been supplanted by a German civil administration, headed regionally by Zambrów Amtskommissar Rohr. The Polish auxiliary police was subordinated, as *Schutzmänner*, to the German Gendarmerie, established in August.

From late July, the SS used labor assignments in the forest of Czerwony Bór as a guise to murder more than a third of the Zambrów Jewish community. The first group of 30 Jews returned safely. A subsequent group of 50 to 90 people was murdered. The largest mass killing occurred on August 19,

1941, when a detachment of Security Police, likely from the Schröttersburg subsection of the Zichenau Gestapo, led by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Schaper, organized 700 to 1,000 Jews supposedly for a “labor detail” near Szumowo Nowe village but instead executed the “laborers” in the part of the forest known as Rząśnik (or Klonowo).³ The Jews in Zambrów learned almost immediately of the killings, as several Poles told some prominent members of the Jewish community, who in turn informed the Judenrat.⁴

The executions likely provoked a confrontation between the Judenrat and German authorities. The Germans dismissed the Judenrat and appointed a more compliant 10-person council under the leadership of Glicksman, a refugee from Łódź. They ordered a Jewish police force established. Eli Hirsch Siniak was its commander.

After the Rząśnik execution, the Germans announced the establishment of a ghetto. One eyewitness mentions the ghetto was established two weeks after the executions at Rząśnik in July (*sic*), another notes a date of late July or early August 1941, and still others suggest dates in September and October.⁵ The ghetto occupied a quarter of the downtown area. It encompassed at least five streets, including Świętokrzyska, Bóznicza, and a part of Tadeusz Kościuszko, and extended to the Jabłonka River. Initially, the ghetto was not fenced.

The ghetto population officially stood at about 2,000, with its actual census likely twice that, as many Jews sought shelter there from anti-Jewish violence in nearby localities. The Germans also expelled to the ghetto Jews from smaller communities, including Prosiénica. The latter either had been held back from or had evaded the German mass execution of their community in August 1941, also at Rząśnik.⁶

The refusal of a few “Polish hooligans” to vacate their houses to make way for the ghetto may have provoked another mass execution in Zambrów.⁷ On September 6, 1941, an SS unit arrived to offer lighter work to about 300 elderly and less fit Jews, a group including pregnant women. The Jews were brought behind the railroad station, in Kołaki Kościelne village, and executed together with three quarters of the Jews (about 450 people) of Rutki-Kossaki village and likely too the small Jewish community in Kołaki.⁸

After the killing, the ghetto was fenced and the violence abated, most likely in exchange for a payment of 100,000 Reichsmark (RM) and a kilogram (2.2 pounds) in gold. The Jews worked mostly on rebuilding barracks at the garrison, used by the Germans from January 1942 as a Soviet prisoner-of-war (POW) camp, Stammlager (Stalag) XII E Zambrow. Jewish laborers cleaned the barracks and houses of camp personnel. In the spring of 1942, forced laborers worked on the Białystok-to-Ostrów Mazowiecka road construction project. They likely were not guarded.⁹ Other Jews worked officially for local farmers as agricultural laborers.

Initially, material conditions were not that difficult in the ghetto, as it was only lightly guarded, providing Jews working outside the ghetto opportunities to bring food back. Farmers also entered the ghetto once a week to barter their goods for the Jews' possessions, though the types of products that they

could offer were restricted. Overcrowding posed the largest problem, as six families, about half of them unregistered, typically lived together in a small apartment. The resulting sanitation problems provoked a typhus epidemic. The Judenrat chair, Glicksman, supposedly did little to assist the sick and impoverished; instead, he used the institutions of the Jewish Council to protect Jews with black market wealth. Local Poles continued to denounce Jews as Communists, usually those with whom they wanted to settle scores or financial accounts. The arrested are believed to have been murdered.¹⁰

On the night of November 1–2, 1942, members of the SS and the Gendarmerie, including local Schutzmannen, surrounded the ghetto in preparation for its liquidation. On November 2, the Jews were expelled to the garrison, a part of which the Germans had transformed into a transit camp to imprison about 17,500 to 20,000 Jews from nearby localities. Although a large number of Zambrów Jews initially evaded the expulsion order, almost all the fugitives, perhaps as many as 2,000 people, either reported voluntarily to the garrison when they could not locate shelter or were rounded up in searches, organized on German orders by local Polish officials, and brought to the Zambrów transit camp.¹¹

The SS began liquidating the transit camp around January 10, 1943, by ordering more than 2,000 inmates expelled to the train station in Czyżewo for transport to the Auschwitz extermination camp. The Zambrów Jews were some of the first and last transit camp inmates sent to Auschwitz. They arrived at Auschwitz II-Birkenau in two separate transports, on January 15 and 19, each of which carried about 2,000 people. From the first transport, the Germans held back 217 men and 21 women as prisoners of the camp. From the second transport, which also included Jews from Łomża, the Germans chose as camp inmates 164 men and 134 women. The remaining Jews in the two transports, about 3,500 people, were gassed on arrival.

Few Zambrów Jews lived to see the war's end. Under 10 of the Auschwitz prisoners survived. Another 10 to 15 people were sheltered by Christians or hid in bunkers outside Zambrów. Among them were 3 Stupnik brothers. In Czerwony Bór village when the region's ghettos were liquidated, they eventually forged a small partisan organization composed of about 12 Jews from that village and from Gać village and several Poles. However, the Poles soon turned on the Jews, murdering about half of them. The Stupniks and 3 other survivors retreated to a bunker on the property of a Christian family in Milewo (Szczytny gmina and powiat).¹² Also counted among Zambrów survivors is Hersz (or Grzegorz) Smolar, the leader of the resistance in the Mińsk ghetto and the commander of a partisan unit in the Kojdanów (or Nalibocka) Forest.

SOURCES A useful source of published survivor testimonies is the yizkor book, Yom-Tov Levinski, ed., *Sefer Zambrov: Zembrove: Zikaron li-kehillat ha-kodesh she-bushmedab* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Irgunim shel yots'e [Zambrov] be-Artsot hu-Berit, Argentina be-Yisrael, 1963). An English-language translation, sponsored by the United Zembrover Association, is scheduled to appear on the Museum of Family History Web site, www.museumoffamilyhistory.com. Several memoirs by survivors

from other places touch on Jewish life in Zambrów under the German occupation, including Rivka Teyer and Israel Teyer, *The Red Forest*, narrator Izhak Shumowitz, trans. Rachel Luzan (Ra'anana, Israel: Docostory, 2005); Martin Gray, with Max Gallo, *For Those I Loved*, trans. Anthony White (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972).

Secondary accounts include Avraham Wein, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 4, *Warsaw and Its Region* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1986), pp. 209–216; its English-language counterpart in Arnon Rubin, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communities in Poland and Their Relics Today*, vol. 1, *District Białystok* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2006), pp. 235–240; Andrzej Zawistowski, "A Short History of Zambrów," on the Museum of Family History Web site; and in Polish, Józef Stanisław Mroczek, *Zambrów. Zarys dziejów* (Białystok: Ośrodek Badań Naukowych w Białymstoku i Łomżyńskie Towarzystwo Naukowe im. Wągów, 1992); Tomasz Wiśniewski, "Dzieje Gminy Żydowskiej w Zambrowie," *Wiadomości Zambrowskie*, nos. 5–6 (1991): 3–7; and Andrzej Zawistowski, "Zagłada," *Wiadomości Zambrowskie*, no. 2 (38) (1996): 19.

Survivors of the September executions likely were sent to a labor camp established in Łapy, as discussed in Avigdor Ben-Dov, ed., *Deliverance. The Diary of Michael Maik. A True Story*, trans. Laia Ben-Dov (Kedumim, Israel: Keterpress, 2004).

Archival documentation about the fate of the Zambrów Jewish community under German occupation in World War II includes AŻIH (e.g., Ankiety, 301 [1258, 2959, 3159, 3160, 3520, 3533, 3592]); BA-L (e.g., B 162/5863 [205 AR-Z 13/62]); IPN-Bi (56/6-7, S-104/68/1-2, S-500/71); USHMM (e.g., Acc.2000.173, RG-15.079M [AŻIH] [Ring I/899], RG-15.019M [IPN] [2 (172, 191), 14 (46, 81)]); VHF (# 2599, 8605, 11868, 17320, 18137, 32038, 41637, 49409); YVA (e.g., M-1E/1434, M-11/188, M-49E [874, 3159], O-3/10957, O-16 [970, 1258, 1265, 1850, 2249, 2353, 2959, 3159, 3160]).

Some of the material above appears in Polish translation in Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, eds., *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2002), vol. 2, *Dokumenty*, pp. 367–369 (AŻIH, 301/1258), pp. 169–174, 175–177 (BA-L, B 162/5863 [205 AR-Z 13/62]), pp. 156–166, 195–199.

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NOTES

1. Moshe Lewinsky testimony, in Levinski, *Sefer Zambrov*, pp. 168–170; AŻIH, 301/1258, testimony of Icchak Stupnik, pp. 1–2, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:367.
2. VHF, # 18137, testimony of Morris Baker (Piekarewicz); AŻIH, 301/3159, testimony of Fajwel Słowik, pp. 1–2.
3. Date from Zawistowski, "Zagłada," p. 19, because the date of August 23, 1941, cited for the "Black Thursday" executions in Levinski, *Sefer Zambrov*, pp. 122–123, 159–164, fell on a Saturday. For suspicions about Schaper's unit, see BA-L, B 162/5863 (205 AR-Z 13/62, Sta. Hamburg 141 Js 223/64).
4. Teyer, *The Red Forest*, p. 81.
5. See AŻIH, 301/1258, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:367–368; BA-L, B 162/5863 (205 AR-Z 13/62), pp. 156–166 (Sosnowska deposition); Lewinsky testimony, in Levinski, *Sefer Zambrov*, pp. 173–177; VHF, # 5872, testimony of Leon Rzepka.

6. Compare Sosnowska and Łupiński testimonies, respectively, at BA-L, B 162/5863 (205 AR-Z 13/62), pp. 156–166; and Jan Żaryn, “Przez pomyłkę. Ziemia łomżyńska w latach 1939–1945. Rozmowa z Ks. Kazimierzem Łupińskim,” *Biuletyn IPN*, nos. 8–9 (19–20) (August–September 2003): 113.

7. AŻIH, 301/1258, in Machcewicz and Persak, *Wokół Jedwabnego*, 2:368.

8. USHMM, RG-15.019M (IPN), reel 1, 2/172, pp. 1–2; RG-15.079M (AŻIH), Ring I/899, pp. 1–5, notes 450 Rutki Jews and 300 Zambrów Jews executed.

9. Gray, *For Those*, pp. 162–163.

10. VHF, # 18137, 5872; Yitzchak Golombek testimony, in Levinski, *Sefer Zambrov*, pp. 126–128.

11. AŻIH, 301/2959, testimony of Fajwel Słowik, pp. 2–4; VHF, # 5872.

12. Teyer, *The Red Forest*, pp. 169–172, 174.

ZELWA

Pre-1939: Zelwa, village, Wołkowysk powiat, Białystok województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zel’va, raion center, Grodno oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Zelwa, Kreis Wołkowysk, Distrikt Białystok; post-1991: Zel’va, raen center, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Zelwa lies on the Zelwianka River about 28 kilometers (17.4 miles) east of Wołkowysk. In World War II, immediately after the Red Army occupied the region in September 1939, the Zel’va raion counted 34,500 native inhabitants, including among others 23,800 Belorussians, 9,300 Poles, and 1,300 Jews. Almost all the Jews resided in Zelwa. Of the 7,000 Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland who subsequently passed through Zelwa, as many as 1,500 may have settled there.¹

On June 23, 1941, the second day of the German invasion of the USSR, heavy German aerial bombardment set Zelwa ablaze and resulted in the deaths of 80 to 300 Jews.² Before the Germans occupied Zelwa on June 27, many Jews fled to places with less extensive devastation, including Dereczyn (and Kolonia Synajska). The remaining Jews crowded together in the only three Jewish houses to have survived the fire.³

A unit composed of about 20 SS soldiers, likely from either Sonderkommando 7b, led by SS-Sturmbannführer Günther Rausch; or Sonderkommando 8, commanded by Hauptsturmführer Erich Engels, arrived in Zelwa on July 8 or 11, 1941, to appoint a local collaborationist administration.⁴ The SS commander named a group of young Polish men to a Jugendpolizei, an auxiliary police force, and charged them with maintaining order in the Jewish community. At an assembly of Jews, he named the rabbi of Zelwa, “Abba” Poupko, the Jewish elder (Judenältester) and sole representative of the Zelwa Jewish community. Upon arriving in Zelwa in the fall of 1941, the Amtskommissar retained these institutions and practices. As a result, neither a Jewish police force nor a Judenrat was established in Zelwa.⁵

At an assembly, the SS commander issued a series of anti-Jewish decrees, including the wearing of yellow markings, on the back and chest, and then chose a man and a woman from

among the Jews to demonstrate the punishments for violating the decrees. After flogging the man to death, members of the SS unit publicly gang-raped the woman before beating her to death. The commander next ordered the community’s educated members to come forward. He may have added 15 better-dressed Jews to the group. Before executing the 18 to 33 Jews in the Bereszko Forest, the Germans, joined by the newly appointed Polish police, beat and chased the remaining Jews back to Zelwa.⁶

The fire damage contributed to the establishment of an open ghetto in Zelwa. When German civil administrators, including members of the Gendarmerie, arrived in Zelwa, they expelled the Jews from their houses and ordered them to reside instead in the basements of some of the fire-devastated structures.⁷ The Zelwa Jews were concentrated together, with several families residing in a single basement. It is unknown if the concentration was a consequence of the fire, with perhaps only a limited number of basements surviving intact, or the result of anti-Jewish decrees, which either had established a distinct Jewish quarter or had ordered war-devastated Jewish houses expropriated and razed for their usable building materials.

Zelwa’s location as the easternmost outpost of Distrikt Białystok, separated from the Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien only by the Zelwianka River, reinforced the open ghetto, as the local German authorities rigidly enforced decrees limiting the Jews to Zelwa. For example, when a ghetto was established in Dereczyn around February 1942, the Gelman family returned to Zelwa but discovered it impossible to remain there, as the Germans closely monitored the Jewish population as part of the search for fugitives from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. For this reason, the family fled to Wołkowysk.⁸ Other Dereczyn fugitives note that the Zelwa Jews were “hiding in their basements,” a point that suggests the imposition of a curfew or some other type of order that limited Jewish movement within Zelwa.⁹

The Amtskommissar also publicly enforced German decrees on Jewish movement beyond Zelwa. Survivors most remember him for organizing the hanging of seven Jews found outside Zelwa, including five refugees and two native-born butchers, David Vishnivisky and Joshua Niznitsky. He ordered both Jews and Christians to construct the gallows together and then made attendance obligatory for both communities. At the hanging, he announced it was his obligation to execute all Jews found illegally beyond Zelwa’s borders. Perhaps because Zelwa was in Distrikt Białystok, which the Germans treated more as a part of the Reich, the Amtskommissar simultaneously emphasized the legality of his actions by insisting that the condemned confessed to having violated German decrees. The Amtskommissar may have added Poupko to those slated for execution, though another account notes that the Judenältester committed suicide after being forced to participate in the hangings.¹⁰

The Germans conscripted the Zelwa Jews for forced labor. These workers likely razed fire-damaged structures. By the spring of 1942, many Zelwa Jews worked on the

Wołkowysk-to-Słonim road construction project at tasks such as crushing stone for paving underlayment. Jewish craftsmen labored for the local German administration. At work, some Jews organized for future resistance by stealing arms and ammunition and burying them in the nearby forest.

On November 2, 1942, an SS commander ordered the Zelwa Jews to assemble for deportation by train to a closed ghetto in Wołkowysk. Some 10 to 15 resistance activists fled to the nearby forest. Another approximately 40 Jews—those too infirm to make the trip or found in hiding—were executed. At the railway station, the Zelwa Jews were joined by other nearby Jewish communities, including the approximately 70 residents of the Krzemienica Kościelna Amtskommissariat driven there by local Gendarmes and auxiliary policemen. Whether the approximately 75 to 90 Jewish inhabitants of the pre-war Międzyrzecz gmina, on the southeastern border of Kreis Wołkowysk, were among these prisoners is unknown. It seems likely, as one survivor noted, that 2,400 Jews from Zelwa and other nearby localities were transferred to SS control at the Zelwa train station.¹¹

In Wołkowysk, the Zelwa deportees were imprisoned in a transit camp established by the SS at a former Polish cavalry garrison together with the approximately 17,500 other Jews from Kreis Wołkowysk. They lived in deplorable conditions there for about a month until being deported, likely either on November 26 or December 2, 1942, on the second Wołkowysk transport to the Treblinka extermination camp.¹² They all were gassed on arrival.

Most of the Zelwa Jews who had evaded the deportation joined the Pobeda (Victory) Soviet partisan unit. The unit's members, mostly Jewish fugitives from Dereczyn, Piaski, and Wołkowysk, won military distinctions for wartime attacks on German troop trains, supply convoys, and police encampments.¹³ Although 80 percent of its approximately 360 Jews were killed in the course of military action, 6 Zelwa partisans survived. Also among the Zelwa survivors are a number of wartime residents of other communities, including several people who fled to still Russian-occupied territory in the first weeks of the 1941 war and at least 8 others who were inmates of other ghettos under the German occupation.

SOURCES Published accounts include *Sefer zikaron Zelva* ([Israel]: Irgun yots'e Zelyah be-Yisrael, 1984), in an English translation as Yerahmiel Moorstein, ed., *Zelva Memorial Book* (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 1992); Moses Einhorn, ed., *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh* (New York, 1949); Noah Kaplinsky, "Volkovysk in Its Death Throes," in *Hurban Volkovisk be-Milhemet ha-'olam ha-sheniyah, 1939/1945* (Tel Aviv: Vaad irgun

yots'e Volkovisk be-Erets-Yisrael, 1946); Katri'el Lashovits, ed., *Volkovisk: Sipurah shel kebilah Yehudit-Tsiyonit bushmedab ba-Sho'ah* (Tel Aviv: K. Lashovits, 1988). The three yizkor books are available in English in the Wołkowysk yizkor book trilogy *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk. The Volkovysk Memorial Book*, trans. Jacob Solomon Berger (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000).

Also useful is the Zelwa entry in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 346–350.

Archival documentation for the Zelwa community in World War II under German occupation includes AŽIH (301/627 and 667); YVA (e.g., O-16/435); and two lists of Zelwa Jews known to have perished under the German occupation in GARF (7021-86-41, pp. 8, 66), with microfilmed copies available at USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 13) and YVA (M-33).

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NOTES

1. Yitshak Resnik, "Krzemienica," in Einhorn, *Volkovisker Yisker-Bukh*, p. 317.

2. Compare Alta Gelman and Emphraim Gelman, "A Family among the Partisans," and Shmuel Yarnivsky, "The Destruction of Zelva," in Moorstein, *Zelva*, respectively, pp. 77 and 104.

3. Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1987), p. 371.

4. With dates of July 6, 8, and 11, 1941, provided, respectively, in Gelman and Gelman, "A Family," p. 77; AŽIH 301/627, testimony of Mojżesz and Kasriel (or Moshe and Katriel) Ślucki, p. 3 (MSS); and Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 374.

5. Alta Gelman and Emphraim Gelman, "The Liquidation of Zelva," in Moorstein, *Zelva*, p. 108.

6. Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. 374; and Gelman and Gelman, "A Family," p. 77.

7. Gelman and Gelman, "The Liquidation," p. 108.

8. Alta Gelman and Emphraim Gelman, "My Family," in Moorstein, *Zelva*, pp. 108–109.

9. Moses Einhorn, "Destruction," in Einhorn, *Volkovisker*, p. 952.

10. Compare Mordechai Loshovitz, "Alone in the Forest," with Yerahmiel Moorstein, "The Suicides," in Moorstein, *Zelva*, respectively, pp. 79 and 102.

11. Resnik, "Krzemienica," p. 317.

12. Cited dates, respectively, in *Sefer zikaron Volkovisk*, pt. 3, p. 81; and BLH, Aronzon; with December 5–7, 1942, also mentioned by Yarnivsky, "The Destruction," p. 104.

13. Moses Slutsky, "The Partisans," in Moorstein, *Zelva*, pp. 71–76.

